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# DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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## NEWS IN CHINA

- 6,500 tonnes of 50-meter [steel rails made in China](#) left Tianjin in Northeast China on Tuesday for Europe, where they will be used for Hungarian-Serbian railway construction projects. It is a part of a total of 22,000 tonnes of rails to be exported from China before the end of May. Chinese-made 50-meter steel rails are being exported to the European market for the first time. The 342-kilometer Hungary-Serbia Railway is a major BRI project in Europe and the centrepiece of China's cooperation with Central and Eastern European nations. It will connect Budapest, the capital of Hungary, and Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. Once finished, the Serbian section of the railroad will be 183 km long and can reach speed up to 200 km/h. This rail will run around 159 km in Hungary. China has successfully produced 60E1 steel rails by using the "universal rolling process" for the first time to improve the straightness of the rails.
- According to data released by China's National Energy Administration, [its installed renewable energy capacity](#) grew significantly in the first two months of the year. By the end of February, installed wind capacity had increased 11 per cent year-on-year to about 370 million kilowatts, while installed solar capacity had increased 30.8 per cent to about 410 million kilowatts compared to last year. The installed capacity of hydropower was also 410 million kilowatts, a year-on-year increase of 5.5 per cent. By the end of February, China's installed power generation capacity totalled about 2.6 billion kilowatts, an increase of 8.5 per cent over the previous year. China has decided on target of 490 million kilowatts of installed solar capacity by end of 2023. To promote environmentally friendly development, China has increased its

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investment in renewable energy over time. The total investment in solar energy by China's major power companies in the first two months nearly tripled from the previous year to 67.6 billion yuan (about \$10.14 billion). Out of this, investments in solar projects was around 28.3 billion Yuan (\$4.12 billion), a year-on-year increase of nearly 200 per cent.

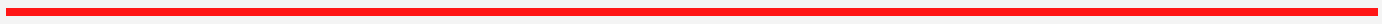
- Beijing and Xian have begun to offer cash subsidies on electric vehicles (EVs), indicating the failure of price war between automobile companies which could not effectively boost sales. Beijing's residents can receive a cash subsidy of 10,000 yuan (US\$1,452) if they replace their existing cars with e-vehicles between March 1 and August 31, according to the programme announced by city municipal government. EV buyers in Xian, the capital of China's north-western Shaanxi province, can receive a 6,000 Yuan subsidy if they buy EV before the end of April. According to Cao Hua, a partner at private equity firm Unity Asset Management, regional governments are placing their bets on the EV sector to boost consumption and stimulate economic growth. With these two cities, the total number of provinces offering subsidies on EVs have now increased to 14 since January after the central government stopped national level subsidies from January 1.
- As part of a larger effort to promote the growth of the domestic chip industry, China has released preferential tax policies for chip companies in 2023. The National Development and Reform Commission announced the policies on its website on Wednesday. According to the policies,

eligible semiconductor manufacturing projects, chip designers, and other businesses involved in the chip industry chain can apply for preferential tax policies. Businesses that were listed as eligible for preferential tax policies in 2022 must reapply in 2023 if they wish to continue receiving the benefits.

- Central Agricultural Office has recently introduced a package of policies and measures to improve soybean production and stabilise income of soybean farmers in China. These policies are being implemented in coordination with National Development and Reforms Commission, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Finance and State Food and Material Reserve Administration. It includes policies such as rationalising subsidy policy for soybean and corn especially in Northeast China, increase incentives for large grain-producing regions, expand soybean financial credit and insurance support, strengthen technical guidance services for soybean cultivators, encourage SOEs and other soybean processing enterprises to strengthen links between production and marketing of soybean and so on. These comprehensive measures indicate the importance of soybean in ensuring China's food security.

## SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Discussion on safety of Chinese tourists in other countries takes place on social media:** Recently, a 38-year-old Chinese tourist was kidnapped in Thailand by local people with the help of police and



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demanded huge ransom on the pretext of wrong documentation carried by the Chinese tourist. The Chinese national paid half of the amount and fled back to China in fear. The local police investigated the issue and caught the kidnappers. Moreover, the Thai embassy in China also issued a notification assuring safety of Chinese tourists in the future. However, this issue attracted strong criticism from Chinese netizens about the overall safety of Chinese citizens abroad. One Weibo user advised others not to travel to southeast Asia as it is not safe and instead suggested to explore China first. Some users also raised the issue of failure of Thailand to end human trafficking cartels in the country which jeopardises tourists' lives and property. Some users also suggested to travel in unknown countries only through recognised travel agencies and not to travel alone.

## INDIA WATCH

- India is now competing internationally in the production of semiconductors. On one hand, it wants to grow its strategic partnerships in the semiconductor industry, and on the other, it wants to attract chip manufacturing to produce in India. For instance, India has introduced the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) in 2019 in its efforts to promote Make in India initiative. India has since implemented a \$10 billion incentive programme to entice manufacturers to build new semiconductor fabrication facilities (fabs) in the country. India is subsequently looking to other nations for assistance in order to become self-sufficient in the chip industry. For instance, through the US-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET),

India and the US Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) have established a public-private partnership with the aim of strengthening India's position in the world chip market. In the production of semiconductor chips, India lags behind nations like China and Vietnam. India is one of the top countries for semiconductor design talent, even though it does not produce semiconductors, up to 20 per cent of all semiconductor design engineers worldwide are from India. India faces difficulties in mastering chip manufacturing technology as it is an extremely sophisticated and resource-intensive process. India will thus need to implement all-encompassing policies to address these issues, if it wants to create an opportunity of dominating the global semiconductor market.