

2 AUGUST 2022

DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Chinese internet giant Sina, social media service Weibo unexpectedly close Taiwan platforms amid escalating geopolitical tensions:** On Monday, Weibo's service on the island was discontinued, and Sina's Chinese news section in Taiwan went black. In light of speculations that US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi may visit Taiwan, the sudden shutdown reflects heightened stress in cross-strait relations.
- **The Internet is charmed by a young boy displaying his kindergarten diploma, and a compassionate police officer takes a lost elderly woman home on his back:** Internet users were charmed by a video of a young kid in China proudly displaying his kindergarten diploma to his mother. The Xioxiang Morning Herald said that the youngster from Chaozhou, Guangdong province in southern China, and his kindergarten classmates, all clad in small graduation gowns, received their diplomas last week. When the youngster realized that his mother was filming him, he pointed to his red certificate book, opened it, and then pointed to his photo and name.

NEWS IN CHINA

- Australia is being urged to act as China attempts to purchase a crucial Solomon Islands port. A Chinese state-owned business is in negotiations to purchase a deep-water port and World War II airstrip in the Solomon Islands, as new documents expose how Beijing's financial support has helped maintain the country's unpopular leader in power. An investigation by Four Corners has revealed that China is

aggressively pursuing economic possibilities across the Solomon Islands to advance Beijing's strategic goals. A hardwood forestry plantation on the island of Kolombangara, which boasts a sheltered harbour, deep-water port, and airfield, is one of China's targeted assets.

- Chinese warplanes buzz the Taiwan Strait dividing line before to Pelosi's scheduled visit, according to a report. Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi was set to arrive in Taipei later on Tuesday, according to sources briefed on the situation, while Chinese jets flew near to the median line dividing the Taiwan Strait, as reported by Reuters. China has frequently cautioned Pelosi against visiting Taiwan, which it claims as its own territory, while the United States stated on Monday that it will not be intimidated by Chinese "sabre-rattling." In addition to Chinese aircraft flying close to the median line of the strait, many Chinese warships have cruised close to the unofficial dividing line since Monday, according to a source for Reuters. According to the source, Chinese warships and aircraft "squeezed" the median line on Tuesday morning, a manoeuvre described as "very aggressive."
- Chinese investment in Pakistan and Russia dries up. According to media reports, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) investments in Russia dropped to zero in the first half of 2022, while Chinese expenditures in Pakistan declined by 56% during the same period. According to RFE/RL, these are the conclusions of a recent analysis from the Green Finance and Development Center at Fudan University in

Shanghai, which indicates that Chinese President Xi Jinping's main foreign policy initiative, which he previously termed "the project," is encountering increasing headwinds.

- China uses the ACCC report to ridicule Australia's "laughable" gas supply developments and criticizes the nation's "arrogance." A spokesperson for the Chinese Communist Party has wasted no time in attacking Australia over a new report predicting a gas supply shortage. The Global Times mocked Australia's "laughable" energy advancements on Monday, citing the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) Gas inquiry 2017-2025 initial report. In 2023, the east coast of Australia is expected to be short 56 petajoules, or 10 per cent of domestic demand, according to the ACCC research. The analysis predicts that supply conditions on the east coast market would deteriorate dramatically in 2023, resulting in a shortfall of 56 PJ.

INDIA WATCH

- Since 1949, Taiwan has been governed independently from China, but Beijing considers the island to be a part of its territory. Beijing has threatened to "unify" Taiwan with the mainland, if necessary, by the use of force. Tensions are on the rise. President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan, whose party platform supports independence, has criticized Beijing's attempts to undermine democracy. Beijing has intensified its political and military pressure against Taiwan. Some observers are concerned that the United States and China may wage war over Taiwan. The United States left

unresolved the question of whether it would genuinely defend Taiwan, despite Biden's assertion that it would.
