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President Xi Jinping shakes hands with US President Joe Biden during a meeting in Lima, Peru, on Saturday. FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY

Stabilizing Sino-US ties emphasized

Beijing and Washington agree to ensure 'smooth transition' of relations

By ZHANG YUNBI in Beijing, SU QIANG in New York and CHANG JUN in San Francisco

Charting a smooth transition of China-US ties, taking stock of the policy legacy and underlining Beijing's policy consistency were highlights of the third summit between President Xi Jinping and United States President Joe Biden, observers said.

Prior to their meeting on Saturday in Lima, Peru, Xi and Biden had met face-to-face in Bali, Indonesia, in 2022 and in San Francisco last year.

On Saturday, Beijing and Washington agreed to "continue to stabilize China-US relations, and ensure a smooth transition of the relationship," the Foreign Ministry said.

Both leaders said they believe that "their meeting has been candid, profound and constructive,

and they expressed their willingness to stay in contact", the ministry added.

Xi and Biden agreed to maintain the momentum of communication and strengthen macroeconomic policy coordination.

They also reviewed the important progress since their San Francisco meeting in dialogue and cooperation on counternarcotics, climate change, artificial intelligence and people-to-people exchanges.

Diao Daming, a professor of US studies at Renmin University of China's School of International Relations, said, "The third Xi-Biden summit further plays the role as a navigator and a stabilizer for the ties, and taking stock of the policy legacy and lessons over the past four years and beyond is part of Beijing's clear, constructive solution for driving the relations' growth in the future."

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Joint effort urged to meet challenges facing Asia-Pacific

By MO JINGXI in Lima, Peru
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President Xi Jinping proposed on Saturday building an open and interconnected paradigm for Asia-Pacific cooperation, with efforts to advance regional economic integration and "tear down the walls" impeding the flow of trade, investment, technology and services.

Addressing the 31st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, Xi called on Asia-Pacific countries to act in solidarity and cooperation to meet the challenges facing the Asia-Pacific, such as rising tendencies of geopolitics, unilateralism and protectionism.

"At this historic crossroads, we Asia-Pacific countries carry greater responsibilities on our shoulders," he said in the speech.

Xi announced that China will host the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in 2026, marking the third time — after 2001 and 2014 — that China will host the gathering

since APEC's founding in 1989.

The Chinese president's proposal is an active move to steer the world economy back onto the correct track of globalization, and it is also a commitment by the world's second-largest economy to further opening-up and common development for the world, particularly the Global South countries, experts said.

APEC, which consists of 21 members, accounts for approximately 38 percent of the world's population, 60 percent of its total GDP and 47 percent of its trade.

"A Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific is an ambitious vision for regional economic integration and is critical for long-term development and prosperity of our region," Xi said in the speech.

Ten years ago, a historic decision to kick off the process for a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific was made at the gathering of APEC economic leaders in Beijing.

"Today, we will adopt a new document to guide this process. I believe that this will give new impetus to

our efforts toward an open Asia-Pacific economy," Xi said.

Chen Taotao, a professor at the School of Economics and Management at Tsinghua University in Beijing, said that regional economic integration has proved to be an efficient economic operating model in the process of globalization.

"In recent years, due to geopolitical reasons, some countries have intentionally adopted high tariffs and other methods to restrict the normal global layout of Chinese high-tech enterprises in certain industries in order to suppress China's development," she said.

Chen, who is also director of Tsinghua University's Latin America Center, said that in this process, developing countries — including many Latin American countries — have strongly felt the damage caused to their economies by such instability.

Xi told other leaders of APEC member economies that opening-up is a distinct hallmark of Chinese modernization, and he reiterated

the country's commitment to promoting reform through opening-up.

"We voluntarily subscribe to high-standard international economic and trade rules, adopt proactive measures for further opening-up, and take systematic steps to further open the telecom, internet, education, culture, medical service and other sectors," he said.

China signed a protocol to upgrade the free trade agreement with Peru on Thursday and concluded negotiations last month with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to upgrade to free trade area 3.0.

"Together with the relevant parties, we will seek to discuss trade agreements in digital and green areas and steadily expand the globally oriented network of high-standard free trade areas," Xi said.

He added that China welcomes all parties to continue riding the "express train" of its development and grow together with the Chinese economy.

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People wave Chinese and Brazilian flags as they welcome President Xi Jinping in Rio de Janeiro on Sunday afternoon. Xi will attend the 19th G20 Summit and pay a state visit to Brazil. LI YAN / XINHUA

Global South's support for multilateralism, open economy key for G20 Summit

The 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, will count on the strong and consistent support of Global South countries to ensure the survival of multilateralism and an open global economy.

The G20 sits alongside similar entities such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. These groupings understand the way open trade contributes to global economic growth, which is the foundation for building prosperity, including in the Global South.

As the largest developing country

and a natural member of the Global South, China recognizes that sustainability rests on global cooperation that is not hindered by tariffs, unfair taxes, sanctions or political barriers that hamper trade, trade settlement and the exchange of ideas.

Unfortunately, the G20 consensus on these objectives may face opposition from the incoming administration in the United States.

The G20 meeting takes on particular significance because it must prepare for a more combative trade and economic future shaped by US delegates who cast a shadow over the G20 ambitions to build a

WORLD WATCH

By Daryl Guppy

just world and a sustainable planet, because it is unlikely the current US policy position will remain the same under the new administration.

The well-known pillars of US President-elect Donald Trump's trade agenda are based on 20 percent to 60 percent tariffs, sanctions, protectionist barriers and the destruction of international

organizations like the World Trade Organization.

As a premier forum for international economic cooperation, the G20 plays a critical role in steering the global economy through the significant challenges it faces. The task facing the G20 is to develop strategies to provide a bulwark against the US attack on free trade, which sits at the core of the economic challenges posed by inflation and stalled economic development.

China is one of the strongest of the G20 economies in its full support for free trade within the framework of WTO rules and procedures.

China's trade disputes with the European Union are resolved through the WTO using the structure that is a temporary substitute for the WTO appeals court. In its attempt to destroy the WTO, the US has blocked the appointment of appellate judges for seven years.

China is steadfast in its full support for the globalization of trade. The seventh China International Import Expo in Shanghai is evidence of global support for China's role in the global economy.

President Xi Jinping's scheduled participation in the G20 Summit in Brazil highlights China's firm

support for multilateralism and underscores its high regard for G20 cooperation.

China has become a major advocate for an equal and orderly multipolar world. Its strong stance against protectionist policies is matched with its consistent support for inclusive and universally beneficial economic globalization.

The 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro takes place at a critical juncture because never have the forces against an open world economy been so strong.

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Theatergoers head to Shanghai to binge-watch plays
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President hails commissioning of deep-ocean drilling vessel

By ZHAO LEI
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President Xi Jinping has called for continuous efforts to make the best use of a new deep-ocean drilling vessel, named *Mengxiang*, or Dream, which was commissioned on Sunday in Guangzhou, Guangdong province.

In a congratulatory letter sent to all organizations and people involved in the project, Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military

Commission, said the successful trial run and commissioning of the *Mengxiang* marks an important step in China's deep-ocean access, exploration and development.

It also marks a new significant achievement in turning the country into a great power in marine sectors, as well as in science and technology, he wrote.

Xi noted that the workers involved in the design and construction of the vessel tapped the advantage of the nation's unique resource mobilization

system, which is characterized by its ability to mobilize all available resources to overcome difficulties and achieve desired goals. They managed to overcome several major technical difficulties, displaying their confidence, self-reliance and sense of mission and responsibility, he wrote, applauding their spirit of innovation, teamwork, perseverance and courage.

"I hope that you can keep working hard to make the best use of this important science and technology asset, enhance innovation and creativity in marine science and technology,

and expand international cooperation in marine sectors, so as to make greater contributions to Chinese modernization and the building of a community with a shared future for humanity," Xi wrote in his letter, which was read out on Sunday by Vice-Premier He Lifeng at the vessel's commissioning ceremony.

The *Mengxiang* is China's first domestically designed and built deep-ocean drilling ship. It will be used to drill through the Earth's crust and into the upper mantle for surveying resources and collecting samples.

XI'S VISIT



Leaders and representatives of the APEC member economies take a group photo during the 31st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Lima, Peru, on Saturday. HUANG JINGWEN / XINHUA

Meeting: Green innovation, sci-tech revolution stressed

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To start a new era in Asia-Pacific development, the Chinese president also proposed to make green innovation a catalyst for the Asia-Pacific and uphold a universally beneficial and inclusive vision for Asia-Pacific development.

"We need to firmly seize the opportunities presented by the new round of sci-tech revolution and industrial transformation and strengthen exchanges and cooperation in artificial intelligence, quantum information, life and health, and other frontier areas," Xi added.

China will launch a Global Cross-Border Data Flow Cooperation Initiative and seek deeper cooperation with other parties to promote efficient, convenient and secure cross-border data flows, he said.

The Chinese president also called for more support for developing economies and disadvantaged groups and for nations to work together to increase the pie

and distribute it equitably to allow more economies and people to benefit from development.

Three outcome documents, including the statement of economic leaders and the Ichma Statement on a New Look at the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific, were adopted after the meeting on Saturday.

Liu Chenyang, director of Nankai University's APEC Study Center, said the outcomes hold positive significance in determining the role of the Global South

amid a complicated global landscape.

Noting that it is impossible for any kind of cooperation at the global level to succeed without the participation of APEC members, Liu said the valuable experience gained within APEC will provide a boost for a wide range of multilateral cooperation.

Xi also gave a written speech to the APEC CEO Summit on Friday, calling for shared efforts to promote universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization.

Summit: Red lines must not be challenged, Xi says

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"Whoever takes charge of the US' China policy should respect lessons from the past, face up to the US' international duties, act on the very interests of the American people and respond to global expectations for better well-being," Diao said.

Xi's underlining of Beijing's consistency in US policy will help respond to the potential uncertainties that may be brought about by Washington in the future, he added.

On Saturday, Xi said that China and the US should keep exploring the right way for two major countries to get along well with each other, realize long-term, peaceful coexistence, and inject more certainty and positive energy into the world.

Xi also said that neither decoupling nor supply-chain disruption is the solution, and "small yard, high fences" is not what a major country should do.

Citing the lessons from the two countries' diplomatic ties over the past 45 years, Xi said that if the two sides regard each other as rivals and pursue vicious competition, they "will roll the relationship or even set it back."

He identified four red lines for China that must not be challenged: the Taiwan question, democracy and human rights, China's path and system, and China's development right.

"Major-country competition should not be the underlying logic of the times; only solidarity and cooperation can help humanity overcome current difficulties," Xi said.

Biden said the US-China relationship is the most important bilateral relationship in the world, not just for the two peoples, but also for the future of the world.

He underscored that the US does not seek a new Cold War, it does not seek to change China's system, its

China has made clear time and again that mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation are at the heart of its global agenda. The US can — and should — endorse a similar philosophy."

Anthony Moretti, head of Department of Communication and Organizational Leadership at Robert Morris University

alliances are not targeted against China, it does not support "Taiwan independence", it does not seek conflict with China, and it does not see its Taiwan policy as a way to compete with China.

The US will stay committed to the one-China policy and is prepared to enhance communication and dialogue with China during the US' presidential transition period to have a better perception of each other and responsibly manage differences, he said.

He added that the two sides support each other's host roles for 2026 — China will host the APEC meeting that year and the US will host the G20 meeting — demonstrating "what we can do for the two peoples when we work together."

On specific policy agenda items, Xi stated China's positions on Taiwan, economic and trade ties, science and technology, cybersecurity, the South China Sea, the Ukraine crisis and the Korean Peninsula.

It is crucial for the US to handle the Taiwan question with extra

prudence, unequivocally oppose "Taiwan independence", and support China's peaceful reunification, Xi said.

In the South China Sea region, the US should not get involved in bilateral disputes over the relevant islands and the reefs of the Nansha Islands, and neither should it aid or abet making provocations, Xi said.

China does not allow conflict or turmoil on the Korean Peninsula, and it will not sit idly by when its strategic security and core interests are under threat, Xi said.

In Lima, the two presidents reiterated — and stated readiness to further uphold — the seven-point common understanding on the guiding principles for China-US relations.

Worked out under the two leaders' instructions, the principles are treating each other with respect, finding a way to live alongside each other peacefully, maintaining open lines of communication, preventing conflict, upholding the United Nations Charter, cooperating in areas of shared interest, and responsibly managing competitive aspects of the relationship.

Anthony Moretti, department head and an associate professor of the Communication and Organizational Leadership Department at Robert Morris University in the US state of Pennsylvania, said, "The US and China remain the best partners when it comes to solving vexing challenges like climate change, food insecurity, preparing to fight the next pandemic and more."

"But Washington must adopt a respectful tone in its rhetoric," Moretti added. "China has made clear time and again that mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation are at the heart of its global agenda. The US can — and should — endorse a similar philosophy."

Analysts noted that over the past four years, the China-US relationship, which went through ups and downs, remains stable on the whole.

More than 20 communication mechanisms have been restarted or established, and positive achievements have been made in areas such as diplomacy, security, economy, trade, fiscal affairs, finance, military, counternarcotics, law enforcement, agriculture, climate change and people-to-people exchanges.

In Lima, Xi underscored that "it is worthwhile to review the experiences of the past four years and draw inspirations from them."

He listed seven items as lessons that should be learned: to have a correct strategic perception, to match words with actions, to treat each other as equals, not to challenge red lines and paramount principles, to conduct more dialogue and cooperation, to respond to the expectations of the people, and to step forward to shoulder the responsibilities of major countries.

Xiaohua Yang, a professor of international business and founding director of the University of San Francisco's Center for Business Studies and Innovation, said that Xi made it clear at the Lima summit that China continues to believe the relationship is pivotal to the peace and prosperity of the whole world.

"Xi set a forward-looking tone in the US-China relationship — a stable and cooperative US-China relationship benefits the whole world, not just these two countries; decoupling, building up walls and being confrontational is not the solution," she said.

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Sino-Brazilian ties a model for other nations

President calls for intensifying exchanges at all levels and strengthening strategic mutual trust

By ZHOU JIN
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The relationship between China and Brazil has established a model for major developing countries to promote win-win cooperation and pursue a shared future, President Xi Jinping said in a signed article published on Sunday in Brazilian media outlet Folha de S. Paulo.

Since the two countries established diplomatic relations 50 years ago, China-Brazil ties have withstood the test of a changing international landscape and become increasingly mature and vibrant, Xi said. This dynamic relationship has not only boosted the development of the two nations, but also contributed significantly to world peace and stability, he added.

The article was published as Xi is set to attend the 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and also make a state visit to the South American country.

"Our relationship has always been a forerunner in the relations between China and fellow developing nations," he said in the article.

Xi called on Beijing and Brasilia to intensify exchanges at all levels and across all fields, and continuously strengthen strategic mutual trust and cement the political foundation of the bilateral relations.

He called on the two sides to create new growth drivers for mutually beneficial cooperation, promote synergy between the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative and Brazil's development strategies, and foster more exemplary projects that deliver lasting benefits to the two peoples.

Bilateral mutually beneficial cooperation, with no shortage of bright spots and fruitful outcomes in the areas of agriculture, infrastructure, energy, resources, green development, technological innovation and finance, has greatly promoted economic and social progress in both countries, Xi said.

China has been Brazil's largest trading partner for 15 consecutive years and is a major source of foreign investment in Brazil.

Statistics show that China's annual imports from Brazil in the past three years have stayed above \$100 billion, while bilateral trade volume reached \$181.53 billion in 2023, up 6.1 percent year-on-year.

Xi noted that China and Brazil share a natural affinity and a common pursuit of all that is beautiful.

In recent years, music, dance and other forms of art have become a new bridge connecting the two peoples, helping to enhance amity and mutual understanding, he said.

"Brazil's cute capybaras, bossa nova music, samba dance and capoeira (a martial art) are immensely popular in China, while China's traditional festivals like Spring Festival and its cultural heritages such as traditional Chinese medicine are increasingly well-known among Brazilians," he said.

Xi recalled the letters he received in the past couple of days from over 100 Brazilian friends from across sectors, saying that he was touched by their fervent desire to strengthen the friendship between the two nations.

China and Brazil should work together with other Global South countries to resolutely safeguard the common interests of developing nations, address global challenges through cooperation, and promote a global governance system that is fairer and more equitable, he said.

Xi emphasized that development should be placed at the center of G20 cooperation, and the attainment of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should be a top priority.

He called for advancing reform of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization and increasing the representation and voice of the Global South.

Macroeconomic policy coordination should be stepped up while trade and investment liberalization and facilitation should be promoted, to create an open, inclusive and nondiscriminatory environment for international economic cooperation, Xi said.

Building a sustainable planet requires the G20 to promote a sustainable lifestyle, he said, adding that the group should advance international cooperation in areas such as green and low-carbon development, environmental protection, energy transition and climate change response.

The G20 should honor the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and provide more funding, technology and capacity-building support to Global South countries, Xi said.

"I am confident that the Rio de Janeiro Summit will achieve fruitful outcomes and leave a distinct Brazilian mark on G20's history," he added.



The logo of the G20 Summit is displayed outside the Rio de Janeiro Prefecture headquarters in Brazil on Tuesday. MAURO PIMENTEL / AFP

Forum: China sheds light on global governance, sustainable growth

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China's commitment to an open world economy has been tested over the past decades, and the China-proposed Global Development Initiative sheds light on global governance and G20's solution for sustainable development.

However, proposals backed by US President Joe Biden and advanced by the US at the G20 meeting can

be, and probably will be, overturned by the new administration. Proposals based on the anticipated new directions taken by a Trump administration currently lack the necessary authority for action.

This dilemma for US representatives provides a unique opportunity for the G20 to develop and take a strong stand before the onslaught of adverse US economic and trade policies.

The G20 brings together the world's major and systemically important economies. Its members represent around 85 percent of global GDP, over 75 percent of international trade and about two-thirds of the world's population. If the US wishes to isolate itself from the global economy, hiding behind protectionist walls, then the other members of the G20 need to develop strategies to survive in

this hostile environment.

The theme of the 2024 G20 Summit is "Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet." The foundation of a just world is built on multipolarity, which recognizes open and free trade taking place within a structured environment where all accept the rules. China's high-level participation is clear evidence of the desire to promote more inclusive and equitable global governance.

The litmus test for the survival of the G20 comes from the way the traditional allies of the US — the United Kingdom, Australia and Japan — choose to support China's commitment to multipolarity, or if they back a world disintegrating under tariffs and sanctions. A beggar-thy-neighbor approach will undermine the authority of the G20.

The G20 Summit is a farewell tour for Biden, but it must not be

allowed to become a farewell for a multilateral solution to global economic relations that overturns G20 aspirations. China's support for the G20 will help it to continue to serve as a primary forum for international economic cooperation and as a bulwark against the economic course of protectionism.

