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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **'Double Standards' in Condiments? Do The Chinese Feel Cheated?:** Trouble has stirred yet again in Chinese social media, but this time it is not politics or the pandemic, it is food. It is known that Chinese people love their condiments, so when trouble is stirred into these bottles of deliciousness, anger is the indefinite reaction to upsurge. Popular Chinese condiment brand 'Haidian Flavouring and Food Co. Ltd' has been the center of [mass criticism](#) from Chinese people all over social media, with many citing the company mixing artificial flavoring and unnatural ingredients in their products sold at the Chinese markets as against their internationally shipped products that are made from all-natural ingredients. Health insecurity in processed and store-bought foods has always been an impending problem among the Chinese, so social media posts circulating around Haidian products being unsafe instantly went viral last week. Netizens have used the term 'hex technology' – a gaming term to tag videos and posts on the supposed adulteration of food products, and have garnered a total view count of 3 billion on Douyu (the Chinese equivalent of TikTok) as of Thursday. Chinese social media is now filled with posts checking ingredient lists of their products with "zero-additive products" being the top searched item on search engines last week. Last Friday, the company released a statement flouting the rumors as false and refusing any claims of adulterating products for the Chinese people. With health concerns being a growing issue in China, the authenticity of the statement was taken with a grain of salt and Haitian foods released another statement last Tuesday to gain support for the use of food additives, widely popular in all manufacturing companies in China. Even when

such claims haven't been clinically proven and health professionals have flouted health hazard claims caused by food additives, instead used to enhance the taste of food, the public continues to show and share their resentment for the company and the food processing industry in general.

- **Ahead of the 20th National Congress, China Upgrades Its Social Media's 'Great Fire Wall':** As the country is basking in the long holiday week and the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) is gearing up for its five-yearly National Congress meeting this week, many citizens have complained on social media platforms over high restrictions on popular messaging apps like Douyin, Weibo and WeChat. Stating that it is "no longer possible to talk freely". A user on twitter tweeted, "I'm unable to have a normal conversation in any of my group chats with friends, relatives or classmates", last week. Many have resorted to use circumvention software to use apps outside the firewall, but unluckily have given up due to lack of users. Many citizens have raised complaints over the restrictions in using a VPN software to access outside the firewall while some have voiced out the concerns Chinese nationals living outside the mainland are facing trouble in accessing the platforms, with some of them being blocked out from Weibo. As data security and freedom of speech continues to be a looming problem in the Chinese civil societies, with many youngsters being vocal on the CPCs didactic style of governance. Some have criticized the government's insecurity in letting any free flow of information tarnish the perfect image that they have created

for themselves and mask-off the facade in front of the gullible citizens.

NEWS IN CHINA

- On Sunday morning, China sent the country's first solar probe, an Advanced Space-based Solar Observatory (ASO-S) – a satellite specially designed to carry out a comprehensive probe of the Sun - into preset orbit via a Long March 2D carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China's Gansu Province. Named 'Kuafu-1', the satellite was jointly developed by the Innovation Academy for Microsatellites of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS,) CAS National Astronomical Observatory, the CAS Changchun Institute of Optics, Fine Mechanics and Physics and the CAS Purple Mountain Observatory. In addition, Nanjing-based CAS Purple Mountain Observatory will work towards operating the spacecraft. Kuafu-1 is designed and sent to conduct continuous solar observations for (at least) the next four years. On Sunday, the program leader, Gan Weiqun elucidated the aims of the project which includes the formation of the solar magnetic field, solar flares and titanic blasts known as coronal mass ejections, as well as their relationship in a simultaneous fashion, and also to support space disaster weather forecasts to prevent the effects on high-tech activities such as human spaceflights, communication and navigation. Upon its establishment, the Kuafu-1 will be the world's first in observing the solar magnetic field, solar flares and titanic blasts, while simultaneously deploying a payload combination onboard. With a total life of four years, Kuafu-1 will
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work in the Earth's polar orbit and will conduct 24-hour continuous observation directly of the Sun, fast and efficiently. Scientists have shared their pride for China and its advancement in space technology and would be fully open to sharing the data collected from the probe with the entire international community, as a way of sharing the Chinese pride and joy.

- The ongoing 'Zero-COVID' policy has economically slumped China's growth, with many foreign investors shifting to a 'China+1' policy to efficiently provide for the global supply chain, while others have been dwindled in concerns over the strict Covid-19 restrictions, data security and the politicization of economic matters, on top of long-standing concerns about market barriers and an uneven playing field. Much to their relief, the State Council or the country's cabinet on Saturday announced the opening of service sectors including tourism and elderly care, in some of China's largest cities to foreign investment. The new measure is part of a flagship project, designed to affect companies in Chongqing, Shanghai and Tianjin, as well as the island province of Hainan. The project is under China's larger plan of relaxing the rules on FIs from April 2021 and will last till April 2024 and contains an additional 203 flagship projects aimed to cover 12 key service industries, including technological services, financial services, healthcare, education and e-commerce. The State Council nudged relevant departments to make adjustments and establish a management system that efficiently aids in opening up and expanding the service industry. This move is considered imperative to boost China's

stagnant growth amidst strict Covid-19 policies. Zong Changqing, head of the Commerce Ministry's department of foreign investment administration, said that, "There is a need to further expand the opening up of the service sector ... and to shape new advantages on the international stage" as Beijing had received positive results back in 2015 when similar lax measures were applied in foreign investments.

