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*DAILY*  
**CONVERSATIONS  
IN CHINESE  
MEDIA**



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**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON  
CHINA AND ASIA**

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***PREPARED BY***

Shivam Vishal (Research Intern, ORCA)  
writetous.orca@gmail.com

## I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Netizens react to experts' warnings of Tonga volcano ash drifting to China:** Recently, a submarine volcanic eruption in Tonga has caused tsunamis and a large amount of ash is being released into the atmosphere. After the disaster, China's Fengyun meteorological satellite has been continuously following up and monitoring the movement of the ash clouds, stating that it could drift towards China as well.
- **Chinese movies are gaining popularity in Japan:** According to media reports, the film (你好，李焕英) "Hello, Li Huanying" directed by Jia Ling was officially released in Japan on January 7, 2022. The movie shows China in the 1980s and has received surprisingly good reviews and ratings in Japan. Despite strong anti-China sentiment, especially vis-a-vis historical baggage and contemporary Chinese assertiveness, there has been a steady rise in the popularity of Chinese movies and TV shows in Japan in past few years.

## II. News in China

- Amid the slow economic growth and crackdown on big corporates, feuds between the factions in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) are becoming more common. Recently two articles published in state-controlled media have indicated the intensifying feuds. Factions within the CPC have always used ideological institutions to settle their scores, and the institutionalization of the leadership succession had struck a certain balance amongst them. But by rewriting the party and state constitution, and amassing huge power across the major institutions, General Secretary Xi has rocked the balance.
- The latest article by President Xi Jinping in Qiushi Journal stresses that developing a digital economy is a strategic choice to seize the opportunities arising from the new round of technological revolution and industrial change. Xi, on one hand, acknowledges China's progress and achievements in the sector, but also admits that they are still behind some global digital powerhouses, which may threaten the national financial and economic security and must be rectified.
- Looking beyond the global semi-conductor chip shortage during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21, China has reemphasized the importance of research and development in the field of semiconductor chips. Many Chinese companies have come forward with innovations and breakthroughs in the design, manufacturing, packaging, and testing of the chips. China in its "14th Five-Year Plan" has prioritized the Chip manufacturing industry, with a focus on strengthening the digital technology sector and producing high-end chips. Importantly, as Taiwan forms a central location for the production of semiconductor chips, it further shapes China's growing focus on the semiconductor supply chain.

- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs issued the "14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of National Planting Industry", with a forecast of making China self-sufficient in rice and wheat by 2025. Currently, China is the largest producer of wheat and rice, but it still relies on imports of grains to meet its domestic needs. China's overall grain output in 2020 was 669 million tonnes, and it aims to take it to 692 tonnes by 2025.
- Anti-graft watchdogs nationwide investigated 470,000 cases of corruption in the first nine months of 2021. The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the Party's top discipline watchdog, has warned that the confrontation between corruption and anti-corruption is still ongoing and taking on new characteristics.

### **III. India Watch**

- Recently, Chinese media boasted of China making the world's largest quadruped robot. China presents it as a useful technology for delivery and reconnaissance tasks. But it is obvious that they have been investing heavily in such technologies with India in mind. Recently, the capability of PLA soldiers surviving in the harsh mountains on their Western borders and standing against the Indian side has been under question, both domestically and internationally. Soon after that, China has relied on modern defence technologies to assist its soldiers. There has been news of China deploying robots with machine guns along the LAC in Ladakh and providing robotic arms and legs to their soldiers posted on mountains and hills. There is no doubt that China has forced India to spend heavily in defence by creating a turbulent environment on the border, but it is also true that by provoking India, it is only accelerating its goals of becoming self-reliant in defence..