The author is an international financial technical analysis expert and a former national board member of the Australia China Business Council. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

XI'S VISIT

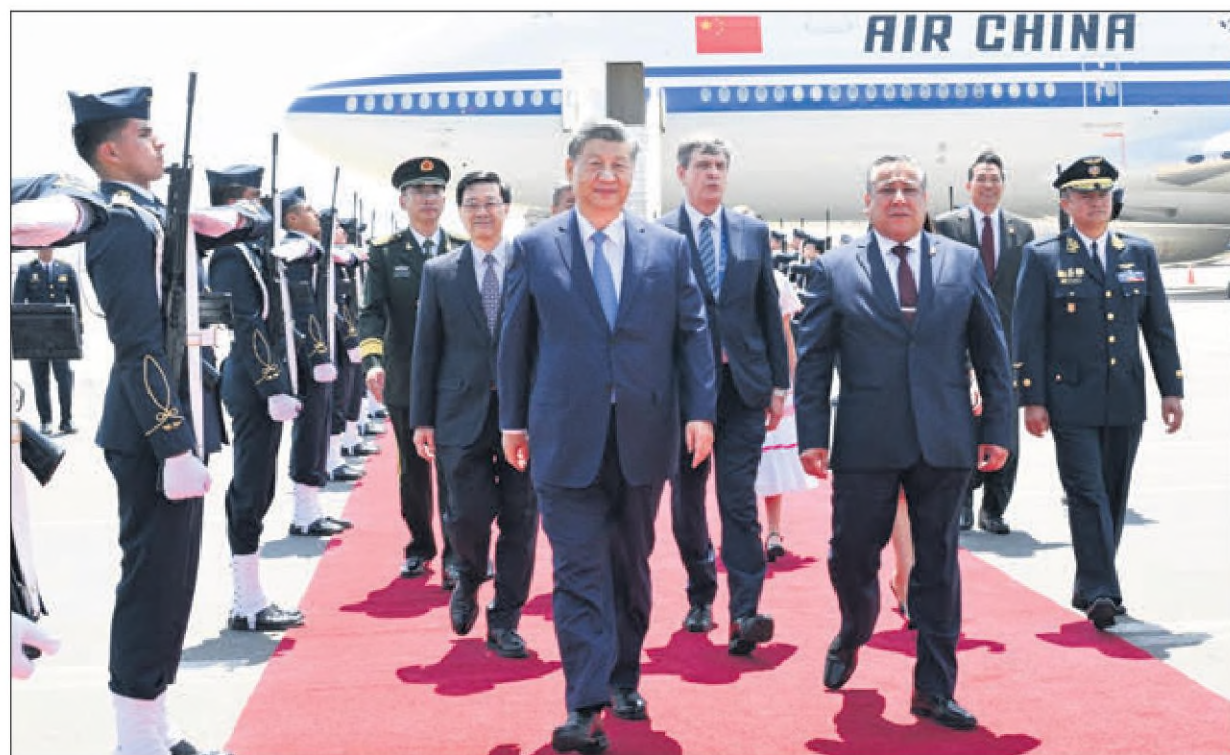


President Xi Jinping and Peruvian President Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra attend the inauguration ceremony of the Chancay Port via video on Thursday from the Government Palace of Peru in Lima. The port is located 78 kilometers north of the Peruvian capital. XIE HUANCHI AND LI MENGXIN / XINHUA

ADVOCATING ASIA-PACIFIC UNITY



Clockwise from above left:
 President Xi Jinping and Peruvian President Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra wave during a grand welcome ceremony hosted in Xi's honor in Lima, Peru, on Thursday. FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY
 President Xi Jinping delivers a speech on Saturday at the 31st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Lima, Peru, titled "Shouldering Responsibility to Our Times and Jointly Promoting Asia-Pacific Development". XIE HUANCHI / XINHUA
 President Xi Jinping arrives in Lima, Peru, on Thursday for a state visit and the 31st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting. LI XUEREN / XINHUA
 President Xi Jinping meets with US President Joe Biden in Lima, Peru, on Saturday. FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY
 A cavalry regiment escorts President Xi Jinping on Thursday to a grand welcome ceremony hosted by Peruvian President Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra in Lima, Peru. FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY



G20
BRASIL 2024

XI'S VISIT

Small farms key to taking on hunger

Modest operations account for more than 90% of global food producers

By LI LEI
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China has underlined the importance of the role of smallholder farming as G20 members gather to address the global hunger and poverty crisis that's been worsened by climate change, conflicts and trade barriers.

That was the message sent out by Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Ma Youxiang at the G20 meeting of agricultural ministers held in Cuiaba, Brazil, in September.

Smallholder farming — a major source of livelihood for millions of people worldwide — is foundational to China's sprawling agricultural sector.

According to an agricultural census in 2016, small-scale farmers in China account for over 98 percent of agricultural operating entities, with an average plot of about 0.52 of a hectare per household.

Drawing inspiration from the nation's success in prioritizing the group in its fight against rural poverty and ensuring food security, he told a mix of agricultural officials and representatives from international organizations, including the World Bank, that the Chinese government has worked to empower these farmers with technologies,

help build their capacity, and offer financial support — all aimed at enabling their integration with modern agriculture.

To make food production more efficient, the vice-minister proposed accelerating the development of agricultural machinery and equipment tailor-made for smallholder farmers and improving the social services they need.

He also recommended extending food production's value chain to boost rural income and enhance farming resilience.

"We shall make sure that no smallholder farmer is left behind," he said, adding that such efforts contribute to the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals of poverty reduction and eradicating hunger.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, smallholder farmers, or family farmers, operate more than 90 percent of the world's farms, covering 70 to 80 percent of the global agricultural land area, and their food production value accounts for more than 80 percent of the world's total.

Supporting smallholder farmers, for instance, by nurturing rural industrial clusters and integrating them into the production of agricultural products with higher add-



People watch a Chinese-made tractor in action in Apodi in the state of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil, in February. As part of the agricultural mechanization cooperation between the two countries, a total of 31 sets of equipment have been delivered to the Brazilian side. WANG TIANCONG / XINHUA

ed value, has aided poverty reduction and sustainable rural development, as demonstrated by Chinese practices.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs reported that 60 percent of central government funding allocated for rural vitalization initiatives was directed toward advancing rural industries. Three-quarters of farmers who have recently been lifted out of poverty are intricately engaged in the extended rural supply chain.

Support measures aimed at farmers have bolstered national food security through various initiatives. These include subsidies for specific crop cultivation and the implementation of a minimum purchase price policy for grains. Under this policy, the government or relevant authorities commit to purchasing grains from

farmers or traders at a set price.

Additionally, the government dispatches technical teams to assist farmers during extreme weather events and outbreaks of pests and plant diseases.

Those efforts have in part helped China to further boost its food production capacity despite major food-producing areas being buffeted by typhoons and other extreme weather conditions earlier this year.

In late October, Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Zhang Xingwang told a news conference in Beijing that China is on track to surpass 700 million metric tons in grain yield for the first time this year, after maintaining a figure above 650 million tons for nine consecutive years.

At a news conference on World Food Day, which has been celebrat-

ed annually on Oct 16 since 1981 to raise awareness and promote action for fighting hunger and ensuring food security for all, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said China has managed to feed its 1.4 billion people despite having just a quarter of the world's arable land.

As the world's largest food producer, China also attaches great importance to global food security.

The country has provided more funding and experts and undertaken more projects than any other developing country under the framework of the Food and Agriculture Organization's South-South Cooperation Programme, she said.

Mao reiterated the nation's commitment to more global cooperation on food security and to create a world free of hunger.

G20 action for business promotes sustainability

By YANG RAN
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The G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro will help foster global consensus and bridge differences, creating a favorable environment for entrepreneurship that can help tackle today's global challenges and support sustainable development, said Gao Jian, director of the Entrepreneurship Research Center on G20 Economies at Tsinghua University.

"The G20 is a broad international mechanism that includes both developing and developed countries, ensuring representation from various regions and continents. Each participant plays a unique role. Therefore, the annual G20 Summit and its agenda are indeed beneficial for global economic development," Gao said.

"This year's theme — 'Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet' — indicates that in global development, every economy aims to create more employment opportunities, secure a good position in global trade, and avoid falling behind. However, this must not come at the expense of sustainable development, which requires addressing employment issues and the green and digital transition," said Gao, who is also professor at the department of innovation, entrepreneurship and strategy at Tsinghua's School of Economics and Management.

"Only through global cooperation and joint efforts can we achieve sustainability. And in this process, companies need to update technologies, reduce carbon emissions and foster new innovation.

"Innovative entrepreneurial companies are essential for providing new solutions to solve these problems. For instance, China's globally leading electric vehicle industry, largely driven by startups, exemplifies this," Gao said.

The Entrepreneurship Research Center on G20 Economies was established in 2017 to promote the implementation of the consensus reached by G20 leaders at the Hangzhou Summit the previous year.

In the G20 Entrepreneurship Action Plan adopted at the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting in 2016, it pointed out that waves of technological change, economic globalization and industrial and demographic changes present new challenges and opportunities for G20 economies in both the short and longer terms. The plan urged for G20 members to redouble efforts to support a more innovative pattern of inclusive economic growth, with new engines of development and new pathways for job growth.

Jointly established by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and Tsinghua University, the research center tracks and analyzes the progress of the G20 Entrepreneurship Action Plan and shares valuable entrepreneurial practices and experiences among G20 members.

Since its inception, the center has hosted an annual G20 Entrepreneurship Roundtable to review and evaluate the progress of G20 members in implementing the entrepreneurship action plan.

"Overall, G20 members are keeping pace with the times in entrepreneurship, especially in emerging industries like the digital economy and green transition. In terms of entrepreneurial policies, developed countries tend to have more detailed and systematic policies, while developing countries may lag in this aspect," Gao noted.

"China, as a G20 member, has significant advantages in providing entrepreneurship services. For example, China emphasizes tailored policies for different groups, such as incubation services for young people, women and new university graduates, provided by social institutions. This is considered an advanced practice internationally," Gao said.

"China's reform and opening-up policies are also conducive to global economic development and openness. As an inclusive nation promoting globalization, China's development benefits global entrepreneurs. Events like the China International Import Expo and the Canton Fair also stimulate international entrepreneurship," said Gao.

Capacity of technology evolving in education

By ZHAO YIMENG
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The G20 Education Dialogue held in Beijing in October zeroed in on the crucial intersection of education, technology and sustainable growth in the digital age.

The three-day event brought together more than 100 speakers, including education leaders and policymakers from G20 members, to delve into how digital transformation can enrich learning experiences and improve educational outcomes globally.

Wang Dinghua, Party secretary of Beijing Foreign Studies University, which organized the event, emphasized the transformative potential of artificial intelligence and data science in education. He noted that G20 nations share a commitment to inclusive and equitable quality education, aiming to leverage digital tools to meet the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

"China, together with other G20 members, has been committed to the vision of inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all through digital means," Wang said. The dialogue on education, technology and quality growth in the digital era offers a platform for educators and policymakers to share insights and seek solutions to common challenges, he added.

Luiz Costa, former minister of education in Brazil, highlighted the growing partnership between Brazil and China, asserting that education forms the foundation for sustainable development and technological advancement.

"As Brazil and China continue to deepen our ties, especially through partnerships in educational exchange, technological innovation and shared research initiatives, we are showing the world that collaboration between nations is key to solving the complex challenges of the digital era," Costa said.



Participants in a Sino-foreign youth dialogue event take time out to interact with a robot in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, in August. XINHUA

China, together with other G20 members, has been committed to the vision of inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all through digital means."

Wang Dinghua, Party secretary of Beijing Foreign Studies University

He stressed the need to ensure that all students benefit from digital innovations, warning that technology should empower rather than hinder educational experiences. "Our challenge is to ensure that no student is left behind in this digital revolution," he said.

Echoing Costa, Andreas Schleicher, director for education and skills at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, discussed the dual nature of using artificial intelligence in education, acknowledging its ability to personalize learning while also warning against potential inequities. "AI is a powerful tool, but it amplifies both good and bad practices," Schleicher said. The role of public policy is crucial in shaping how these technologies are used in educational settings, he said, calling for regulations that lead to transparent and bias-free applications.

Also held over the three days, the G20 Basic Education Dialogue and the G20 Vocational and Technical Education Dialogue attracted experts and administrators from G20 members to engage in in-depth discussions on leveraging digital technologies to transform educational systems and prepare students for the demands of the future workforce.

Kylie Readman, vice-president of the University of Technology Sydney, highlighted that technology alone cannot foster educational success and meet the needs of a new generation of students in higher education. "It requires a commitment to purpose, a desire for connection and an environment of learning that promotes student success," she said.

Throughout the dialogue, participants engaged in deep discussions about the impact of digital transformation on education, sharing their experiences and exploring collaborative pathways for the future. A youth dialogue also took place, where young leaders from G20 members discussed how educational technology can address climate change challenges.

The consensus emerged that while technology enhances accessibility and equity in education, it cannot replace the invaluable role of teachers. Education transforms lives, and the purpose of education remains unchanged regardless of technological advancements, said Li Youwen, an associate professor at Beijing Foreign Studies University. "Nothing, even the best technology, can replace a good teacher," she said.

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Targeted policies for women could contribute to equality

By LI LEI
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As the G20 works to empower women amid a global increase in them facing hunger and poverty, China has emerged as a potential model for nations lagging on this front.

The nation with a population of 1.4 billion has made significant strides in gender equality through targeted policies and programs.

These initiatives, including small loan programs and tuition exemptions, have enhanced women's employability and economic independence.

Huang Xiaowei, vice-president of the All-China Women's Federation, underscored these achievements during a G20 ministerial meeting on women's empowerment in Brasilia, Brazil, last month.

She called for more international exchanges to narrow gender disparities across the globe.

Huang highlighted that China has achieved this goal partly by investing in girls' education, with over half of college students in China now being female.

This increased focus on education has led to higher employability among Chinese women, reflected in a labor participation rate of approximately 63.7 percent, compared with the global average of 47.3 percent, she told a mix of government officials and representatives of international organizations on Oct 11.

Women make up more than half of the workforce in lucrative sectors such as finance, internet services, public accounting and intellectual property, she said, adding that 45.8 percent of Chinese scientists and one-third of individuals involved in e-commerce and livestreaming businesses in China are female.

As rural men seek jobs in urban areas, their wives are often left behind to care for their families, with women making up 65 percent of the working-age population in the countryside.

In recent years, authorities have assisted 44.16 million rural women in lifting themselves out of poverty through initiatives such as providing small loans for starting businesses or buying agricultural materials.

Huang said that Chinese banks and other financial institutions have prioritized women in their efforts to help the nation eradicate absolute poverty. Together, they have extended 640 billion yuan (\$88.4 billion) in loans to over 8 million rural women in the past decade.

"Women in China, whether in emerging or traditional economic sectors, have attained unprecedented economic independence. This empowerment enables them to excel in their lives while contributing to the development of the economy and society," Huang said.

She said that G20 nations, despite differing circumstances, are united by a common vision of modernization and gender equality.

Huang advocated for empowering women through technology and education, ensuring their legal protection, and cultivating a collaborative, inclusive culture.

She urged increased international cooperation to advance women's empowerment in alignment with the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals ahead of schedule.

Statistics from UN Women paint a stark picture of the challenges faced by women globally. One in every 10 women worldwide lives in extreme poverty. The number of women and girls residing in conflict-affected regions has doubled since 2017, surpassing 614 million. In these areas, women are 77 times more likely to endure extreme poverty.

Climate change is projected to leave an additional 236 million women and girls hungry by 2030, twice the number of men affected. At peak working age, only 61 percent of women are engaged in the labor force compared to 90 percent of men, UN Women said.

These figures prompted ministers attending the meeting in Brasilia to adopt a declaration emphasizing the critical role of women in decision-making and global challenges.

The document proposes narrowing the gender pay gap, reducing gender disparities in the labor market, enhancing education and technical training opportunities, and promoting gender equality policies to ensure that women can participate equally across all fields.

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XI'S VISIT

Latin America a magnet for new firms

Region's trade opportunities, steady growth to entice Chinese businesses

By ZHONG NAN
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Latin America is set to attract more Chinese businesses seeking trade and investment opportunities, adding greater momentum to both regional and global economies, market watchers and business leaders said.

The significant trade complementarity and intertwined interests of China and Latin America — along with their immense scope for cooperation in emerging industries — are expected to further enrich business ties.

Brazil, Chile and Peru boast large, young populations and growing middle-income groups, which will further drive demand for consumer goods, technology and infrastructure, areas where Chinese companies excel, said Peng Bo, a researcher specializing in foreign trade at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation in Beijing.

"As these economies continue to grow, they offer substantial market potential for Chinese exports, providing an avenue for China to diversify its trade partnerships beyond developed economies," said Peng.

China saw its foreign trade value with Latin America soar 9.6 percent year-on-year to 2.79 trillion yuan (\$391.82 billion) in the first three quarters of 2024, statistics from the General Administration of Customs show.

China's trade with Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Guyana, surged 12 percent, 17.7 percent, 15.1 percent and 16.1 percent, respectively.

Construction machinery, passenger vehicles, solar cells, trains, building materials, manufacturing equipment, electronics, textiles, garments and household appliances are China's main exports to Latin American countries.

In addition to metals, crude oil, natural gas and grains, Latin American countries' exports to China include passenger aircraft, steel and chemicals, timber, wine, coffee, fruit, meat and aquatic products.

Mauricio Hurtado, Chile's ambassador to China, said with the support of the China-Chile Free Trade Agreement and the tangible growth of the



The BYD Co's Yuan Pro electric vehicle is launched in Brazil at an event at Clube Monte Libano in Sao Paulo, on Sept 5. The company is building new manufacturing facilities in the Brazilian state of Bahia. MAIRA ERLICH / GETTY IMAGES

“As these economies continue to grow, they offer substantial market potential for Chinese exports, providing an avenue for China to diversify its trade partnerships beyond developed economies.”

Peng Bo, researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation

Belt and Road Initiative, economic and trade ties between the two countries will continue to grow in the coming years, with notable diversification in areas such as technology cooperation and trade in services.

"Currently, many Chinese companies are interested in visiting Chile to explore potential cooperation opportunities," he said. "We encourage these firms to visit Chile not only to strengthen the existing partnerships, but also to explore new opportunities for collaboration in fields

like new energy, advanced materials and environmental protection."

Zhang Shaogang, vice-chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, said: "China's continued commitment to deepening institutional opening-up and forging high-standard economic and free trade agreements, along with the rapid growth of its tech-driven green industries, has encouraged its companies to strategically invest in new manufacturing, services and innovation facilities in both

developed and developing countries."

"The ongoing restructuring of global supply chains offers opportunities for Chinese companies to align their strengths with shifting market needs," he added.

Zhang said Chinese firms are showcasing their strong competitiveness in manufacturing sectors such as new energy vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and photovoltaic products, leading to increased acceptance of their presence in many countries.

