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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Heated discussion on social media over warning visitors in Zhengzhou that they will be “executed on the spot”:** In the Henan Province of the residential community in the Chinese city of Zhengzhou, there is a heated discussion on Chinese social media about a stern warning that is blasted over the entrance gate loudspeakers: “Outside will be executed on the spot with the authority of law”. Jinshui District of Zhengzhou is experiencing the worst Covid outbreak in the province. A [video](#) showing the community gate in question went viral on Chinese social media, and the stern tone of the message and the serious face of the guard did not exactly make the situation look like it was meant to be a joke. According to various Chinese news sources, the harsh warning telling outsiders not to enter the community relates to people from outside the residential community coming inside the community gates to do their nucleic acid tests at the Tianxiacheng testing point. Trying to minimize people’s movements in light of the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, property management staff clearly were not happy about these cross-community flows of people and took rather drastic measures to stop them.

NEWS IN CHINA

- China will [reduce the retail prices](#) of gasoline and diesel from Tuesday based on the recent changes in international oil prices. The prices of gasoline and diesel will be cut by 175 yuan (about 24.56 US dollars) per tonne and 165 yuan per tonne respectively, stated the National Development and

Reform Commission. Under China's current pricing mechanism, if international crude oil prices change by more than 50 yuan per tonne and remain at that level for 10 working days, the prices of refined oil products such as gasoline and diesel in the country will be adjusted accordingly. China's three biggest oil companies, namely the China National Petroleum Corporation, the China Petrochemical Corporation, and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation, have been directed to maintain oil production and facilitate transportation to ensure stable supplies.

- On 22nd November, 195,000 newly-recruited Chinese civil servants pledged allegiance to the Constitution and completed national training sessions. Held by the Organization Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee from Nov. 17 to Nov. 21, the training sessions highlighted the implementation of the guiding principles of the 20th National Congress of the CPC, and reinforced the political, theoretical, conduct, and integrity training. The trainee civil servants were called upon to follow the instructions and guidance of the Party, act in line with the people-centered philosophy of development, and earnestly maintain the integrity from the start of their careers. The training sessions featured both video courses and offline seminars and were taught by the relevant central ministry and department officials and experts.
- The Tai'an-Zaozhuang section of the Beijing-Taipei Expressway, which is the first intelligent expressway in east China's

Shandong province, has been in operation for over a year. "The Beijing-Taipei Expressway crosses central Shandong province, which features complicated geology and climate. To ensure the safety of vehicles in all weather conditions, we installed light-emitting signs, glow-in-the-rain lane markings, and other warning devices along the road," said Lv Xinjian, director of the project office responsible for upgrading the Tai'an-Zaozhuang section. A cloud control system at an intelligent dispatching center of the Beijing-Taipei Expressway discovers vehicle breakdowns and locates them at the earliest time possible. Currently, the second intelligent expressway of Shandong province is under construction. Connecting the province's Jinan and Weifang, it fully learns from the advanced experiences in designing, construction, and maintenance gained by the Beijing-Taipei Expressway.

- Last week Chinese President Xi Jinping invited Italy's Prime Minister Georgia Meloni to visit the country after extending a similar offer to other EU leaders. Foreign Minister Wang Yi tells his Italian counterpart Antonio Tajani that Beijing does not want third parties to get involved. Both sides agreed to push forward a partnership on trade and technology. Wang urged Italy to play an "active and constructive role" in China-Europe relations in a phone call with Italian Deputy Prime Minister Antonio Tajani on Monday, echoing a call made by President Xi Jinping when he met Prime Minister Georgia Meloni last week. "China always regards the European Union as a comprehensive strategic partner, supports the EU's strategic autonomy, and wants to
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see a stable and prosperous Europe. China's policy towards Europe remains stable and consistent, regardless of changes in the international situation," Wang said, according to the Chinese foreign ministry.

- The President of Mongolia Ukhnaagiin Khurelsuh will pay a state visit to China from November 27 to 28, which reflects the high-level development of the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday, expressing China's hope to work with Mongolia to take the visit as an opportunity to set a good example of neighbourly relations and further deepen mutual trust and practical cooperation. Hua Chunying, the spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry, announced on Tuesday that at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, President of Mongolia Ukhnaagiin Khurelsuh will visit China. The spokesperson noted that in 2018, Khurelsuh paid an official visit to China as Mongolian Prime Minister. In June 2021, Khurelsuh was elected president. The upcoming visit will be his first to China as Mongolian president, which will carry forward the friendship and the fine tradition of close high-level exchanges between the two countries and shows the excellent growth of China-Mongolia's comprehensive strategic partnership. China looks forward to working with Mongolia to take this visit as an opportunity to deepen our strategic mutual trust and practical cooperation and set an example in neighbourly relations to elevate China-Mongolia relations to a new height, Zhao said.

- The European Union will renew sanctions on Chinese officials it has accused of "serious human rights violations" in the western region of Xinjiang for another year. They were first put in March 2019 on four individuals and one entity. The EU said that it has observed no improvement in human rights conditions in the region, they are likely to be extended without a debate in December, according to multiple diplomats familiar with the situation. Ambassadors in the EU's powerful Coreper II committee will discuss the sanctions as part of the bloc's overall human rights sanctioning regime on November 30, after which the extension will be approved during a meeting of ministers from EU member states on December 5. Diplomats dealing with human rights issues okayed the extension on October 3. This would mean the sanctions will be rolled over in March, two years after they first came into force and helped usher in an unprecedented period of turbulence in the EU-China relationship.

INDIA WATCH

- In the process of the diplomatic outreach accelerated by India, towards the European countries, India welcomed the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen along with the foreign ministers from Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, and the Netherlands in New Delhi on the occasion of the Raisina Dialogue that was held in April, 2022. The Indian Prime Minister also visited Germany, Denmark, and France in the month of May. These back-to-back engagements should give momentum to India's relations with European countries.
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This is also an opportunity for India and European countries to iron out their differences over the perception of strategic threats emerging from Russia and China. European countries have been very vocal in criticizing Russia for its war against Ukraine. However, these countries have trodden carefully with respect to China despite increasing friction between both entities – until now. Following China’s refusal to criticize Russia over its Ukraine invasion, discord between Europe and China is increasingly apparent. The EU-China Summit was held on April 1 after about two years. The meeting, however, failed to bridge the increasing gap between the EU and China. The EU raised issues such as Ukraine, sanctions against Members of European Parliament (MEPs), and human right violations, including in Hong Kong. China did not address these criticisms; instead, China expressed its preference to see the EU pursue strategic autonomy by detaching from the United States. Tensions between European countries and China have been simmering for a long time. The Russia-Ukraine conflict should further make it an easy choice for Europe to rethink its relations with China which opens doors for India.
