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DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**



**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON
CHINA AND ASIA**

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I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **'Civil Services' trends on Chinese social media:** A social media post went trending on Weibo stating that 'Many of us would already know that imperial China was the birthplace of this system of civil services.' Netizens discussed this age-old organization and how it is still relevant in modern Chinese society. Netizens expressed their solidarity and trust in the civil services in China.
- **A teenage boy commits suicide:** A teenage boy in China committed suicide after being rejected by his birth parent and being bullied over the internet. The incident has left people shocked and once again cyberbullying and unethical journalism have become a popular topic of discussion. The role of media, authorities, and society is being questioned over social media platforms.

II. News in China

- China has opened the world's highest bridge in its Southwest province of Guizhou. Guizhou already had seven of the 10 highest bridges in the country, and now it is home to the world's highest. Equivalent to a 200-story building, the Beipanjiang bridge is 1341 meters long and stands at 565 meters above Beipanjiang Valley. The state media has declared it yet another engineering marvel of the country which has "completed many noteworthy feats of engineering in recent years".
- Xi Jinping chaired the meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee which reviewed the 'Comprehensive Report on the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee Hearing'. The meeting also studied the 'Work Reports' of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the State Council, the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Work Report of the Central Secretariat.
- As the Lunar New Year of the Tiger is approaching, Chinese embassies across the world are distributing "Spring Festival packages" to their overseas compatriots. Embassies in Italy and Rwanda distributed anti-epidemic items to local overseas-Chinese citizens and foreign students. Packages were also given to the employees of China-funded enterprises in foreign countries. The embassy in Mexico reported that these packages are a way of conveying the motherland's love towards its overseas citizens and students.
- During a product promotion campaign McDonald's used a thumb and forefinger gesture emoji that is considered as insults to Asian male dignity. Chinese and Korean men moved to domestic forums and threatened to boycott McDonald's. The story has also trended within China with citizens calling out xenophobic practices by American conglomerates.

- In the wake of the recent crisis in Kazakhstan, an uneasiness in the relationship of convenience between China and Russia was clearly visible. In the last 30 years, China has replaced Russia as one of the most important economic players in the region and Russia is also aware of China's economic inroads in the Central Asian Republics. Russia also perceives China's Belt and Road Initiative in Kazakhstan as a security threat and for China, any instability in the region threatens its economic development in the region. Thus, the presence of Russian troops on Kazakh soil has the Beijing side nervous.
- President Xi exchanged congratulatory letters with General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee Nguyen Phu Trong on the occasion of the Spring Festival. They talked about last year's development of the two parties and countries in China and Vietnam and also expressed hopes of the continuous development of China-Vietnam relations. China is the largest trade partner for Vietnam, one of the key nations of ASEAN but the two nations also have their differences on the South China Sea, where Vietnam regularly refutes China's Nine-Dash Line

III. India Watch

- India's growing engagement with the Central Asian nations is not going well with Beijing. India-Central Asia Summit is scheduled for 27th January 2022. Indian Prime Minister will be hosting the first edition of this Summit with Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, in a virtual format. This is seen as India's counter to China's ever-growing presence in the Central Asian region. The importance of the summit can be understood from the nervousness of Beijing that it has announced a meeting chaired by President Xi to celebrate the 30 years ties of China and Central Asia. China, over the years, has made itself the largest partner of the Central Asian countries in trade and defense leaving behind Russia. Now, India can hope to establish a new partnership with Russia to engage in the region and keep China's involvement in check.