Chinese automaker BYD views the Latin American market as crucial to its global business strategy, and is currently building new manufacturing facilities in the Brazilian state of Bahia.

Its Brazil unit will produce electric and hybrid vehicles, electric buses and trucks, and battery products for both local and global markets.

BYD's new manufacturing base is anticipated to begin operations

between this year and early 2025, according to an announcement from the local government. The initial production capacity is set at 150,000 electric and hybrid vehicles per year, with the potential to expand to 300,000 units in the future.

CINO Technology (Shenzhen) Ltd, a coffee machine manufacturer based in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, this year saw a significant surge in orders for coffee machines and tea makers from Latin American markets such as Bolivia, Chile, and Colombia.

"In the first three quarters, our exports to Latin American countries saw an increase of 20 percent year-on-year, with orders scheduled through December," said Liu Youliang, the company's president.

Despite the current global economic slowdown, Liu said that markets in Latin America, Southeast Asia and the Middle East have seen rapid growth over the past two years.

Africa set to leverage advantages from G20

By NDUMISO MLILO
in Johannesburg

African countries should use the opportunity of G20 membership to promote trade and investment with the world's most powerful countries, experts said ahead of this year's G20 summit.

Sizo Nkala, a senior research fellow at the University of Johannesburg's Centre for Africa-China Studies, told China Daily that the African Union joining the Group of 20 is an important step for Africa to increase its visibility on the global stage, and gives it the opportunity to negotiate with rich nations on equal terms.

This year's G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is the first to be held with the African Union as a member. Last year, the G20 accepted the AU as a permanent member of the group.

"The acceptance of the AU will have an impact on the global economic trajectory. Africa will sit at the table with rich nations and voice its concerns and interests and speak for itself," said Nkala.

\$3.1 trillion

The estimated gross domestic product of Africa as of 2023

Alan Mukoki, CEO of the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said while he welcomes the permanent status of the AU at the G20, it remains to be seen how Africa will use and take advantage of it.

He pointed out that Africa must take advantage of this new status to promote trade with the most powerful nations, and seek investment to develop the continent.

Mikatekiso Kubayi, a senior researcher at the South African think tank, the Institute for Global Dialogue, agreed with Mukoki.

He said: "Africans regaining their prominence in multilateral affairs must put their house in order. Africa should negotiate with big players to benefit the continent. The world has realized that Africa, with its gross domestic product of \$3.1 trillion and population of over 1.4 billion, cannot be ignored."

Kubayi said African countries and many nations in the Global South need technical skills and funding to assist them in a just transition to clean energy and the gradual phasing out of fossil fuels, and the G20 can assist them in that regard. He said the G20 could also help Africa to prepare for the effects of climate change.

Joseph Upile Matola, an associate economist from the South African Institute of International Affairs think tank, said the AU's permanent G20 membership has the potential to contribute to development in the continent.

He said that African countries are interested in investment from the G20 in trade, funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation, addressing debt, and peace and security. He said the AU should speak with one voice on trade negotiation issues to deal with bigger nations in the G20.

Ignatius Schoole, CEO of consultancy KPMG South Africa, said the African business community should build business links with G20 members to promote economic cooperation, investment, and technological exchanges.

The continent faces food insecurity, instability, poor economic growth, inequality and a lack of critical skills, which they can acquire through their association with the G20, he added.

South Africa will take over the G20 presidency on Dec 1, and host the G20 summit next year.

The writer is a freelance journalist for China Daily.

China's increased investment eases transition to clean energy in Brazil

By MAY ZHOU in Rio de Janeiro
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Chinese investment in Brazil has grown significantly in recent years as bilateral relations have deepened.

China's presence is especially felt in Brazil's energy and infrastructure sectors. A recent analysis by Brazilian digital media outlet Poder360 estimated such investment from Chinese enterprises alone has exceeded \$51 billion.

Earlier this year, State Grid Corp of China won a 30-year franchise agreement to build a 1,500-kilometer transmission line in northeast Brazil.

"With an investment of 20 billion reais (\$3.4 billion), the project will supply 5 million kilowatts of power to regions including the capital Brasilia and is scheduled to be put into operation in 2029," said Wang Xiaogang, chief technical officer at State Grid Brazil Holding.

State Grid entered the Brazilian market in 2010 after the 2008 financial crisis, said Wang. Three Spanish companies in need of capital were trying to get rid of their seven concession power companies in Brazil.

"We took into account that Brazil has a stable political environment, a promising economy, as well as a stable and attractive power transmission regulatory policy with legal protection, and that power transmission is the core business of SGCC and in line with our international development strategy," said Wang.

After due diligence and arduous negotiations, SGCC successfully won the contract for approximately \$1 billion for 100 percent of the equi-

“Through our partnership with China, we have been exploring new generation possibilities.”

Adriana Waltrick, CEO of State Power Investment Corp, Brasil

ty in the seven companies.

"In 2010, State Grid Brazil Holding Company was established, and the acquisition was completed," Wang said. "We took advantage of the opportunity to enter the Brazilian market, laying a solid foundation for our future development here, thus beginning our grand journey in the Brazilian power industry."

Since then, State Grid has won about a dozen power-transmission projects in Brazil. "Among them, the most noteworthy is the Belo Monte project that has been put into operation," said Wang.

The 2,500-km Belo Monte ultra-high voltage (UHV) transmission project, which started in 2014, was completed in two phases, both ahead of schedule. Chinese President Xi Jinping witnessed the signings of the agreement on three occasions between 2014 and 2019.

State Grid's operations in Brazil are part of its global success.

"We have the world's leading and core technology in UHV transmission and a wide range of construction and operation experience," said

Wang. "For more than 20 years, State Grid has maintained the longest safety record of the world's ultra-large power grid and has built 35 UHV transmission projects to form the world's largest power grid with the strongest transmission capacity and the largest scale of new energy grid connection."

The success of the Belo Monte project laid a solid foundation for winning the new Brazil Northeast UHV transmission project, which signifies another leap for clean energy transmission, Wang said.

"The project will integrate and transmit clean energy such as wind power, solar energy and hydropower in northeastern and northern Brazil to central Brazil. It will promote Brazil's clean and low-carbon energy transformation and drive Brazil's economic and social development," he said. "It will also serve as a new breakthrough project in the next golden decade of the Belt and Road Initiative envisioned by President Xi Jinping."

While State Grid is involved in power transmission in Brazil, State Power Investment Corp of China is producing power in the market.

The company arrived in Brazil in 2017 and has since invested 14 billion reais in the country, according to Adriana Waltrick, the CEO of SPIC Brasil. It is a long-term investment company that began its expansion in Brazil in 2017 through the acquisition of Pacific Hydro, she said.

Waltrick said they started with 58 megawatts and today assets total approximately 4 gigawatts. "Currently, we are the sixth-largest private generator in the country, and



A local resident collects water from an outlet at a water desalination project funded by the State Grid Corp of China in the state of Rio Grande do Norte in Brazil. CHEN HAOQUAN / XINHUA

we aim to be among the top three by 2030," she said.

The first major project was securing the right to operate the Sao Simao Hydroelectric Power Plant for 30 years, she said. It remains the company's largest renewable asset in Brazil to date. Since 2019, more than 1.2 billion reais have been invested over 10 years to modernize the plants, including updating the control system from analog to digital, according to Waltrick.

In 2021, the company started to participate in the natural gas project, Gas Natural Acu, in partnership with Prumo, BP, Siemens and Siemens Energy. That participation aligned with the company's strategy to support Brazil's energy transition with a focus on renewable expansion while ensuring energy security, she said.

In June, the company invested 2.4 billion reais in solar power plants in the northeastern states of Ceara and Piaui, and in November, the company announced a partnership involv-

ing the Luiz Gonzaga solar complex with a 400 million reais investment in Pernambuco state.

In partnership with China, the company is also studying the feasibility of producing, storing and transporting green hydrogen from offshore wind sources in ports in Rio de Janeiro and Ceara.

"In summary, we believe in the diversity and complementarity of energy sources," said Waltrick. "Through our partnership with China, we have been exploring new generation possibilities, such as hybridization and integrating batteries into the system, running models and considering pilot projects."

With China expanding investment in energy transition and technology, those projects will contribute to Brazil's new industrialization.

"I am convinced that Brazil can lead the energy transition globally and be at the forefront alongside other major nations such as China," she said.

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China and the World Roundtable | G20 Summit

Editor's note: The G20 Summit is seen as a promoter of global economic and financial governance reform. In the face of rising global challenges, the G20 members should shoulder their responsibilities, uphold multilateralism and improve global governance to promote a spirit of partnership. Three experts share their views.

Henrique Couto da Nóbrega

Brazil, China pursue sustainable growth

With Brazil and China celebrating half a century of diplomatic relations and Rio de Janeiro hosting the G20 Summit on Monday-Tuesday, this is the right time to reflect on the challenges and opportunities the 21st century presents to the two countries. The Brazil-China partnership, which has become a symbol of mutual success and development, has the potential to transcend borders and drive economic development throughout Latin America. The collaboration between Brazil and China, which spans various sectors and fosters innovation, is a driving force for sustainable and inclusive development in the region.

Over the past decades, the Sino-Brazilian partnership has become one of the most important strategic ones in the world. Initially driven by economic and commercial interests in areas such as industry, energy, agriculture and technology, the partnership has yielded benefits that extend beyond national borders. The partnership has been further strengthened by investments in infrastructure, sustainable development and innovation-oriented high-tech projects — key components in addressing global challenges such as climate change. As such, the transition to clean energy has become crucial for future development, particularly for developing countries in Latin America.

Trade between Brazil and China has grown exponentially over the past two decades. China is currently Brazil's largest trading partner, and Brazil plays a crucial role as a supplier of essential commodities such as soybean, iron ore and oil to China. In 2023, trade between the two countries reached new highs, thanks to China's increasing demand for Brazilian agricultural products, particularly soybean, in which Brazil holds a competitive edge over the United States and Argentina.

However, trade between the two countries is no longer limited to commodities. According to a Brazil-China Business Council (CEBC) report, Chinese investments in Brazil are increasingly focused on the high-tech sector and sustainable industries such as electric vehicles, solar photovoltaic panels and wind energy. This diversification of bilateral trade helps both countries adapt to the demands of a rapidly changing global economy, and reduces their reliance on traditional sectors.

The climate crisis has become a challenge that needs to be immediate-



MA XUEJING / CHINA DAILY

ly addressed, especially given the increasing frequency of extreme weather events such as floods and heat waves. To address this challenge, the transition to clean energy is a priority for countries and a pillar of Sino-Brazilian cooperation. China, the world's largest investor in renewable energy, sees Brazil as a strategic partner to advance its global sustainability goals. And Brazil's mostly clean energy matrix offers a solid foundation for new renewable energy projects.

Last year, 72 percent of Chinese investments in Brazil was in green energy projects, such as wind and solar power generation, according to the CEBC report. Committed to achieving carbon neutrality before 2060, China seeks partners that share this vision, and Brazil, with its abundant natural resources, stands out as a key destination for such investment. Chinese companies such as the State Grid and the China Three Gorges Brazil, a subsidiary of China Three Gorges Corporation, have been investing in Brazil's hydropower sector since 2010 while also expanding into solar and wind energy.

Agriculture is another key pillar of the Brazil-China relationship, with Brazil consolidating its position as the



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top supplier of corn and soybean to China, the world's largest importer of farm products. In the first two months of 2024, Brazil supplied 4.1 million tons of the total 6.19 million tons of corn imported by China during that period. This trade is vital for both countries, as it ensures China's food security while benefiting Brazil's economy.

Chinese companies have also invested in agricultural projects in Brazil, which hopefully will make production more efficient and sustainable. Additionally, China is highly interested in low-carbon agricultural technologies, which reflects the shift of the global development paradigm toward sustainable food production. Brazil, as a global leader in precision agriculture and green technologies, is well-positioned to expand this collaboration to benefit both economies, and contribute to global food security.

Investment in infrastructure is central to the Brazil-China relationship, reflecting both sides' commitment to sustainable development. According to the CEBC, between 2007 and 2023, Chinese companies invested \$73.3 billion in Brazil across 264 projects. One notable example is the State Grid, which won the largest Brazilian government auction in 2023 and will invest 18 billion Brazilian reais (\$3.09 billion) to build an ultra-high voltage transmission line connecting Maranhão to Goiás to supply renewable energy from northeastern Brazil.

In the transportation sector, the China Railway Construction Corporation has secured major projects, including the construction of the São Paulo-Campinas Intercity Train and an inter-metropolitan train connecting Jundiaí with Campinas, as well as the 7-Rubi line, which is part of São Paulo's metropolitan train network. These projects are critical to the modernization of Brazil's transportation infrastructure and sustainable mobility.

Brazil has also expressed its interest in deepening this cooperation by participating in the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, a possibility it is still exploring. The two countries may discuss the issue in detail after the G20 Summit.

As China continues its economic expansion and Brazil seeks to diversify its production and make its economic sectors more sustainable, the cooperation between the two economies is growing stronger. Infrastructure, clean energy, low-carbon agriculture and foreign trade remain at the core of the Sino-Brazilian partnership.

Most important, the fact that both countries are committed to tackling the climate crisis through green investments and technological innovation offers a promising path for the future. While China is likely to consolidate its position as the leading foreign investor in Brazil's strategic and sustainable sectors, Brazil will continue playing a key role as an economic partner and a preferred destination for Chinese investments, particularly in the energy transition-related sectors. And their collaboration has the potential to reshape the economic future of not only China and Brazil but all Latin American countries.

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

Chen Yihao

Correcting trade imbalance through cooperation

Geopolitical tensions are rising, with the United States and some other Western countries criticizing China for its rising trade surplus against other countries and its so-called industrial overcapacity. These issues are but snapshots of the broader structural challenges facing the global economy.

Amid the sluggish global economic recovery, uneven technological innovation and supply chain disruptions, countries across the world face formidable challenges. Now more than ever, collaboration is essential. Rather than provoking confrontation, countries need to work together to resolve their differences and encourage positive competition that leads to shared prosperity.

The road to economic recovery is uneven across countries because every economy grows at a different pace. This has created trade imbalances. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, many countries scaled up production to stabilize their economies, resulting in extra capacity and trade imbalances, which take time to correct. China scaled up its production in the manufacturing sector to meet the global demand during the pandemic, which caused its current account surplus as a percentage of GDP to rise to 2.0 percent in 2021. But with economies across the world recovering, the figure dropped to 1.4 percent in 2023, and it is continuing to decline, highlighting the market's self-correction capability.

China's achievements in sectors such as electric vehicles, EV batteries and solar photovoltaic equipment — or the "new energy trio" — reflect the positive impact of a cooperation and coordination of policy support and market competition, not government distortion. China has always adhered to the principle of competitive neutrality, which has enabled multinational corporations such as Tesla and Eco Green Energy to freely operate and compete against domestic enterprises in China.

Consumer-targeted green industry subsidies have facilitated China's transition to renewable energy in line with its commitment to realize its two climate goals. In fact, China's renewable energy sector has created opportunities for growth for domestic and overseas enterprises alike. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency, China's renewable energy development has reduced the solar photovoltaic installation cost per kilowatt-hour by 86 percent and the levelized cost of electricity by 90 percent from the 2010 levels. As the International Energy Agency's Global EV Outlook 2024 report says, the demand for EVs is booming, but the journey to replace internal combustion engines in economies such as the European Union and the US is long drawn.

Addressing the global trade imbalance and excess capacity problems requires dialogue and cooperation among countries. But countries like the US are taking protectionist measures such as imposing extra tariffs on Chinese products, instead of seeking solutions to the problems. By doing so, they are undermining the chances of resolving even the fundamental issues.

Given these facts, China must maintain its strategic composure, promote cooperation without shying away from competition, and avoid unnecessary confrontation. To begin with, China should continue to champion economic globalization, oppose trade protectionism, and name and shame countries that misuse anti-subsidy and tariff measures, because reinforcing China's stance on open trade is crucial for countering protectionist rhetoric.

The country should take measures to align its policies with international policies, and review its policy on subsidies. By taking countermeasures against unjust sanctions and offering relief to affected Chinese businesses, China can deter other countries from resorting to protectionist measures.

It should also proactively engage with the World Trade Organization, so as to better safeguard national interests using established multilateral mechanisms. By supporting domestic companies facing investigations from the US or other Western countries, and helping them to consult international trade experts to strengthen their cases, China can defend its businesses and ensure they have the resources to counter discriminate policies.

To effectively address global trade imbalances, China should use its major player status in the global economy to promote openness and inclusivity, and more actively engage in global economic rule-making, and facilitate WTO reforms, especially in critical areas like subsidies and competition policy. And by expanding free trade and investment agreements in fields such as the digital economy, artificial intelligence and intellectual property rights, China can build consensus on, and drive forward, new global standards.

Through the diversification of its import sources, particularly in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, high-quality agriculture and electronics, China can meet its growing consumer demand while creating growth opportunities for both domestic and overseas enterprises. In areas such as healthcare, telecommunications and cultural products, it can attract more foreign investments and facilitate mutual growth by further opening up the economy.

Moreover, by encouraging Chinese companies to deepen their engagement with quality-driven Belt and Road projects which prioritize technology and management expertise, China can benefit the global market. By boosting localized operations to help companies to better serve and integrate into host countries, it can help them sharpen their competitiveness in the global market. And by working alongside host nations, Chinese companies can help bridge the technological gap and foster green transition in other countries, thus benefiting the global economy.

China's efforts to correct the trade imbalance will help bolster its role as a stabilizing force in the global market. By increasing transparency, practicing competitive neutrality and promoting cooperation, China can foster an inclusive global economy that aligns with the interests of all countries, facilitates shared growth, and positions itself as a model for cooperative progress.

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

Zhang Monan

G20 should help address common global challenges

The international community expects the G20 Summit, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Monday-Tuesday, to address rising global economic challenges. The existing global economic governance system is faltering against the growing tide of trade protectionism and unilateralism. The World Trade Organization's dispute resolution mechanism is nearly paralyzed, and reforms are stalled. Fragmentation is increasingly evident across the global trade system, which faces its greatest challenge since World War II.

Many hope the G20 Summit will address these issues and take a major step toward preserving a free and multilateral global order.

The rising trade conflicts, particularly those instigated by the United States and the European Union, are threatening global economic stability. Recent years have seen a proliferation of protectionist tariffs and sanctions, which are disrupting global production networks and fracturing industry, supply and value chains.

The US, a major instigator of trade wars, has continued to escalate tensions not only in trade but also in other areas. Since 2018, when the then US president Donald Trump launched a trade war against China, Sino-US trade relations have deteriorated.

The Joe Biden administration has not only continued with the Trump-era tariffs but also increased them. In particular, this year has seen the US



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administration impose a series of new tariffs on Chinese products.