- The Xinjiang topic continues to be sensitive to the Chinese Communist Party due to international claims of ongoing human rights violence and unequal civilian atrocities in the region. Largely claimed by the West led by the United States, the recent UNHCR meeting last week at Geneva, over the region, composed of 47 state members, was rejected last week. The 19-17 vote against the US-led draft decision on Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region showed that the international community is slowly seceding out from the US led hegemony, despite looming pressure, both economically and politically when disagreeing with the West. Despite the result being a "diplomatic win for China" by the West, Chinese experts are cautiously optimistic about this partial success. According to observers, the US and the West will keep pressuring those who abstained to reconsider their stances and redouble their attempts to disparage China over its Xinjiang policies at subsequent meetings. However, Chinese diplomats call this a victory for developing countries and a victory for truth and justice. Hua Chunying, spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, said in a Tweet on Thursday, "Human rights must not be
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used as a pretext to make up lies and interfere in other countries' internal affairs, or to contain, coerce and humiliate others.”

- Supporting and enticing families with several children to purchase homes is turning out to be a key area for improving and modifying the property market policies in different regions of China. The Sichuan Provincial Party Committee and the Provincial Government released the “Implementation Plan on Optimizing the Birth Policy to Promote the Long-term Balanced Development of the Population” on October 9, which stated that families with two or three children would enjoy the benefit of relaxed regulations when purchasing a house. Since May of this year, more than 40 cities in China have implemented special policies and regulations for housing to families with multiple children and have also mentioned that under the new housing policy, larger families have the option to purchase more properties as the current purchase restriction policy would not apply to them. In addition, cities like Jiaxing, Zhejiang have introduced real-money housing subsidies. On August 2, the official website of the Housing and Urban-Rural Development Bureau of Jiaxing City, issued the “Implementation Opinions on Further Perfecting the Steady and Healthy Development of the Real Estate Market in Jiaxing City” under which Jiaxing households with two or three children who newly purchase new commercial housing will be given 300 yuan per square meter and a housing subsidy of 500 yuan per square meter from the date of its release till 31st December, 2022. Chen Xiao, a senior analyst at the Zhuge Housing Data

Research Center, pointed out that the introduction of such a policy is undoubtedly to promote the release of market improvement needs. At the same time she believes that the new housing purchase policy for larger families can be seen as a new step toward easing the policy while also encouraging fertility and population expansion, something China has been struggling to mend post its One-Child policy.

- Great news for China yet again as both the Women and Men’s team advanced to the finals of the World Tennis Championship last week. The Women’s team composed of Chen Meng, Wang Manyu and Sun Yingsha defeated the Japanese team at the finals with a score of 3-0 to, once again be declared winners of the game and holders of the Corbillon Cup for the 22nd time! The Chinese continue to remain unmatchable in Global games with many wins and titles under their belt. On the other hand, their male counterparts defeated the Japanese team at the semi-final with a score of 3-2 and advanced to the finals. A day of immense pride for the Chinese, once again.
 - Post Tesla CEO, Elon Musk’s controversial remarks over Taiwan's sovereignty on October 8, Mao Ning, spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry on Saturday reinstated that the country’s stance on China remains ‘consistent and clear-cut’, and that Taiwan continues to be China’s internal affairs at a press conference in Beijing. In an interview with the Financial Times published on Friday, the billionaire claimed he believed that "conflict over Taiwan was inevitable" as well as recommending "a special administrative
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zone for Taiwan." The proposal was lauded by Beijing, with many high-class diplomats agreeing to the peaceful proposal. "China's position on the Taiwan question is consistent and we will continue to adhere to the basic policy of peaceful reunification and 'One Country, Two Systems' and work with the greatest sincerity and exert our utmost efforts to achieve peaceful reunification," said Mao. She later added that China will take all measures to crush "Taiwan independence" secessionist attempts, resolutely stop interference by external forces, and resolutely defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

diplomatic position in times of its security crisis. With Sino-India border discourse being at its all-time low, it is in the best interest for the South Asian country to have voted out from the situation so as to not sever any bilateral ties with its largest exporter and an important geopolitical power.

INDIA WATCH

- Last Thursday at the UNHCR meeting at Geneva, the much-awaited Xinjiang issue was brought up by the United States which was eventually lost. India abstained from voting on the situation and spoke up about it a day later from the vote. On Friday, New Delhi formally commented on the situation and over its decision. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, Arindam Bagchi at a news briefing stated that, "The human rights of the people of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region should be respected and guaranteed. We hope that the relevant party will address the situation objectively and properly." He further justifies India's decision to abstain by stating that "India's vote is in line with its long-held position that country-specific resolutions are never helpful. India favors a dialogue to deal with such issues", and the country remains committed to upholding human rights. As the vote went in favor of Beijing, with the resolution being rejected, India's decision to abstain is a strong indicator of its
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