On May 14, the administration invoked Section 301 of the US Trade Act of 1974, announcing new tariffs on China's strategic industries. These tariffs include raising the current tariffs on steel and aluminum from 0-7.5 percent to 25 percent, on electric vehicles from 25 percent to 100 percent, on lithium batteries and battery components from 7.5 percent to 25 percent, on solar panels from 25 percent to 50 percent, and on semiconductors from 25 percent to 50 percent.

The EU recently joined the fray by imposing tariffs of up to 45.3 percent on Chinese-made electric vehicles, raising tensions between the two major economies and threatening to destabilize international trade and stall global economic growth.

The WTO's latest report highlights how global trends — geopolitical competition, regional conflicts and trade sanctions — have eroded the stable foundation of world economic growth over the past 30 years, leading to the fragmentation of the global trade system. According to WTO data,

in 2023, the export of global goods was \$23.8 trillion, down 4.6 percent after two years of growth. This downturn represents the slowest growth rate in five decades — not counting global recessions.

Punitive tariffs imposed by the US on Chinese products have disrupted the normal flow of trade, investment and technologies, resulting in severe misallocation of resources and damaging global value and supply chains. The strain on the global industry is palpable; for instance, according to China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing, in July, the global manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index fell to 48.9 percent, marking its fourth consecutive month below the 50 percent threshold, indicating contraction.

History shows that prolonged trade tensions weigh heavily on global economic growth. During the Great Depression, in 1929, then US president Herbert Hoover imposed tariffs on agricultural imports, and one year later Congress worsened the situation by passing the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, which raised duties on more than 20,000 items, with rates reaching nearly 60 percent. This prompted more than 40 countries to impose retaliatory tariffs on US goods, igniting a global trade war that reduced the world trade volume by 66 percent and global industrial output by 33 percent in 1934, bringing the global economy to the brink of collapse.

If the tariff wars continue to escalate today, the global economy could suffer

a similarly devastating blow. If the US continues to maintain or even impose more high tariffs on Chinese goods, such moves will drag more economies into a tariff-driven economic struggle, making each one of them a potential victim of the trade war.

Preserving the global multilateral trade system has become a shared challenge for countries supporting free trade. In the face of rising protectionism and unilateralism, the G20 — founded as a coordination mechanism to help the world overcome financial crises — must adopt a rules-based multilateral approach.

The G20 has played a crucial role in overcoming financial crises and improving the global trade and investment systems.

The G20 Summit will convene in Rio de Janeiro under "exceptional circumstances". Addressing trade conflicts and reinforcing the G20's role as a primary channel for international economic cooperation are complex challenges to overcome. With the increasing presence of the African Union and other Global South coalitions trying to participate in the G20, there is a pressing demand for the summit to deliver a robust and inclusive solution to global economic problems and improve global trade governance. The G20 must champion a vision for globalization that is fair, equitable and beneficial to all.

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WARWICK POWELL

Pivotal moment for G20

Uncertainty over US commitment to multilateral institutions casts a long shadow on the grouping's future, forcing the Global South to look for alternative forums to pursue meaningful reforms

The G20 convenes in Brazil on Nov 18 and 19, a little over a week after Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election. In a quirk of the US system, instead of an election signaling an immediate change of executive authority, there are 76 days between the election day and the inauguration. This period was described by conservative think tank Rand as the "most dangerous period".



Rand's claim, made prior to the election, was premised on the possibility of violence in response to the election outcome. This seems unlikely now.

However, the interregnum is dangerous for other reasons, no more amplified by the G20 and before the APEC, which meets in Peru from Nov 9 to 16. Both of these institutions have historic foundations in US economic preponderance, in which overarching policy directions and multilateral coordination could depend on the active contribution of the US.

These presuppositions no longer hold.

The interregnum is likely to be marked by hastened activities on the part of the otherwise lame duck Joe Biden administration to "Trump-proof" whatever initiatives the outgoing administration believes may be at risk.

The G20 is unlikely to be a high US priority in this context. Will Biden attend for a farewell lap? Or Kamala Harris, in the aftermath of electoral evisceration? The G20 can do little for their legacies, and they offer just as much to the G20.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva nominated three core issues to define this year's G20 focus: enhancing greater participation from the countries of the Global South in key institutions, tackling global hunger and inequality and focusing on the challenges of energy transition and sustainable development.

These are laudable. But is the G20 up to the challenge? Is it today part of the problem or part of the solution?

Inequitable development continues to be intimately linked to the structures of contemporary global finance. The post-World War II institutions of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank remain dominated by Western powers. The United States retains its veto rights over the IMF's decisions.

The IMF functions as the lender of last resort. Ostensibly to assist countries to deal with liquidity issues in the face of balance of payments problems, the IMF's conditional loans have contributed to the consolidation of global inequity and poverty rather than paving the way for their alleviation. IMF conditionality has hampered national efforts to tackle poverty, and research also demonstrates that such conditionality exacerbates unemployment rather than alleviating it.

Is the G20 in a position to address the governance mechanisms and lending conditions that underpin the way the IMF functions globally?

Global hunger has gotten worse in the past five years. According to the United Nations, there are 122 million more people today facing

hunger than in 2019. With around 735 million people facing hunger, almost one in 10 people don't get enough to eat. All the talk in the world hasn't improved matters. Can this year's G20 cause a meaningful shift in global policies on this front?

As for the energy transitions, the situation today appears to be more challenging than for any of the previous few years at the very least. Insufficient commitment to financing green energy development has hampered global efforts, China's own accomplishments aside. Advanced nations continue to fail to meet the commitments of \$100 billion climate finance, according to Oxfam.

Trump himself has described climate change as a hoax, and argued prior to the election that he would speed up the development of the US shale oil industry. "Drill, baby, drill" was his pre-election mantra. As for global financial reforms, Trump has made it clear that he will resist anything that could diminish the role of the US dollar as the global reserve currency. For Trump, losing the status of global reserve is akin to losing a war. Yet, addressing global inequities — as President Lula has flagged — requires a fundamental reshaping of global financial institutions so that the US dollar does not enjoy this privilege.

Trump won't be attending this year's G20 before his inauguration, but his shadow will be cast over proceedings. On at least two of the three key issues identified by the host country, the US' incoming president appears to be implacably hostile.

The G20 was once the table around which critical multinational



MA XUEJING / CHINA DAILY

economic policy coordination could be undertaken, and where issues that required transnational agreement could be addressed. As things stand, in the current geopolitical climate, and with question marks over the US' future commitment to

multilateral institutions, the G20 runs the risk of running out of puff. In that case, the Global South will have to find alternative forums to pursue meaningful reforms.

The author is an adjunct professor

at Queensland University of Technology and a senior fellow at the Taihe Institute. 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.

ZHANG YUN

Multilateralism a sustained momentum

The fundamental driving force in the new era is the overarching collective rise of the Global South and their claim to global governance

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and G20 summits are being held successively in Peru and Brazil this month in the backdrop of continuing bloc confrontation and Donald Trump's re-election as president of the United States.



In recent years, the confidence deficit has been the biggest challenge for global governance. The US' refusal to appoint new members to the World Trade

Organization Appellate Body has partially disabled the international trade dispute resolution mechanism. With Trump returning to the White House, concerns have grown that the US may once again launch trade wars that disrupt the international economic order through retaliatory tariffs and withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change once more. As important regional and global multilateral governance platforms, APEC and the G20 should contribute to leading cognitive thinking and policy innovation in economic cooperation, thus restoring confidence and order in the world.

First, in the new era, the primary driver of global economy and international relations is the collective rise of the Global South, rather than rivalry among great powers or a new Cold War. The number of United Nations member states has increased from the initial 51 to 193, with around 160 of them being emerging and developing countries of the Global South. These constitute the majority of the international community. The basic standpoint and starting point for understanding international relations should be what the Global South thinks and wants. The G20 was established because the G7

was no longer able to continue to dominate global economic governance. The participation of emerging countries not only signifies a change in international power dynamics, but also allows their claims to enter global governance.

Second, the fundamental guarantee for reviving global confidence lies in the collective modernization of the vast number of countries in the Global South. Take China for example. The Chinese path to modernization is an important representative of the collective modernization of the Global South. China's giant market, strong innovation capabilities and tightly integrated industrial and value chains within the Asia-Pacific region and the world play a pivotal role in curbing the counter-globalization and anti-globalization trends.

The Ministerial Meeting of the G20 Task Force for a Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty in Rio de Janeiro on July 24 reviewed and adopted the inception document "Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty". China put forward three proposals: prioritize development and take concrete measures to help developing countries enhance their sustainable food production capacity; stick to a people-centered approach, promote exchanges and cooperation in poverty reduction, and enrich anti-poverty theory and practice; and uphold true multilateralism and work tirelessly to build a community with a shared future for mankind



ZHANG TING / FOR CHINA DAILY

featuring zero poverty and common development.

In just more than four decades, China has lifted nearly 800 million rural people out of absolute poverty, achieving the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Building upon this foundation, China has not only consolidated its poverty alleviation

achievements but also realized high-quality development in electric vehicles, high-speed railways, and renewable energy.

High-speed railways and electric vehicles, which have long been considered unattainable "luxuries" for developing countries, are becoming popular in the Global South. Take Indonesia's Jakarta-Bandung

High Speed Railway as an example. After completion, it has reduced travel time from over three hours to 46 minutes, with a maximum daily occupancy rate of 99.6 percent.

China's achievements on its path to modernization are a great encouragement to the Global South. As President Xi Jinping said in his keynote address at the opening ceremony of the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, "China and Africa account for one-third of the world population. Without our modernization, there will be no global modernization".

Third, the history of peace and development in the Asia-Pacific region proves that successful regional governance is the fundamental source of confidence for regional countries to actively participate in global governance. The collective rise of emerging and developing countries in the region over the past few decades has been due to the emphasis on development as a priority, with economic growth and livelihood improvement as the top tasks. Behind this is a common understanding that countries strive to maintain regional peace and stability, actively promote regional integration, and oppose regional divisions and bloc confrontation to create a favorable external environment for growth.

A prominent issue in global economic governance today is insufficient market demand. The substantive conclusion of China-ASEAN Free Trade Area 3.0

upgrade negotiations not only means the comprehensive connection of China's market of 1.4 billion people with Association of Southeast Asian Nations' market of 600 million people, but also represents a high-quality upgrade, with digitalization, green development, and urbanization being advanced simultaneously.

Despite the temporary dysfunction of global multilateral organizations such as the United Nations and the WTO, the development of regional governance entities will ultimately help restore confidence in global governance. Most Asian nations refuse to join military alliances and do not participate in economic blockades and embargoes. Dissolving the "iron curtain" of regional division with cooperative regionalism and socioeconomic integration is a successful experience in Asia-Pacific regional governance. Regional countries' confidence in a cooperative rather than confrontational regional order and multilateralism will provide sustained momentum for them to promote the reshaping of the UN and global multilateral mechanisms.

Amid great changes, the confidence in global governance will be continuously revived and strengthened among and by the Global South countries, especially China's march toward modernization and building a community with a shared future for mankind.

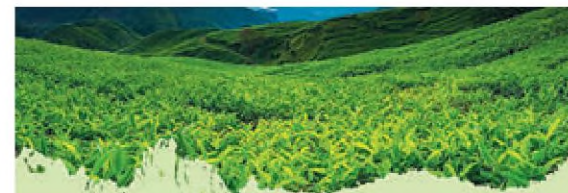
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Editor's note: Amity between the people holds the key to sound state-to-state relations. China Daily will come out with a series of stories highlighting Chinese cities' special connections with sister cities, mutual understanding, trust and friendship between peoples of different countries and cultural backgrounds, and shining light on "city diplomacy".

BEIJING'S SISTER-CITY LINKS GET RIO BOOST

China, Brazil ride on waves of possibilities as they mark 50 years of diplomatic ties



Cultural exchanges enrich heritage

Brazil's vibrant, multicultural heritage is enriched by historical connections with China. In the early 19th century, a group of Chinese tea farmers brought tea seeds and saplings to Brazil, aiming to grow tea and introduce cultivation techniques. The planting site at the time was located within what is now the Rio de Janeiro Botanical Garden, where their efforts became a symbol of China-Brazil friendship, rooted deeply in Brazilian soil.

Today, Rio de Janeiro honors these early Chinese immigrants through lasting tributes. The Vista China in Tijuca National Park, which was built in the early 1900s, is a Chinese-style pagoda-like structure offering breathtaking views of the city and standing as a permanent homage to those first tea farmers.

A plaque unveiled on Aug. 15, 2018, in the Rio Botanical Garden commemorates the bicentennial of Chinese immigration. The plaque reads: "In 1812, the first Chinese immigrants to Brazil planted tea trees here, marking a testament to China-Brazil friendship."

This unveiling was part of the events celebrating Brazil's first Chinese Immigration Day, aligning with the anniversary of China and Brazil establishing diplomatic ties in 1974. Rio de Janeiro's official recognition of this friendship continues through annual observances.

In 2018, the Rio de Janeiro State designated Aug. 8 as China-Rio de Janeiro Friendship Day.

In 2022, the city of Rio established Sept. 28, widely observed as Confucius' birthday, as Mandarin Day, honoring the growing cultural exchange between both countries.

In Rio de Janeiro State, the Spring Festival, or Chinese New Year, is recognized as an official holiday.



Households hail Samba soccer stars

In Brazil, soccer is more than just a game; it's a way of life, a cultural emblem and a quasi-faith. All it takes is a few people, an open space and a simple ball to create a game.

This enthusiasm for the Brazilian team, also known as the Samba Stars, is also shared by Chinese fans. The king of Brazil's legendary players is the late Edson Arantes do Nascimento, better known as Pele, whose expertise led his country to three World Cup titles in 1958, 1962 and 1970, earning him wide admiration throughout China and indeed the world. Another Brazilian favorite among Chinese soccer fans is Kaká, whose skills won him the 2007 Ballon d'Or. Other Brazilian players who are household names in China include Neymar, Ronaldo and Ronaldinho.

Brazil's national team, nicknamed the Seleção, has a large fan base and connects with Chinese soccer fans through an official Weibo account. Renato Augusto, a Brazilian footballer, spent five years with Beijing Guoan and now plays for the Rio's Fluminense Football Club, further strengthening the strong bond between Chinese and Brazilian fans.

CR Flamengo, a popular club in Rio de Janeiro, has a large fan base and connects with Chinese soccer fans through an official Weibo account. Renato Augusto, a Brazilian footballer, spent five years with Beijing Guoan and now plays for the Rio's Fluminense Football Club, further strengthening the strong bond between Chinese and Brazilian fans.

Her favorite poem is *Yang E* (Ode to the Goose), she said, a classical Chinese piece by the Tang Dynasty (618-907) poet Luo Binwang.



Children practice Brazilian jiu-jitsu at the Nova Uniao Beijing gym.

Children practice Brazilian jiu-jitsu at the Nova Uniao Beijing gym. SHAO XINYING / CHINA DAILY

Both cities have hosted the Summer Olympics — Beijing in 2008 and Rio in 2016 — and the Games spirit is embedded in both cities. To celebrate three decades of sisterhood ties, the Rio Olympic emblem was lit at the National Stadium in Beijing on Aug. 4, 2016, the eve of the opening of the 2016 Games.

"The Olympic Games were an opportunity for both cities to showcase their strengths," said Renan Ferreira, secretary of education of Rio de Janeiro, who paid a visit to Beijing earlier this year.

"I think Beijing is where humanity has created some of the most beautiful things on earth, and with Rio nature has gifted us with the most beautiful city in the world."

With some orchestra members now singing in Chinese, "I feel very proud," Melchior said, adding that he has not only expanded their repertoire but also opened new doors for artistic exchange.

Melchior, who is also president of the Riomont Cultural Center, an organization dedicated to spreading Chinese culture in Brazil, said, "I started by introducing Chinese music into the orchestra, allowing members to connect with Chinese language and culture. This exposure deepened our collaboration with Chinese companies and institutions expanded."

Gondim said her experience with the orchestra has been invaluable for her university studies in vocal performance and her path as a music teacher. "I'm grateful for it," she said.

Melchior talked of the impact of the orchestra on young musicians from low-income families. "We have many inspiring stories of musicians whose lives have been transformed," she said. "Many have been accepted into prestigious institutions as musicians, and for those who don't pursue a musical career, the discipline and dedication carry over, leading to professional success in other fields."

These journeys show how music can break down barriers and open new possibilities for the future.



Connections that bind pass through classrooms

Every Monday morning, students at the Rio Chinese International School gather on the school field to sing the national anthems of China and Brazil as well as the school song, watching as flags are raised.

Celine Yang Camargo, a seventh-grade student, said the school's cultural activities set it apart from other schools.

"Here I get to take part in Chinese cultural activities such as making mooncakes during the Mid-Autumn Festival and preparing zongzi (sticky rice treats) for the Dragon Boat Festival. I find them very intriguing," Celine said.

Her favorite poem is *Yang E* (Ode to the Goose), she said, a classical Chinese piece by the Tang Dynasty (618-907) poet Luo Binwang.

named Five-Star Brazil for its five World Cup wins, holds a special place in the hearts of Chinese fans. Zhang Zhang, a Beijing tourist guide, said, "We've always had a deep affection for Five-Star Brazil. To us, they represent more than just passion and skill."

The 1970 Brazil team is often considered to be the greatest soccer team in history.

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ator and artistic director of the Copacabana Fort Orchestra, named after the Copacabana Fort in Rio de Janeiro.

Warmth, hospitality

"Every place we visited, from the Forbidden City to the Great Wall, conveyed a sense of grandeur and tradition that was deeply inspiring. What truly marked this experience was the warmth and hospitality we encountered at each performance and meeting," Melchior said.

The orchestra, made up largely of young musicians from low-income families, was invited to Beijing to perform at a reception event at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Brazil.

They also had a chance to perform with students of Peking University and Beijing Technology and Business University.

Michelly Gondim, one of three singers with the orchestra, said the trip fostered deep friendships and cultural appreciation.

"It's an incredible opportunity to immerse ourselves in a new culture. Everyone is thrilled to be part of it."

Having learned to sing some Chinese songs, such as *Yue Liang Dai Biao Wo De Xin* (The Moon Represents My Heart) and *Wo Ai Ni, Zhong Guo* (I Love You, China), Gondim said she made many Chinese friends during the trip and enjoyed the tour.

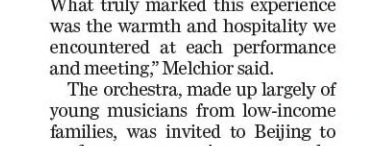
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The Copacabana Fort Orchestra performs at an event marking 50 years of China-Brazil ties in Rio in August. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Technical expertise

"Leveraging CNOOC's technical expertise, we will work closely with Brazilian businesses and society, injecting new vitality into China-Brazil cooperation."

Since CNOOC entered Brazil in 2013, the Beijing-headquartered company has invested nearly \$8 billion in the country, establishing close economic ties with Brazil. After a decade of growth, the company has become the fifth-largest oil producer in Brazil. It has implemented a range of localization initiatives to create growth opportunities and career paths for local employees, Huang said.

"China and Brazil enjoy strong commercial ties, backed by the complementarity of their economies," said Alana Camoca, a professor of political science and international relations at the Rio de Janeiro State University.

One of the key sectors benefiting from growing bilateral collaboration is mining, with Chinese demand for iron ore driving important exports from Brazil. Vale, a multinational corporation headquartered in Rio de Janeiro, has been at the forefront of this trade.

Vale's first iron ore shipment to China was delivered in 1973, "one year before diplomatic relations between Brazil and China were established," said Xie Xue, president of Vale China.

Since 2014, China has accounted for more than half of Vale's iron ore exports, solidifying its role as the company's primary export destination and as a cornerstone of Vale's growth and sustainability efforts, Xie said.

She noted the Sol do Cerrado solar energy park in Brazil's Minas Gerais State as an example of this collaboration, where photovoltaic modules and spare parts supplied by the Chinese solar panel manufacturer JinkoSolar helped Vale achieve total renewable electricity consumption in Brazil in 2023, two years ahead of schedule.

Since 2009, China has been Brazil's largest trading partner and a key source of foreign investment, and Brazil has emerged as China's largest trading partner in Latin America.

Brazil is the guest of honor at the Beijing International Film Festival in April, where four Brazilian films showcasing the country's cultural diversity were featured. The Chinese Film Festival in Brazil opened in Rio on Nov. 4, with nine Chinese films screened.

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"It's like choosing the right game mode based on context, which is challenging and fun," Wang said.

Learning Portuguese allows students to engage with Brazil's society, culture, politics and economy, Ye said.

"Mastering the language helps facilitate effective communication with Brazilians."

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Wang, who has taken part in two exchange programs in Brazil, said: "The bond with Brazil will forever endure."



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Close bonds between China and Brazil, and the passion for Chinese culture are celebrated through events held in Brazil. PHOTOS BY WANG TIANDONG / XINHUA AND PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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Martial arts performers showcase skills at an event celebrating 50 years of China-Brazil ties in Rio in August. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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Signature touch of films mesmerizes audience

By SHAO XINYING and DU JUAN

As fans eagerly lined up for autographs, the Brazilian film director Carlos Saldanha made each moment memorable by adding a personal touch: sketching the beloved parrot from his animated film *Rio* alongside every signature.

On the opening night of the Brazilian Film Week, Saldanha took the stage to stress how the carefully selected Brazilian films offered a unique opportunity for Chinese audiences to explore Brazil at the Beijing International Film Festival.

Brazil was honored as guest of honor for the festival, held in April, as China and Brazil celebrate 50 years of diplomatic ties this year, and Saldanha was invited to serve as a juror for the *Fantasia* award.

"The beauty of cinema lies in its ability to enchant us with visual spectacle and move us with emotional narratives," said Saldanha, who also directed the *Ice Age* series.

"It is an honor to participate in any institution that celebrates this medium, especially those showcasing the beauty of Brazilian films."

The Brazilian Film Week was "an exciting opportunity" to showcase the country's cinematic works, with a diverse selection of films, which drew "enthusiastic response" from Chinese audiences, said Cui Yanyan, executive deputy director of the Beijing International Film Festival organizing committee.

The opening film of the week, *Retratos Fantásticos* (Pictures of Ghosts), instantly captured the imagination, with the theater filled to capacity. The film's co-producer, who was present, expressed his delight at how warmly the audience received the film, Cui said.

Saldanha talked of his love for Beijing, saying: "I always find something new to love in any trip to Beijing, from its intimate layers to its grand landscapes, all blending history and modernity. While there are many differences between Beijing and Rio, they share an energy unique to cities with rich cultural settings: for storytelling."

In the film *Rio*, Saldanha expresses his love for his hometown, infusing vibrant scenes and energetic mode based on context, which is challenging and fun," Wang said.

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Students and parents make zongzi at the school. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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Visitors check posters of Chinese films at a cinema in Rio de Janeiro on Nov. 4. The Chinese Film Festival was held from Nov. 4 to 8 to promote the mutual understanding between Chinese and Brazilian people. WANG TIANDONG / XINHUA

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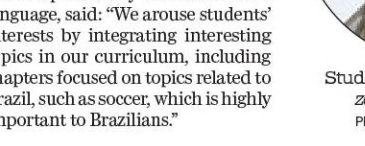
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Signature touch of films mesmerizes audience

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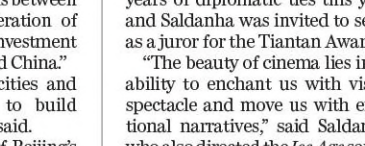
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CHINA

Domestic drilling ship put into service

By ZHAO LEI
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China's first domestically built ocean drilling vessel was commissioned on Sunday in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, marking a major leap in the nation's deep-sea exploration and mining endeavors.

The colossal ship — called *Mengxiang*, or "Dream" — was mainly designed by the Marine Design and Research Institute of China in Shanghai and was constructed by Huangpu Wenchong Shipbuilding Co in Guangzhou.

Both the institute and the shipyard are part of China State Shipbuilding Corp, a State-owned conglomerate and the world's largest shipbuilder.

The ship's construction began in November 2021 and was basically completed in December 2023, when it went on its maiden trial voyage. It underwent several sea trials before the commissioning.

More than 150 companies and institutes participated in the vessel's design and construction work.

With a length of 179.8 meters and a width of 32.8 meters, the ship displaces 42,600 metric tons of water and can travel about 27,800 kilometers in a single voyage and sustain itself for 120 days without needing resupply. During a typical scientific expedition, it can accommodate 180 sailors and researchers.



The *Mengxiang*, or "Dream", China's first domestically designed and built deep-ocean drilling vessel, berths at a port in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, on Sunday. On that day, the drilling ship with a maximum drilling depth capability of 11,000 meters, was officially commissioned in Guangzhou.

LIU DAWEI / XINHUA

It is able to operate in any sea, except those in polar regions, and can navigate against extremely strong winds — up to level 16 on the Beaufort scale.

Thanks to its unique propulsion system design, the vessel is very agile and is even capable of spinning at sea.

When it comes to drilling capacity, the ship is able to drill as far as 11,000 meters beneath the sea into the Earth's crust and into the upper mantle, according to designers.

The mantle, which consists pri-

marily of rock and ice, is generally the largest layer of a planetary body. The Earth's mantle is a layer of silicate rock between the crust and the outer core. It accounts for 67 percent of the Earth's mass and makes up about 84 percent of the planet's volume.

Mengxiang is equipped with the world's most advanced drilling system and has four drilling modes, depending on its specific tasks.

An area of more than 3,000 square meters is reserved on the vessel for nine laboratories involved in basic geology, paleo-

magnetism, organic geochemistry, microbiology, geophysics, drilling technology and other academic disciplines.

The China Geological Survey under the Ministry of Natural Resources will be its primary user.

It is expected to strengthen China's capabilities in deep-sea resource exploration and the development of key technologies and hardware, and will help scientists around the world conduct ocean drills, according to a news release from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

China praised for climate financial aid

Support empowers developing nations in South-South cooperation framework

By HOU LIQIANG
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Experts and officials from both domestic and international spheres have praised China's voluntary financial support to developing nations within the South-South cooperation framework, highlighting it as a testament to the largest developing nation's role as a significant and responsible world power.

Since 2016, China has provided and mobilized more than 177 billion yuan (\$24.5 billion) of financial support to bolster climate initiatives in other developing countries, Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang said while addressing the World Leaders Climate Action Summit on Tuesday during the ongoing COP29 climate change conference in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The United Nations gathering of nearly 200 countries opened on Nov 11 and is slated to conclude on Nov 22.

According to China's Actions for South-South Cooperation on Climate Change report, which was unveiled during an event at the COP29 China Pavilion on Friday, the financial support provided by the nation has facilitated clean and efficient energy use, strengthened adaptation capacity, promoted the coordination of climate change response and environmental protection, and improved the livelihoods in developing countries.

The report, compiled by the BRI International Green Development Coalition, cited the De Aar Wind Power Project in South Africa as an example. It is the largest operational wind power project in South Africa and the first on the African continent to be funded, developed and operated by China.

Since its launch in 2017, the project has delivered 760 million kilowatt-hours of reliable, clean electricity annually.

Meeting the electricity needs of 300,000 households, the output has saved the equivalent of 215,800 metric tons of standard coal and has reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 619,900 tons per year.

Zhang Jianyu, chief development officer of the coalition, said the report's findings were derived from statistics pertaining to specific projects undertaken by the Chinese government and State-owned companies, excluding those from the private sector.

Notably, the statistics do not include China's commitment of 780 billion yuan in new financing for the Belt and Road Initiative in 2023, nor do they include the 360 billion yuan in financial support that the country has pledged to African countries over the next three years.

"It represents an incomplete statistic," he stressed.

Emphasizing the core tenet of common but varied responsibilities within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement, Zhang said the developed nations have an obligation to provide financial resources to support developing countries.

The key task of COP29 is to

establish a New Collective Quantified Goal, which represents a post-2025 climate financing commitment from developed states to developing economies.

Ding's announcement showed the global community that China is a responsible major power in the global climate process, Zhang said.

He said China strictly adheres to the largest developing nation's role as a significant and responsible world power.

"China will shoulder its responsibilities but will not assume those that are not rightfully imposed," Zhang said.

Wang Yi, vice-chair of China's National Expert Panel on Climate Change, said: "In the face of shared challenges posed by climate change, China voluntarily contributes a substantial amount of funding. This voluntary gesture, aligned with respective capacities, stands as evidence of China's significant contributions."

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China's financial support within the South-South cooperation framework is a unilateral decision, independent of negotiations under the UNFCCC, he said.

Nigeria's Minister of Environment Balarabe Abbas Lawal emphasized that developed countries, being the foremost contributors to carbon emissions, possess significant resources and expertise to help address the climate challenges faced by developing nations.

"Developed countries are the biggest emitters. And we in the Third World, or in the developing countries, are the ones that suffer the most in terms of these climate change repercussions," he said.

Lawal said he "strongly" believes that developed countries have a lot to offer, including funds, technology and capacity building, to help developing nations.

But on Friday, COP29 witnessed China, rather than a developed country, reach a memorandum of understanding with Nigeria.

According to their agreement, the two countries will jointly build a low-carbon demonstration zone in the African state.

Noting that China has also signed agreements with many other African nations, the minister said: "China is a country that understands what we are going through because they have gone through it. So they know what it is and they know how it hurts, and they are in a position to lead in that area."

Bridging East and West through Mandarin learning

By ZHAO YIMENG
and PAN YIQIAO

International Chinese language education has become increasingly vital to bridge the information gap and enhance cultural understanding between young people in the East and the West, experts and learners said during the World Chinese Language Conference in Beijing.

Ryan Bernard, president of Saint Mary's School in the United States, said that understanding people's language, history and values is "more important than ever" in today's globalized world.

"It promotes mutual understanding among people from different nations and helps ensure that Americans better understand the world," he said.

The Confucius Classroom at the school, established in 2008 in cooperation with Zhengzhou University in Henan province, was the first of its kind in the United States and is still operating today.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed one of the biggest challenges to cultural exchanges between China and the US, with some programs being postponed, Bernard noted at the event, which began on Friday and ended on Sunday.

"Fortunately, we recognized how debilitating the pandemic would be, so we prepared for online learning in advance of schools actually shutting down in the US," Bernard said.

In June, Bernard and US high school students participated in an exchange program with their Chinese counterparts at Zhengzhou No. 11 High School in Henan province. The foreign students studied Mandarin, stayed in the homes of their Chinese peers and experienced traditional arts and local culture.

"Some of the greatest learning about Chinese language, culture, food and daily lifestyle actually hap-



Visitors attend an exhibition during the World Chinese Language Conference at the China National Convention Center in Beijing on Friday. ZHANG WEI / CHINA DAILY

Chinese has unknowingly become the language we commonly use and are proud of mastering."

Simsek Sehra, international graduate student at Central China Normal University

pens in those Chinese homes," he said.

Meanwhile, Chinese language education in the United Kingdom has emerged as a key avenue for fostering cultural understanding and bridging the gap between China and Britain, said Katharine Carruthers, director of the Confucius Institute at University College London.

The institute has provided a model for how educational programs can build lasting people-to-people connections while cultivating linguistic and cultural competencies, she said.

The Mandarin Excellence Pro-

gram is a notable example of the UK's localization of Chinese language education. This summer, about 1,200 British secondary school students traveled to China for an 11-day visit as part of the program's intensive study course.

"That is the real people-to-people connection at the school level. They make those connections and find out what they're both interested in," Carruthers said, highlighting the transformative power of such exchanges.

"Chinese language is never taught alone; it always comes with culture," said Vicente Andreu, whose Chinese name is An Wenlong, director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Valencia in Spain.

Through a wide range of activities such as Chinese New Year celebrations, the institute creates opportunities for Valencians to experience the richness of Chinese traditions.

One of the innovative activities is an annual children's drawing competition, launched eight years ago. The competition revolves around a story linking Valencia and Xi'an, two key cities on the ancient Silk Road, emphasizing historical connections between

China and Spain.

Beyond cultural festivities, the institute actively promotes collaboration between Valencia and its Chinese sister cities, including Chengdu in Sichuan province, Xi'an in Shaanxi province and Guangzhou in Guangdong province.

"These sister-city partnerships have been instrumental in connecting Chinese and Valencian enterprises," Andreu said.

Italian student Iacopo Germole said he learned that there are some misconceptions about China after he traveled to the country to study Mandarin.

"Language learning is not just an academic journey, but also a bridge connecting young people in China and other countries," said Germole, who was awarded the global champion of the 12th Chinese Bridge for foreign secondary school students.

"In an era prone to prejudice, learning a foreign language, especially one as rich and profound as Chinese, empowers us to appreciate our shared humanity," he said.

Simsek Sehra, a 24-year-old graduate student at Central China Normal University in Hubei province, used to study at the Confucius Institute in her home country in Turkey and now speaks fluent Chinese.

Sehra said grasping the Chinese language has helped her gain a more comprehensive understanding of the world.

"As more and more people came to China and started to learn Chinese, the voice of China, rather than only those from the West, has been widely heard," she said.

Furthermore, Chinese language has brought people from all over the world closer as it has gradually become a global language.

"Chinese has unknowingly become the language we commonly use and are proud of mastering," Sehra said.

Contact the writers at zhaoyimeng@chinadaily.com.cn

Tianzhou 7 cargo spacecraft leaves; successor docks at Tiangong

By ZHAO LEI
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China's Tianzhou 7 cargo spacecraft burned up as it reentered Earth's atmosphere as planned on Sunday night, according to the China Manned Space Agency.

The agency said in a news release that under the ground controller's guidance, the robotic craft

reentered Earth's atmosphere at 9:25 pm. After that, most of the spaceship burned up, and a small amount of debris fell into secure sea areas.

Tianzhou 7 detached from the Tiangong space station on Nov 10 and then started a weeklong solo flight before beginning the process of atmospheric reentry.

During its solo flight, the craft

fulfilled its final task — releasing a small educational satellite into its preset orbit.

The cargo vessel was launched in January from the Wenchang Space Launch Center in Hainan province.

Its successor, Tianzhou 8, was launched on Friday night from the Wenchang spaceport, making it the last spacecraft to visit the Tiangong station this year.

After flying for three hours, the spacecraft docked with the space station's Tianhe core module.

As the 15th spacecraft to dock with Tiangong, Tianzhou 8 is tasked with resupplying propellants to the Chinese space station and delivering living and work necessities for the Shenzhou XIX astronauts, who arrived at the massive orbital outpost on Oct 30.

The materials inside the cargo vessel are sufficient to support a three-member crew for nine months, according to its designers at the China Academy of Space Technology.

Scientific mission planners from the Chinese Academy of Sciences said they placed more than 80 packages with a combined weight of 458 kilograms inside

Tianzhou 8, and the materials from the packages will be used to conduct 36 experiments onboard Tiangong.

Astronauts from the Shenzhou XIX mission began sorting and opening the packages inside the cargo ship on Saturday.

Orbiting Earth at about 400 kilometers above the ground, Tiangong has three permanent parts — a core module and two science capsules — and is regularly connected to several visiting crew and cargo spaceships.

COMMENT

Editorials

Seven pillars of wisdom to uphold right way for China and US to get along well

In his meeting with US President Joe Biden in Lima, Peru, on Saturday, Chinese President Xi Jinping talked at length about the current state of China-US relations, which serves as both a succinct summary of their ties over the past four years and an important guidance for the future trajectory of bilateral interaction.

The meeting, held on the sidelines of the 31st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, is the third between the two presidents and follows their telephone call on April 2, 2024. With China-US ties at a pivotal moment and the world mired in conflicts and challenges, it is only natural that their exchange should draw international attention.

Summarizing the lessons of the past four years, Xi condensed them into seven pillars of wisdom to support healthy bilateral relations, namely the importance of having the correct strategic perception of the folly of a new Cold War; of matching words with deeds; of engaging with each other on an equal footing; of not challenging redlines and paramount principles; of increasing dialogue and cooperation; of building bridges to bring the two peoples closer together; and of the two countries shouldering their international responsibilities by carrying out constructive interactions.

Xi stressed that the overall trajectory of China-US relations over the past 45 years proved the validity of these experiences and inspirations, pointing out that although China-US relations have gone through ups and downs over the past four years, the relationship has remained stable on the whole and the two sides have engaged in dialogue and cooperation via more than 20 communication mechanisms that under head-of-state diplomacy's guidance have made positive achievements in such areas as technology, security, economy, trade, fiscal affairs, finance, military, counternarcotics, law enforcement, agriculture, climate change and people-to-people exchanges.

He also made it unequivocally clear that China desires amicable and cooperative relations, rather than a confrontational competitive relationship.

Leaving no room for misinterpretation, Xi said that China's goal of a stable, healthy and sustainable China-US relationship remains unchanged; its commitment to mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation as principles for handling China-US relations remains unchanged; its position of resolutely safeguarding its sovereignty, security and development interests remains unchanged; and its desire to carry forward the traditional friendship between the Chinese and American peoples remains unchanged.

Looking forward, it is to be hoped that the new US administration will engage in dialogue with China to expand cooperation and manage differences so as to sustain the hard-won momentum toward stability in the two countries' relations. It should not overstretch the national security concept, still less use it as a pretext for malicious moves to constrain the Chinese people's right to development and not foul the nest for the US and others by speculating on China's territory, sovereignty and maritime rights and interests.

Washington should know what are the most important guardrails and safety nets for bilateral ties as Beijing will remain firm and resolute in safeguarding China's territorial integrity and development interests and it will not sit idly by should its strategic security and core interests be under threat.

It is normal for countries to have some differences, and even disputes between them. To properly handle the differences and disputes between the US and China requires the leaders of the two countries to demonstrate skillful stewardship, recognizing that when the two countries treat each other as partners and seek common ground, their relationship makes considerable progress, producing dividends for both countries and the world at large. But on the contrary, if they regard each other as rivals and pursue vicious competition, they will roil the relationship or even set it back to the detriment of both countries and the world.

Beijing and Washington should therefore keep exploring the right way for the two countries to get along well with each other, for the good of themselves and the world at large.

Framework for openness and cooperation

For too long, the leaders of major economies have not spoken with one voice in support of free trade and climate actions. The 31st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Lima, Peru, has changed that.

As shown by the Lima meetings' outcome documents — a statement of the APEC leaders, the "Lima Roadmap to Promote the Transition to the Formal and Global Economies (2025-40)", and the "Ichma Statement on a New Look at the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific Agenda" — the leaders have taken advantage of the invaluable opportunities for face-to-face talks to focus on issues of common interest under the theme of "Empower, Include, Grow".

Among the multiple important bilateral meetings held on the sidelines of the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting on Saturday were those between President Xi Jinping and the leaders of the United States, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Thailand, Chile and Singapore respectively. In the meetings, the leaders not only unanimously acknowledged China's important role as a world growth engine and a key player in the Asia-Pacific and beyond, but also expressed their common wish to maintain the development of their economic and trade ties with China on a healthy track believing it serves the common interests of the region and the world.

The series of consensus and common understandings these meetings have yielded, including those on the necessity and urgency of resolving disputes through negotiations and talks, are conducive to reinforcing regional efforts to foster inclusive economic globalization and steer it in the right direction for the benefit of all. As Xi said in a written speech addressing the APEC CEO Summit, the Asia-Pacific region is deeply woven into the fabric of economic globalization, and is now an interdependent community with common interests. Backpedaling on globalization, under whatever pretext, makes regional development an uphill struggle.

Encouragingly, the Lima APEC gatherings have given a firm and resolute answer to the question on where the Asia-Pacific will head at this crossroad of history.

As agreed by all the APEC economic leaders, all economies in the region should pool their efforts to see to it that economic globalization generates more positive outcomes and is taken to a new phase that is more dynamic, inclusive and sustainable. To that end, they should take innovation as the driving force for stronger, inclusive and balanced growth of the regional and world economy, including the less-developed economies.

To make that happen, they need to reform the system of global economic governance, following the principles of "plan together, build together and benefit together", as Xi advocated, to make sure the representation and voice of the Global South are effectively and continuously enhanced.

President Xi correctly pointed out that global prosperity and stability cannot be achieved when the rich get richer and the poor poorer, noting true development means the common development of all countries. All countries should be entitled to equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules in conducting international economic cooperation in the process of building an open world economic system. That's why he urged the Asia-Pacific economies to pursue economic globalization that is people-centered and delivers more balanced development and more equal opportunities.

A major reason why the Asia-Pacific has maintained robust growth and created its remarkable development miracle is that the regional economies share a commitment to peace and stability and have acted accordingly.

The Asia-Pacific should remain the locomotive of economic globalization in the future. While further burnishing its hallmark openness and inclusiveness, the region should make new efforts to foster a green and digital Asia-Pacific, build an Asia-Pacific community with a shared future, and usher in another 30 golden years of development for the region.

Song Chen



Opinion Line

Effective incremental policy support strengthens positive trend of recovery

On Friday, the National Bureau of Statistics released data showing that major economic indicators such as consumption, services, and imports and exports have all significantly rebounded, consolidating the positive trend of economic stabilization and recovery since September.

First, the momentum of market sales recovery is evident. Influenced by the consumer subsidy policy for trade-ins, the retail sales of household appliances, automobiles, furniture, and office supplies in units above a designated size in October have seen a quicker year-on-year growth compared to September, driving the total retail sales of consumer goods to increase by 1.2 percentage points to 4.54 trillion yuan (\$627.9 billion).

Second, investment growth has also become more pronounced. Driven by large-scale equipment updates, investment in equipment and tools purchases from January to October increased by 16.1 percent year-on-year, contributing to a 2.1 percentage point increase in total investment, with a contribution

rate of over 60 percent.

Encouraged by the accelerated implementation of existing policies and the introduction of a new package of policies, the stock and real estate markets both saw more active transactions in October, with the transaction volume and amount in the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock markets both having grown about 1.5 times year-on-year. In the real estate market, new home sales improved, and secondhand housing transactions significantly increased, enhancing market activity.

The significant rebound in current main economic indicators is largely due to the driving effect of economic policies. After the introduction of a series of regulatory measures, the domestic real estate market has shown signs of stabilization. In October, among 70 major and medium-sized cities, the number of cities where the sales prices of new commercial residential buildings rose month-on-month increased by four compared to the previous month. The drag on eco-

nomical growth from real estate will gradually diminish.

Second, the year-on-year growth rate of narrow infrastructure investment in October rose from 2.2 percent to 5.8 percent, indicating that local infrastructure investment has begun to recover. In addition, the recovery of the service industry is apparent, with the service industry production index in October growing by 6.3 percent year-on-year, accelerating by 1.2 percentage points from the previous month.

China must focus on expanding domestic demand to stabilize economic operations, promote structural adjustments, and achieve the transition from old to new drivers of growth. In this process, maintaining stable economic operation is the premise and foundation of all policy goals. Therefore, the market should have confidence that China will take various scientific and reasonable measures to promote the steady and positive progress of the national economy.

—21ST CENTURY BUSINESS HERALD

Innovative digital scenarios spur consumption

In a freshly released blue book on how the internet empowers digital consumption, the China Internet Network Information Center shows that the scale of online shopping users nationwide has exceeded 900 million. As of June 2024, the number of internet users in China was nearly 1.1 billion, with an internet access rate of 78 percent. The development of digital consumption continues to contribute to expanding domestic demand and promotes sustained consumption.

The development of digital consumption relies not only on the continuous progress of information

technology but also on the ongoing innovation of consumption scenarios. One important reason for the popularity of livestreaming e-commerce and short video e-commerce, for example, is their focus on changes in consumer behavior, constantly adapting to new consumption scenarios, thereby powerfully driving potential consumption toward actual consumption.

For this reason, the market should play a leading role in innovating consumption scenarios. By utilizing market mechanisms to continuously interact between supply and demand, new consumption scenarios will keep emerging.

That's why promoting innovation in consumption scenarios primarily depends on market forces. Therefore, with the support of the government, enterprises should boldly explore applications in consumption scenarios around the intelligent needs of digital consumption, and strengthen communication and interaction between the supply and demand sides.

Effective government policies and efficient market dynamics working together to continuously innovate consumption scenarios can provide consumers with better shopping experiences.

—ECONOMIC DAILY

What They Say

From nothing to something to something big

On Thursday, an event marking the 10 millionth new energy vehicle produced in China for the year 2024 was held in Wuhan, Central China's Hubei province. It also marked the first time that China's annual production of new energy vehicles has exceeded 10 million units.

The continuous surge in new energy vehicle production is a result of the fast-growing domestic automotive industry, underpinned by a systemic upgrading of infrastructure and the supply chain network, and research into consumer behavior.

For instance, China has built the world's largest charging infrastructure network, with over 10 million charging facilities. It has also established a complete and competitive new energy vehicle industry chain, successfully connecting key links such as raw materials, components, systems integration, and manufacturing equipment. Simultaneously, the industry

and value chains of new energy vehicles are continuously expanding into the transportation, energy, information and communication sectors, driving the research and industrialization of technologies such as next-generation power batteries, intelligent driving technologies, and collaboratively promoting the low-carbon development of energy supply, material provision and manufacturing processes.

However, it's also important to recognize that the Chinese new energy vehicle industry faces challenges in achieving greater breakthroughs, especially in establishing a larger competitive advantage in the global market.

From a market perspective, an important indicator measuring a country's comprehensive strength in the automotive industry is its recognition in the global market. Despite the accelerated pace of "going global" by Chinese new energy vehicle makers in recent years, the total volume in overseas markets still needs to be

increased. According to data from the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers, in the first 10 months of this year, domestic sales of new energy vehicles were 8.69 million units, more than eight times the volume of new energy vehicle exports during the same period. This means that currently, Chinese new energy vehicle sales are still primarily domestic, with a low proportion of exports.

The automotive industry is highly competitive on a global scale. Currently affected by intensified global competition and increased geopolitical frictions among other external factors, whether continuing to expand into global markets or enhancing supply chain resilience, China's new energy vehicle industry will face challenges and pressure. This is an objective problem that must be acknowledged, calling for a clear understanding and proactive preparation for potential challenges in the future.

—BEIJING NEWS

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BUSINESS

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China pivotal to MNCs' global biz strategy

Manufacturing top in attracting foreign investment into country

By ZHONG NAN in Shanghai
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Three or four decades ago, multinational corporations used to take a simple approach while conducting their businesses in China.

They would bring in products that had already succeeded internationally and instruct local factories to produce them for Chinese consumers.

This strategy, backed by the scale and profitability of the Chinese market, proved effective.

As a result, they could gradually expand their presence by establishing additional plants, branches and regional offices within China to maintain a competitive edge.

However, this model no longer fits today's complex business landscape.

A large number of global companies have leaned heavily on the China International Import Expo platform, held annually in Shanghai for seven years now, to showcase their latest products, solutions and services, as well as build connections with new clients in China as well as other countries.

Numerous products and technological solutions making their debuts at the CIIE were developed in their research and development centers in China, showing a clear trend in their investment focus within the country in recent years.

The seventh edition of the CIIE, which was held from Nov 5 to 10, covered an area of over 420,000 square meters and attracted 3,496 exhibitors from 129 countries and regions.

Up to 297 Fortune 500 companies and industry leaders were present at this year's expo, a record high, according to information released by the Ministry of Commerce.

A total of 186 companies and institutions, including French industrial conglomerate Schneider Electric, Swiss food and beverage giant Nestle SA and United States material-science group Dow Inc, have taken part in the CIIE during all seven years.

Highlighting that this grand event has established itself as a premier venue for global product debuts for seven years, Arnold Li, senior vice-president of Ingersoll Rand Inc, a US industrial goods manufacturer and seven-time participant at the CIIE, said the expo has become a key platform for Ingersoll Rand to launch new products.

The company, in fact, held the world premiere of its latest compressor during the expo.

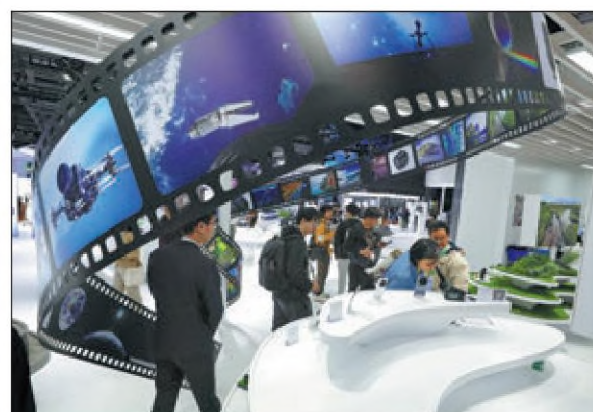
"The Chinese market holds a pivotal position in our global business strategy. As the second-largest economy in the world, China offers immense potential and innovative capabilities, presenting us with numerous opportunities for growth," said Li.

"We firmly believe that the Chinese market is not only a key driver of our current business expansion, but also a core focus of our future strategic layout," he said.

Sectors including healthcare, biotechnology, new energy and automation will be the group's next



Visitors check large aircraft parts from Swedish technology group Hexagon AB at its booth during the seventh China International Import Expo in Shanghai on Nov 5. TANG KE / FOR CHINA DAILY



Visitors experience lens products from German optical systems company ZEISS Group at its booth during the seventh CIIE in Shanghai on Nov 9. FANG ZHE / XINHUA



People walk past the booth of French industrial conglomerate Schneider Electric during the seventh CIIE in Shanghai on Nov 9. WANG XIANG / XINHUA

growth points in China, he added.

Up to 450 new products, technologies and service items made their debuts at this year's CIIE, up from 442 in 2023, said the Ministry of Commerce.

Market watchers and foreign business leaders view this as a strong testament of global companies' confidence in the Chinese market and their commitment to further expansion in the country, despite a sluggish global economic recovery.

Amid the current headwinds to economic globalization, China remains steadfast in advancing reform and opening-up, optimizing the business environment, and continuously working to enhance market transparency, efficiency and market rules.

The government has introduced a series of policies to attract foreign investment, said Derek Ji, managing partner for China at Belgium-based ADL Consulting.

For instance, the latest edition of China's national negative list for foreign investment, which took effect on Nov 1, has removed the last two manufacturing-related restrictions, further opening the sector to global investors, according to the National Development and Reform Commission.

"As China's manufacturing sector undergoes transformation and upgrading, high-end manufacturing has become a key area for attracting foreign investment," Ji said.

Strategic industries in the manufacturing sector, such as electric vehicles, new materials, intelligent manufacturing, industrial robots, biomedicine and high-performance medical devices, aerospace and high-end equipment manufacturing, offer opportunities for foreign companies to achieve growth through technological cooperation and investment, he added.

Apart from showcasing the latest

products and technology solutions at its 600-square-meter booth, Swedish technology group and seven-time CIIE participant Hexagon AB said it plans to deliver more tailored solutions for rapidly expanding sectors such as electric vehicles and commercial aviation to support China's rising demand for high-end manufacturing.

"Collaborating with local partners and startups has been a key part of this strategy, helping us to remain agile and address China's industry needs directly," said Josh Weiss, president of Hexagon's manufacturing intelligence division.

After establishing empowerment centers in Shanghai and Qingdao, Shandong province, as well as other regions within the country in recent years, the Stockholm-headquartered group is currently building its South China headquarters in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, at an investment of more than 200 million euros (\$212.4 million). The

facility will be operational by the end of next year.

This will create an "Industry 4.0" demonstration model, including a global "lighthouse factory" and the core resource ecosystem for the entire industrial chain. It will also offer solutions support for clients in Southeast Asia and other Asian countries, said Weiss.

Driven by its institutional opening-up, market size, robust infrastructure, growing innovation strength and talent pool, as well as its status as a "world factory", China's foreign direct investment, in actual use, reached \$163.3 billion in 2023, an increase of 176 times compared to \$920 million in 1983, data from the Ministry of Commerce showed.

Foreign executives at the CIIE often express "long-term confidence in China", grounded in the country's stable economic fundamentals and the consistent trajectory of steady growth in the world's second-largest economy, said Liu Tao, a researcher

specializing in market economy studies at the State Council's Development Research Center.

Despite a high benchmark set in the previous year, China's economy posted a year-on-year growth rate of 4.8 percent in the first three quarters, surpassing that of many other major global economies, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

By Nov 10, companies had already signed up for over 100,000 square meters of exhibition area for the eighth CIIE to be held in November next year, said the CIIE Bureau, one of the expo's organizers.

Reflecting this enthusiasm, Treasury Wine Estates, Australia's largest winemaker by sales revenue and the parent company of Australian wine brand Penfolds, believes that the CIIE is a well-developed business platform for China to open up global cooperation and promote a shared prosperous market.

Penfolds' booth showcased wines from countries including Australia, the United States, France and China for the fifth time during the seventh CIIE in Shanghai.

"This is an exciting time for TWE and the Penfolds business, with China remaining a highly attractive long-term growth opportunity," said Tom King, managing director for Penfolds.

King said that re-establishing the group's Australian portfolio in China this year has seen a fairly positive response from consumers to date, reflecting the ongoing strength of Penfolds' brand in the market.

"We will invest further to support our growth ambitions in China, including expanding our local team and developing business on digital sales platforms, while continuing to strengthen our commitment to the Chinese market, its consumers and the local industry," he added.

To meet surging domestic demand for various agricultural products, the Basel, Switzerland-headquartered Syngenta Group signed import agreements with a number of companies such as Louis Dreyfus Company, the Netherlands-based processor and merchant of agricultural goods, and Jiusan Grain and Oil Industry Group Co Ltd in Harbin, Heilongjiang province, for a total contract value of \$1.5 billion during the seventh CIIE.

The agreements cover key agricultural exporting countries, including Brazil and Argentina, with a wide range of products such as feed grains, coffee, edible oil and oilseeds.

"Future agriculture must not only sustain a growing population, but also actively and effectively protect the environment. Achieving an efficient and green transformation is only possible through accelerated innovation in agricultural technology," said Su Fu, president of Syngenta Group China.

As a company deeply rooted in China's agricultural sector, Syngenta will focus on the vast market and significant opportunities arising from China's push toward agricultural modernization, said Su.

The export and import value of foreign-invested companies reached 10.61 trillion yuan (\$1.47 trillion) between January and October in China, marking a 1.3 percent year-on-year increase and comprising 29.5 percent of the nation's total foreign trade value, according to statistics released by the General Administration of Customs.

CIIE showcases nation's enormous market potential

REPORTER'S LOG

By Zhong Nan

Anyone wanting to get a better idea of an influential expo that showcases China's high-level opening-up and vast market potential — offering tremendous opportunities for global participants — should visit the China International Import Expo in Shanghai in early November.

Since its inception in 2018, the CIIE has seen remarkable success over the past seven years, marked by growing attendance and steady

increasing turnover each year. It has become a symbol of China's new development model, a premier platform for high-level openness and a valuable global service.

When the six-day exhibition closed on Nov 10, the value of tentative deals reached at the seventh CIIE had risen 2 percent year-on-year to exceed \$80 billion, according to data released by the CIIE Bureau, one of the expo's organizers.

Many foreign business executives told me that amid unprecedented global changes and a sluggish economic recovery, they view the CIIE as a key that unlocks the door to China's vast market. The tremendous market opportunities attract numerous multinational

corporations to deepen their presence in China.

They said that while many of them showcased their most advanced technologies at this year's CIIE, the innovations may still be years away from practical application. These early demonstrations indicate that those companies are actively seeking potential partners in China.

Yann Bozec, president for Asia-Pacific at Tapestry Inc, the United States-based luxury goods company, said that the CIIE offers companies the chance to engage and connect with numerous clients, government representatives, media, peers and business partners, while also receiving real-time market feedback on product innova-

tions showcased at their exhibits.

Echoing similar views, Roy Jacobs, CEO of Royal Philips, a Dutch multinational industrial conglomerate, emphasized that healthcare is a key focus for the group in China. "To closely align with medical practices, we need proximity to hospitals, technology innovation companies and government agencies. All of them are represented at the CIIE," he noted.

Apparently, the vast opportunities and growth potential of the Chinese market remain difficult for multinational companies to ignore. As they have been adjusting their investment strategies, the structure of foreign investment in China is continuously optimized.

To seek new growth points and

sustain their growth in China, many foreign companies are actively aligning with domestic industrial upgrading trends.

For example, they have gradually closed or relocated production lines for products such as computers and home appliances in China, while increasing production lines for high-tech products like industrial robots, new materials and new energy batteries, as well as expanding their investment in research and development centers.

To create more opportunities for global businesses, the seventh CIIE established a new materials zone within the technical equipment hall to foster international exchange and innovation in the field of new materials.

The automobile section brought together exhibitors specializing in autonomous driving, low-altitude economy and new energy storage,

showcasing the key elements of future mobility. Among these were a series of debut exhibits representing the development of new quality productive forces, covering a wide range of cutting-edge technology areas, including high-end equipment and new materials.

New quality productive forces refer to advanced productivity freed from traditional economic growth modes and productivity development paths. It features high technology, high efficiency and high quality, and is in line with the new development philosophy.

To continue to upgrade and improve its business environment, the Chinese government has fully lifted restrictions on foreign investment in the manufacturing sector, ensuring equal treatment for foreign companies in resource access, licensing, standards and government procurement.

WORLD

Consumers to bear brunt of US tariffs

Retailers concerned over prospects of Trump's levy plans, observers say

By BELINDA ROBINSON
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US retailers are creating contingency plans to deal with the prospect of President-elect Donald Trump's proposed tariffs as he heads back to the White House.

Trump floated levies of 60 percent on imported goods from China and 20 percent on all imported goods into the United States while he was a presidential candidate. He may also enact a 100 percent tariff on nations that don't use the US dollar and slap high tariffs on cars built in Mexico.

"Tariffs are the greatest thing ever invented," Trump said in September in Flint, Michigan.

Tariffs, which work as a sales tax on products produced outside of the boundaries of the countries that import those goods, could impact most US industries, observers say.

Under Trump's plan, US citizens could lose between \$46 billion and \$78 billion in spending power per year on products like clothing, toys, furniture, appliances and travel goods, the National Retail Federation said. A \$50 pair of sneakers could cost \$59 to \$64 under the levy.

Trump said China will pay for the tariffs, not US businesses or consumers. But companies that face the duties are busy deciding whether they will have to source products from outside of China or raise their prices. One company says it will do the latter.

"If we get tariffs, we will pass those tariff costs back to the consumer," Philip Daniele, CEO of AutoZone, an auto parts chain, said on a September earnings call.

"We'll generally raise prices ahead of we know what the tariffs will be; we generally raise prices ahead of that," Daniele said.

Tiffany Smith, vice-president of global trade policy for the National Foreign Trade Council in Washington, DC, told China Daily: "New and expanded tariffs will harm working families."

The new duties also could mean "a household with median income is projected to pay \$1,700 more each year in import taxes," Mary Lovely, professor emerita of economics at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs of Syracuse University and a senior fellow of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, told China Daily.

Trump said his policy will move manufacturing back to the US, creating more jobs, but not all companies say they can afford US facilities.

It is "unlikely that we're moving a lot back to the US because it's just not cost-effective to do," Donald Allan Jr, president and CEO of Stanley Black & Decker, said on a recent earnings call.

In the spring, the toolmaker, with revenue of \$16 billion, forged a plan to deal with any levy, admitting that any "price increases associated with tariffs (would be) put into the market".

Zichun Huang, a China economist at Capital Economics, a business research group, wrote in a recent note: "Trump's return could create a short-term boost to Chinese exports as US importers increase their purchases to get ahead of the tariffs."

China-based e-commerce companies and others accounted for 20 percent of net new warehouse leasing across the US in 2024, according to Prologis, the world's largest industrial real estate operator.

In Trump's first term in office, he imposed tariffs on more than \$300 billion of Chinese-made goods, and the US was hit with retaliatory tariffs.

President Joe Biden maintained those original tariffs and increased levies on \$18 billion of Chinese imports in September.

Inflationary pressure

Steve Lamar, CEO of the American Apparel & Footwear Association, said in a statement: "Tariff policy under the new administration will indeed be a challenge and will trigger new inflationary cycles if campaign proposals are fully enacted, making it more expensive for Americans to get dressed every day."

Trump's advisers recently met with Republican Jason Smith, chair of the US House Ways and Means Committee, to discuss how a tax package could be partially paid for by tariffs, according to Politico.

In the early days of the US, tariffs were widely used to raise revenue for the government. However, since the 1950s, tariffs have accounted for 2 percent of total federal revenue, according to the Congressional Revenue Service.

"As trade barriers, (tariffs) can also cause domestic industries to become less competitive and lead other countries to retaliate," Thomas Fullerton, a US economist and economics professor at the University of Texas at El Paso, told China Daily. "When that happened during the 1930s, it caused the Great Depression to deepen and become more protracted."

As tariffs remain an issue among businesses, Trump on Saturday selected Chris Wright, the CEO of an oilfield services company, as his pick for the next secretary of the Energy Department.

Wright is the CEO of Liberty Energy, a Denver-based company that provides hydraulic fracturing services to the oil and gas industry.

On Friday, Trump named Karoline Leavitt, his campaign press secretary, to serve as his White House press secretary.

Leavitt, 27, currently a spokesperson for Trump's transition, would be the youngest White House press secretary in history. Previously that distinction went to Ronald Ziegler, who was 29 when he took the position in 1969 in Richard Nixon's administration.

Agencies and Xinhua contributed to this story.



Firefighters douse the flames at the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted the center of the southern Lebanese city of Nabatieh on Saturday amid the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. ABBAS FAKIH / AFP

Gaza, Lebanon hit in deadly assaults

GAZA/BEIRUT — Strikes by the Israeli military killed dozens in Gaza on Sunday, the civil defense said, while also hitting a Hezbollah stronghold near Beirut's international airport.

Israel has been fighting on two fronts since September, intensifying attacks on Lebanon's Hezbollah after the cross-border clashes with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

A Lebanese security source said Hezbollah spokesman Mohammed Afif was killed in a strike on Beirut's Ras al-Nabaa district, Agence France-Presse reported. Israel's military declined to comment.

Following Hamas' Oct 7 attacks last year, which resulted in the deaths of about 1,200 people in Israel and led to about 250 hostages being taken, Israel has launched large-scale offensives against Hamas in Gaza.

In the latest violence in the besieged Palestinian territory, the civil defense agency said Israeli air raids killed at least 46 people.

The deadliest strike, in the middle of the night in Beit Lahia in the north, killed 26 people, and left at least 59 others buried under the rubble, said civil defense spokesman Mahmud Bassal.

Hamas-run Gaza's health ministry on Sunday said the overall death toll in more than 13 months of conflict had reached 43,846.

On Israel's second front in the north, AFP TV footage showed several strikes hit Hezbollah's south Beirut stronghold, shortly after the Israeli military warned people to evacuate.

Columns of smoke were seen rising over the capital's southern suburbs, where Lebanon's only international airport is located.

Further south, overnight Israeli airstrikes and shelling hit the flash-point town of Khiam, the Lebanese state-run National News Agency reported.

Following the bombardment, the Israeli army said about 20 projectiles were seen crossing from Lebanon into Israel, and that some of them were intercepted. Emergency services did not immediately report casualties.

Israel has escalated its bombing of Lebanon since Sept 23 and has since sent in ground troops, following almost a year of limited, cross-border exchanges of fire begun by Hezbollah militants in support of Hamas in Gaza.

Israeli forces also shelled the southern area of Lebanon along the Litani River, the NNA said on Sunday.

The news agency had earlier reported strikes on the southern city of Tyre, including in a neighborhood near UNESCO-listed ancient ruins. Israel's military said late on Saturday it had hit Hezbollah sites in the area. In Lebanon's east, the health ministry

said an Israeli strike in the Bekaa Valley killed six people including three children.

Hezbollah said it fired a guided missile that set an Israeli tank ablaze in the southwestern Lebanese village of Chamaa.

Lebanese authorities say more than 3,452 people have been killed since October last year, with most casualties recorded since September.

Israel announced the death of a soldier in southern Lebanon, bringing to 48 the number killed fighting Hezbollah.

A UN-backed assessment on Nov 9 warned famine was imminent in northern Gaza, amid the increased hostilities and a near-halt in food aid.

In Israel, police said they arrested three suspects after flares were fired near the home of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the central city of Caesarea, south of Haifa, while he was away.

Demonstrators in Tel Aviv on Saturday reiterated demands that the government reach a deal to free dozens of hostages still held in Gaza.

The protest came a week after mediator Qatar suspended its role until Hamas and Israel show "seriousness" in truce and hostage-release talks.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

Briefly

PHILIPPINES Thousands displaced as typhoon batters

A powerful typhoon wrecked houses, caused towering tidal surges and forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee to emergency shelters as it cut across the northern Philippines on Sunday in the sixth major storm to hit the country in less than a month. Typhoon Man-yi slammed into the eastern island province of Catanduanes on Saturday night. There were no immediate reports of casualties from the typhoon, which was forecast to blow northwestward on Sunday across northern Luzon.

INDIA

Fire in hospital kills 10 newborns

A fire tore through a neonatal intensive care unit in a hospital in northern India, killing 10 newborn babies and injuring 16 others, The Associated Press reported on Saturday, citing authorities. The fire occurred late on Friday at a hospital in Jhansi city in India's Uttar Pradesh state. Officials said the blaze spread quickly through the ward, where 55 infants were being treated. An initial investigation points to lapses in safety protocols, including expired fire extinguishers and nonfunctional fire alarms, which officials say delayed rescue efforts.

FRANCE

Dinosaur skeleton fetches \$6.4m

The skeleton of a 22-meter-long dinosaur fetched six million euros (\$6.4 million) on Saturday, Agence France-Presse reported, citing auction houses Collin du Bocage and Barbarossa. An anonymous collector snapped up the vegetarian apatosaurus, which was dug up in the United States, for 4.7 million euros rising to 6 million, including costs. The buyer pledged to allow it to be displayed in a museum. The skeleton of the giant herbivore is made up of 75 to 80 percent of the original bones and is roughly 150 million years old.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

Russia pounds Ukraine's power grid in massive strike

KYIV/MOSCOW — Russia unleashed a massive airstrike on Ukraine on Sunday, firing 120 missiles and 90 drones in a sweeping attack that caused "severe damage" to the power system, officials said.

Ukrainians have been bracing for weeks for an attack on the hobbled energy system, fearing crippling damage that would cause long blackouts as winter sets in.

"Russia launched one of the largest air attacks: drones and missiles" against cities and critical infrastructure, Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andrii Sybha wrote on X.

Air defenses could be heard engaging drones over the capital in the night, and a series of powerful blasts rang out across the city center

as the missile attack was underway in the morning, Reuters reported.

Kyiv's air force said the military had destroyed 104 out of 120 missiles fired and 42 out of 90 drones launched by Russia.

Russia's defense ministry said it had launched a massive strike on energy facilities that supply Ukraine's military-industrial complex.

"Severe damage to Ukraine's energy system, including to DTEK power stations. These attacks again highlight Ukraine's need for additional air defense systems from our allies," said Maxim Timchenko, CEO of DTEK, which is Ukraine's largest private energy provider.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr

Zelensky said the "massive combined attack targeted all regions of Ukraine".

Zelensky said in a Ukrainian radio interview aired on Saturday that Kyiv wants to end the conflict by next year through "diplomatic means".

The attack came as Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed the situation in Ukraine with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Friday, according to the Kremlin and the German federal government.

It was their first telephone conversation since December 2022.

The two leaders exchanged their views on the current situation in Ukraine. Putin said the crisis was "a direct result of NATO's long-standing

aggressive policies" aimed at creating an "anti-Russian bridgehead" on Ukrainian territory while ignoring Russia's security interests.

During the call, Scholz urged Putin to withdraw Russian troops from Ukraine and bring an end to the conflict. He emphasized the need for Russia to negotiate with Ukraine to achieve a just and lasting peace, and reiterated Germany's commitment to supporting Ukraine for as long as necessary.

Regarding German-Russian relations, Putin acknowledged their unprecedented decline in all areas, but expressed a willingness to pursue mutually beneficial cooperation.

AGENCIES—XINHUA

Opinions divided over Australia's social media ban move

By KARL WILSON in Sydney
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The impact of social media on the well-being and mental health of children has been thoroughly documented for more than a decade.

Research has shown that excessive use of social media by children has led to increases in anxiety, depression, self-harm, and loss of self-esteem.

The Australian government is pushing ahead with legislation that will ban all children under the age of 16 from social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram and X — even with parental consent.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced the ban on Nov 7, with legislation to be introduced in the Australian Parliament before the end of the month.

Albanese said the proposed legislation was to combat the worrying consequences of social media use on Australia's young people.

Although the bill has support from both sides of the political

divide, there are many who question whether a ban will work.

Samantha Schulz, a senior lecturer in sociology of education at the University of Adelaide, told China Daily: "Young people are going to access online worlds regardless of a ban."

The European Union in 2015 introduced similar legislation that banned children under 16 from accessing any online service without parental permission. After much public criticism, the legislation was changed, giving individual countries the option of whether to adopt the proposal.

In the United Kingdom, a similar ban exists, but limiting it to children under 13 years.

In the United States, individual states have their own laws regarding social media use by children.

Associate professor Megan Lim, deputy program director for behavior and health risks at the Burnet Institute, a medical research center in Melbourne, said: "Before com-

mitting to a ban, I think we need far more research understanding how it would work and what impacts it would have."

She told China Daily a ban would be "very difficult, but not impossible".

"Yes, there would likely be loopholes that some young people could get past, but that doesn't mean it would not have any impact."

Australia's eSafety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant told a parliamentary inquiry in June this year that most social media platforms simply have a box that asks users to say if they are over a certain age and if they have consent.

Questions raised

"If age-based restrictions are imposed, we (eSafety) have concerns that some young people will access social media in secrecy."

"This may mean that they access social media without adequate protections in place and are more likely to use less regulated non-mainstream services that increase their

likelihood of exposure to serious risk." Communications Minister Michelle Rowland said earlier that the proposed legislation will contain "strong privacy protections", which would be informed by the age assurance trial currently being run by the government.

Social media companies will have 12 months to enforce the age ban under the proposed legislation, once it is passed by Parliament.

Children and parents will not be subjected to penalties if they defy the ban.

In a letter to the Australian government in October, the Australian Child Rights Taskforce — made up of over 100 organizations — called on the government to impose "safety standards" on social media platforms rather than a blanket ban.

Among the concerns were the effects the ban would have on access and participation for young people, and that for social media platforms, it would be a disincentive to having safety features.

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LIFE



Actors perform at SAGA City of Light, featuring stories of 1930s Shanghai and time-travel experiences, in an immersive theater with a large performance area, by French production company Puy du Fou, in Xuhui district, Shanghai.

Curtain up for scene of enthusiasm

Theatergoers head to Shanghai to binge-watch plays for spiritual nourishment and to forge friendships

By CHINA DAILY

Wang Jiaqi and Zhang Yuyan may come from diverse backgrounds but they have one thing in common: their absolute love and passion for theater which leads them to binge-watch plays.

Two months ago, Wang, 21, a college student, traveled to Shanghai to watch four plays over a weekend. Such a tight schedule has been routine for her, and it is also becoming increasingly common in the lives of many theater lovers.

Her schedule is almost military in its precision. Wang, a clinical medicine student from Xiamen University, Fujian province, usually takes an overnight high-speed train to Shanghai on Friday evening, arrives at a youth hostel near People's Square on Saturday morning, watches one play in the afternoon and another in the evening, and repeats the feat on Sunday. On Monday, she takes an early flight back to Xiamen.

As she often travels to Shanghai, by air or by railway, she says that she "could even walk from Shanghai Hongqiao Railway Station to People's Square with my eyes closed".

The area around Shanghai's People's Square is home to more than 70 theaters, including theater spaces in such well-known venues as the Asia Building, Shanghai Dashijie (the Great World), and Shanghai Cultural Square.

She doesn't just watch the plays. After each performance, she always waits at the stage door, where actors enter and exit the theater, to interact with the professionals.

To cut costs, she sometimes sleeps on a seat at the Haidilao hotpot restaurant on Sunday nights, which is open all night, to wait for her flight. "The waiters at the restaurant all know me well now, and sometimes they even take me to a dimly lit area in the eatery, so I can rest more comfortably," she adds.

Wang is one of many theatergoers crowding the theaters around People's Square during weekends or short holidays. "Watch as much as you can" has



Left: Fans view a show at the immersive theater. Right: Visitors gather at the lobby of the Wanping Theater in Xuhui district, watching excerpts staged by Chinese traditional opera performers. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

become the motto for these theater lovers while in Shanghai.

Zhang, 22, is another theater enthusiast. After graduating from a Beijing university this summer and moving back to her hometown of Changzhou in Jiangsu province, she found that the short one-hour train ride from her city to Shanghai has made her play-watching binge more affordable.

In less than six months after settling down in her hometown, she had made seven trips to Shanghai for her "theater binge". Actually before graduation, her play-watching schedule was even busier.

Once, on a Friday night, she saw a musical in Beijing, while that Saturday morning she woke up at 5 o'clock to catch an early flight to Shanghai to watch two shows — *Meng Weizhi*, telling the story of two Chinese ancient poets, and *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*, an adaptation by French playwright Alexandre Dumas' well-known novel. That Sunday, she watched two more plays, and was about to fly home, but she got a message informing that her flight was delayed until midnight, so she immediately went to buy another ticket to watch another performance of the *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* that evening, before winding up her record-breaking five-play binge.

"That was really exhausting, but it is my

spiritual nourishment," she says, recalling her "five-show-in-a-row craziness".

Shanghai has become a favorite destination for many Chinese theatergoers. In 2017, the metropolis officially declared its target to become "Asia's performing arts capital". In 2019, its municipal bureau of culture and tourism proposed to set up 100 "new spaces for performances". By transforming office buildings, shopping malls and commercial zones into accommodating performance venues, the city has broadened its theater landscape, helping "small-theater" low-budget plays to have more shows performed on more stages, thus gaining widespread popularity.

In terms of the number of musical performances, for example, Shanghai takes the lead nationally. Of all the 9,960 musical theater performances nationwide in 2023, 5,888 were held in Shanghai, making up around 60 percent of the total. And in the first half of 2024, its 100 "new performance spaces" hosted 9,927 performances, attracting 1.68 million audience members and generating a total revenue of 147 million yuan (\$20.3 million), according to the Shanghai Performing Arts Association.

Many "theater-bingers" repeatedly watch plays they have seen before. Zhang once flew to Shanghai to see



three performances of the musical *Fan Letter*, just to savor the different cast. A special term has been coined for this behavior: "collecting casts".

It is even more common in small theaters, where performances are repeated every weekend with varying casts. For example, *Mia Famiglia*, a popular small-theater play staged since 2020 — telling stories of three men who meet in a 1930s New York bar and prepare for a final performance together — has been staged over 1,000 times in the past four years. It was scheduled to be staged for 17 performances in Shanghai this month, almost each time acted by a different cast, according to Damai, a ticketing service platform.

Wang is a loyal fan of the musical *King's Table*, which features a man's adventure on an island. "It is a tragedy of an idealist, but it converted into a belief for me: to do it anyway, even when it seems impossible," she remarks.

Wang watched the musical almost every time she visited Shanghai. Once, when she couldn't get a ticket, she even chose to stay by the theater door, just to listen to the play. Touched by her passion, a staff member opened the door slightly so she could hear more clearly.

Another "crazy" thing she did was that she admired one of the lead actors, Guo

Hongxu (as Jon Olsen in the musical), so much that she wrote a 6,000-word essay with a friend, just to comb through and praise his acting skills. After a show, the ardent fan waited at the stage door to meet Guo and hand him the essay as a gift to show her appreciation for both the actor and the play.

These enthusiasts meet in theaters and outside, fostering friendships before and after the shows. For example, Wang once realized that the person sitting next to her during a performance was an internet acquaintance. She offered to share a blanket with Wang when the theater turned cold due to air conditioning, and they became friends afterward.

Xu Zihan, 21, a junior from Zhejiang Normal University who's also a theatergoer, has been to Shanghai 16 times this year to binge-watch plays. Also to save money, she often dines at an inexpensive Japanese eatery near the Asia Building after a show. "It's such a happy moment, as it is packed with theatergoers, and we talk about the performance while eating," Xu says.

Another way of cost saving is to find a mate with the same hobby to share a hotel room with, often in cheap youth hostels. "I have countless group chats for room-sharing in my phone, and through these, I've made many new friends," she says.

Wang loves a quote from Xu Junshuo, 27, a well-known musical actor. He says: "Audiences may see the light onstage as stars while actors on the lit stage see the audience as a whole, dark sky. The light in the theater is not one-way — within the space, it lights up us all!"

For Wang, theater bingeing allows her to stray beyond her often boring routine, giving her quality time to let her imagination and fantasies run wild, and help her regain fresh energy while going back to real life.

"The charm of theater is endless. Every time I see tickets of future plays, I see it as a promise to meet friends again, inside and outside the theaters," Wang says.

Yu Hexin contributed to this story.

What's on



the booming art market in Guangdong from the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.

A prosperous economy motivated extensive exchanges between home-grown artists and cultural figures who traveled to the province. Many business owners built private art collections that further boosted creativity.

Legacy of the south

South China's Guangdong province has been a gateway for exchanges between the country and the rest of the world since ancient times. Its thriving art scene exhibits the integration of various regional cultures across the country and the introduction of Western art.

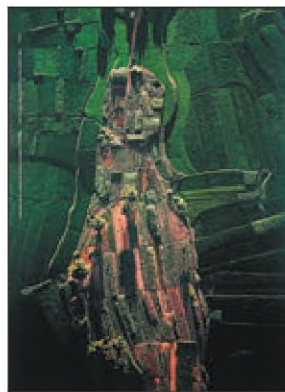
A selection of collections from the Guangzhou Museum of Art now on show at the National Art Museum of China in Beijing offers a glimpse into

The exhibition, running until Feb 16, is the latest installment of *Ink Splendor and Cultural Context*, a series in which the national art museum collaborates with art museums around the country that rotate exhibits in Beijing.

9 am-5 pm, closed on Mondays. 1 Wusi Dajie, Dongcheng district, Beijing. 010-6400-1476.

Swiss designs

Posters, chairs, books, shelves and woven pieces ... more than 200 fine



examples of creativity are on show at *Swiss Design Classics*, an exhibition in Beijing that opens people's eyes and hearts to the evolution of Swiss design spanning four centu-

ries. The show runs until Jan 12 at the Today Art Museum.

The exhibition is a celebration of the country's inventive forces, from daily apparatuses to the industries of engineering and medical applications. It steers the audience through a journey of groundbreaking research and practices that have changed the lives of people in Switzerland and around the world.

The exhibition pays tribute to Max Bill, an influential Swiss artist, architect and designer, by displaying his works of furniture, posters and prints of limited editions. A section of the show is dedicated to the winners of the annual Most Beautiful Swiss Books competition.

The exhibition marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Switzerland in 2025. It will later tour Nanjing, Jiangsu province; Shenzhen,

Guangdong province; and Shanghai.

10 am-6 pm, closed on Mondays. 32 Baizwan Road, Chaoyang district, Beijing. 010-5876-0600.

Perfect path

Dao in Chinese means the road, way and path that also includes the rules, courses and methods to achieve one's goal. *The Perfect Path* recently opened at the Art Museum of the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, shows the approaches of various artists and art groups embracing an international vision, grounded in their traditions.

The exhibition, running until Jan 10, is a collaboration between the China Academy of Art and the Venice Biennale with its Historical Archive of Contemporary Arts, launched on the 700th anniversary

of the death of Marco Polo, the Venetian merchant and adventurer who reached Hangzhou in the 13th century.

The exhibition pays tribute to this historical connection between Venice and Hangzhou and looks to deepen exchanges between Italy and China in a new era.

9 am-5 pm, daily. 218 Nanshan Lu, Hangzhou, Zhejiang province. 0571-8661-1569.

CHINA DAILY



CULTURE

Fanning a love of Chinese fans

Tuanshan are works of art that embrace tradition and innovation, Alexis Hooi and Zhang Li report in Guilin.

It was approaching the height of summer and work at Huang Shuofu's factory was also heating up, with more than 20 employees rushing to fill orders for his local specialty product — Chinese *tuanshan* fans.

The task at hand was particularly pressing this time because they were making *tuanshan* exports for an international luxury fashion brand, which specifically requested about 7,000 custom-made versions of the traditional handicraft.

"Our fans have always symbolized Chinese culture and heritage, prized as works of art," said Huang, 78.

The popularity of *tuanshan* can be traced to the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220). The round fans resemble a full moon, signifying auspicious union and happiness. Their use extended beyond being tools for dealing with scorching summers to reflect high status and taste.

Huang himself is a fourth-generation master craftsman of the fans, which are traditionally made with bamboo that grow abundantly in his hometown in Guilin city of South China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region.

He has won major accolades at home and abroad for his work in preserving and promoting *tuanshan* as intangible cultural heritage. In 2013, he was asked to craft two fans adorned with ethnic Zhuang embroidery to be presented to then-UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon, who was visiting China at that time.

Huang's fans are still made the traditional way, with bamboo strips and sticks for frames and handles assembled by hand. Paper, silk and cloth on which paintings, calligraphy, embroidery and other designs complete the product.

He is also constantly innovating and adding features to his creations, such as a distinctive ring-ribbed base to connect the fan frame to its handle.

Tapping trends

"We need to keep up with new trends and incorporate these into the traditional elements as much as possible while retaining the original essence, to continue sharing this heritage with people at home and abroad," Huang said.

He added that the group has obtained more than 30 national patents and exported products to



Top: A visitor takes photos of Chinese *tuanshan* fans exhibited in May in Guilin city, South China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region.

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Above from left: Fourth-generation master craftsman Huang Shuofu in his *tuanshan* fan studio; Students from a Thai international school learn to make Chinese *tuanshan* fans in Guilin city in November.

major overseas markets including South Korea, Japan and Singapore.

His daughter Huang Keren, 40,

who helps run the family's business operations, such as its marketing and outreach, said daily

production can hit 5,000 pieces, with about one-fifth of that amount for export.

Latest digital trends such as livestreaming have helped e-commerce make up a major part of the

business, she said.

The *guochao* trend of recent years to showcase traditional Chinese cultural elements in a variety of fields such as clothing has also contributed significantly to

growth, she said.

"Many of our customers include parents buying fans that showcase the best of Chinese traditional culture, like copies of famous paintings, poetry and calligraphy, for

Our fans have always symbolized Chinese culture and heritage, prized as works of art."

Huang Shuofu,
tuanshan factory owner

their children," she said, adding that mini DIY kits for their young customers to put together their own fans are also very popular.

Huang Shuofu said that, as part of his responsibility in passing down the intangible cultural heritage to future generations, he also runs workshops and classes for children and adults, as well as collaborations with cultural institutions like museums, to make sure the *tuanshan* tradition "survives and thrives".

Similarly, sustainable, green practices are a priority, he said, especially since his creations rely on natural bamboo as a major material.

"We minimize our waste and discard as little as possible," Huang said. "I recycle the bamboo strips, cloth, paper and try to come up with new ways to use them, such as for bookmarks, stationery and other smaller-sized, related products."

In line with sustainable, inclusive development, the *tuanshan* production also ropes in local rural communities.

For villager Zheng Ming, harvesting bamboo through cooperatives and other production channels to provide the raw material for Huang's fans in the past three decades has helped improve his family's previously subsistence livelihood in line with rural revitalization.

"We help provide 600,000 to 700,000 pieces of bamboo every year and our income has increased significantly, three to four times higher than before," said Zheng, who is in his 70s.

"We make our *tuanshan* here by blending tradition and innovation, protecting our heritage and promoting it together," Huang Shuofu said.

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

Opera adaptation hits right note at London premiere

By JULIAN SHEA

in London
julian@mail.chinadaily.com

An opera based on a book by Chinese author Hong Ying received its world premiere in London on Nov 1, with the help of two British musicians who have a long and close connection with China's classical music scene.

The performance, by the Arcadian Opera company at London's Bloomsbury Theatre, consisted of two pieces inspired by a series of books with Sangsang as the central character.

The first was a narrated piece, *The Girl from the French Fort*, which was created for the China pavilion at the Milan Expo in 2015, and the second a new work, *The Stone God*, which was based on the story *New Moon Rising*, both composed by Nicholas Michael Smith.

The stories, set in Chongqing in Southwest China, have their roots in Hong Ying's childhood memories.

"I told my daughter traditional Chinese stories when she was growing up, so I wanted to make a contribution to the library of children's stories, and created a series of stories for her and her age range," she told China Daily, admitting that she was surprised but delighted that someone else saw the wider artistic potential in her writing.

"I've been an artist in many media — a poet, a photographer, a director, it's all interconnected, so for me, they have always been more than just words on a page. It's a lovely surprise that someone wanted to put them to music."

The Girl from the French Fort is a time-travel fantasy about a boy who meets a mysterious girl in an old barracks building on the banks of the Yangtze River.

"I used to walk past it when I was younger. When I was older, I got to go inside and I wanted to turn it into a tale," Hong explained.



I hope I've created something that conjures up the image of being in China. It's set in China and I think it would be very popular if it was staged there."

Nicholas Michael Smith, composer



The story of *The Stone God* tells of an ancient statue coming to life to seek revenge, but being won over by selflessness. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

The piece proved so popular, it was performed as the Shanghai Oriental Art Center's 2019 Children's Day Concert by the Ningbo Symphony Orchestra.

"*The Stone God* comes out of my childhood memory of strange figures, monsters and folk tales that I used to hear about," said Hong. "It's about the human condition, with themes of loss, forgiveness, and kindness, so I hope anyone at any age can embrace it, and that it will find a wide audience."

Composer Smith's relationship with China goes back more than three decades. He studied music at Cambridge University before going to a country about which he admits he knew nothing, to teach English. He soon became part of its music scene. But his involvement with *The Stone God* came via an indirect route.

"Previously I'd been a translator and I was asked by my friend Adam Williams, Hong Ying's husband, if I could help translate her books as the translator they had wasn't very good, which meant the book's illustrator, Cherry Denman, was drawing the wrong pictures, because she was given the wrong details," he said.

Translating the third book, Smith said its musical potential was obvious.

"It had so many good operatic themes. I began working on *The Stone God* at the end of 2019, then it became one of my big lockdown projects, translating it from Chinese to English, and then to the language of music," he explained.

"I hope I've created something that conjures up the image of being in China. It's set in China and I think it would be very popular if it was staged there. It has a Chinese flavor, but underneath it's just a great story that I think anyone can enjoy."

Arcadian Opera's Musical Director Justin Lavender conducted the orchestra for the performance. Like Smith, he has a long relationship with China which includes learning

the language, which he said was "one of the hardest things I've ever done".

"I performed the role of Lieutenant Pinkerton in Giacomo Puccini's *Madam Butterfly* a lot," he said. "It was not uncommon to be the only Westerner in the company, so I realized I needed to learn basic Chinese. And when I came home, I went to evening classes and learned it up to A Level (pre-university) standard."

Being a British performer who can sing in Mandarin means Lavender, who teaches at London's Royal College of Music, has more Chinese than European students.

To be allowed to oversee the piece's premiere was, he said, "a real honor and privilege".

"It's performed in English, but four of the main characters are Chinese," he said. "Our mezzo soprano is Polish and in one scene has to sing in Mandarin, which she worked very hard to get right, and at one point so do the chorus, which was a lot of fun."

Lavender is also full of praise for Hong Ying's writing. She has written about a boy living on the banks of the Yangtze River in the late 1970s, and there's a fairytale element with a statue coming to life, and travelling back in time, so it combines the birth of modern China with traditional tales, he said.

Although the piece may be mainly in English and is written by a British composer, Smith now lives in China, so the work's Chinese roots are very apparent.

"It's a wonderfully stimulating project with a lot of pentatonic melody running through it," said Lavender.

For those who listen closely, there is a hidden musical reference very specific to the time and place that the story is set.

"Years ago, composer Xian Xinghai wrote a recruitment song for the Chinese Army, which Nick has woven it into a chorus," he said. "It will pass a lot of people by, but if you joined the army in the 1970s, you will know it."

SPORTS



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Tracking Success delivers the inside story for global sports fans, exploring what makes elite performers tick, and providing insight into their biggest and most intriguing moments on and off the field of play.

DIVING

DIVE, DREAM, DISCOVER

Chen Yuxi provides a snapshot of her life beyond the platform



Main: Chen Yuxi during the final of the women's 10m platform event at the 2024 Paris Olympics. **Right:** Chen and her partner Quan Hongchan (right) pose with their Olympic gold medals in Paris. PHOTOS BY ANTONIO MARTINEZ / EUROPA PRESS VIA GETTY IMAGES AND XINHUA



Online
Watch the video by scanning the code.

By LI YINGXUE
liyixgvue@chinadaily.com.cn

At 19, Chen Yuxi's achievements in diving are already the stuff of legend: two Olympic gold medals and two silvers. Yet, for the freshman at Tongji University studying sports training, her story is just beginning. Three months after claiming diving gold in the women's synchronized 10-meter platform at the Paris Olympics, Chen is embracing a new chapter. Few would recognize the global diving icon as she carries her backpack across campus, hidden among her peers as she navigates the life of a student.

She looks forward to her university experience with a sense of anticipation, excited to immerse herself in classes, expand her knowledge, and meet new and interesting people.

"Diving has always been a focus on practical skills for me, so I haven't had much exposure to theory," she said. "I'm eager to explore the theoretical side of sports to complement and enhance my practical expertise."

For Chen, the next phase is about more than academics; it's about redefining her path. "Whether in diving, or elsewhere, I want to become a better version of myself," she says. "I hope to forge new paths in different fields, carving out a space that belongs uniquely to me."

Born in 2005 in Shanghai, Chen started her sporting life as a gymnast, with her earliest memories drawn from fragments of stories shared by her parents.

At the age of three, while attending kindergarten, she would often spend her afternoons either training with her father and the local gymnastics team, or waiting for her mother to pick her up after school. Restless and energetic, she almost always opted for the former. Even at that young age, she was already able to perform a handstand.

In 2011, at six years old, Chen entered her first gymnastics competition, but by then, her focus had already shifted toward diving.

"My mom said I might not have another chance to compete in gymnastics, so she encouraged me to take part," Chen recalls. She spent a week briefly revisiting gymnastics, practicing a routine on the high and low bars. During the competition, it was her father, nervously watching from below, who seemed more anxious than Chen herself.

While gymnastics had been taught to her by her father, the young girl faced a new challenge when she transitioned to

diving — adapting to a new coach. Initially, she was resistant. Terrified of water, she struggled with swimming lessons, and despite the efforts of over a dozen coaches, she couldn't seem to overcome her fear.

Chen remembers the fear that gripped her when she first began learning the 10m platform dive in 2017. "In the beginning, I wasn't clear on my flips or how many twists I had done — it all felt chaotic. If I got too scared and became stiff, I couldn't execute the moves properly, which often led to mistakes and injuries," she recalls.

But, as time passed, she began to embrace the sport.

"The feeling of diving off the platform

became something I truly enjoyed," she says. "Diving has become an inseparable part of me, filled with a range of emotions."

In 2018, Chen won her first national title in a senior competition, taking gold in the women's individual 10m platform at the National Diving Championships. The victory boosted her confidence, and, the following year, she earned a spot on China's national diving team.

At the Tokyo Olympics three years ago, Chen made her Olympic debut in spectacular fashion. Alongside teammate Zhang Jiaqi, she claimed gold in the women's 10m synchronized platform and added a silver in the individual 10m event.

Reflecting on her earlier years in the sport, Chen admits that she struggled with self-doubt. "I used to get caught up in every small detail," she says. "If I didn't perform well in training, I would dwell on it for a long time, which affected my mindset, both in practice and competition."

She acknowledges that her performances were sometimes inconsistent, often overshadowed by fear.

"Back then, I just told myself, 'I've reached this level, so I have to give it my all. I practiced tirelessly, every day, until the last possible moment,'" she says.

In July 2023, Chen secured her third consecutive gold medal in the women's

individual 10m platform at the World Aquatics Championships.

Then, this summer, at the Paris Olympics, she and teammate Quan Hongchan successfully won the gold medal in the women's synchronized 10m platform, and in the individual event, Chen earned silver with a score of 420.70.

Over the past three years, Chen has faced a range of challenges, each one met with resolve and perseverance. Today, she feels more centered and composed, with a greater sense of balance in all areas of her life.

Off the diving platform, Chen is a strikingly different figure — lively, curious, and full of interests that extend far beyond the sport that has made her a champion.

After returning from the Paris Olympics, she took a much-needed break to unwind. Chen visited Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, to see the giant pandas, and even tried on traditional *hanfu*, embracing the chance to experience different aspects of Chinese culture.

She enjoys the simple pleasures of shopping, playing the piano and building Lego sets, and, at the same time, she is also drawn to extreme sports, eager to try skydiving, bungee jumping and rock climbing.

Photography, however, is one of her true passions. "When I take photos of others, I want to capture their stories," she explains. "Through these images, I can imagine their lives in that moment, and also reflect on why I took the photo and what I was doing at the time."

For Chen, photography is not just about images, but about preserving moments. "If someone else takes photos of me, it feels like they're documenting my life. When I look back at these photos, I can recall many stories and details that remind me of the moments they captured," she says.

Chen's perspective on life is shaped by her experiences in diving, where she has spent over a decade honing her skills. "In diving, you have five attempts," she notes. "You push through each one, even if you make mistakes along the way. You can't afford to get discouraged, because you won't know the results until you hit the water."

But for Chen, the lessons learned in diving go far beyond the pool.

"Life is about finding joy in the everyday moments, discovering what makes you happy, and constantly learning and growing. Whether it's diving, academics or personal pursuits, I want to continue improving, stay strong and keep pushing forward."



Clockwise from top: Chen Yuxi and Quan Hongchan visit Macao in September; the pair take a selfie with Kim Mi-rae of DPR Korea in Paris; Chen interacts with school children. PHOTOS BY XINHUA AND LI MINGKUN / FOR CHINA DAILY