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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Chinese netizens demand videos to expose the reality of the arrest of UK reporter during protests in Shanghai:**

News about the [arrest of BBC journalist](#) Ed Lawrence who was covering the second night protests in Shanghai on 27 November 2022 had hit the main headlines on the Chinese social media. On 29 November 2022, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Zhao Lijian, responded by criticizing western media (BBC news) which distorted the incident to paint China in a bad light. Zhao's comments went viral on Weibo in two hashtags, namely "Zhao Lijian presents the truth about the BBC reporter who was taken away" (#赵立坚介绍BBC记被带离真相#), and "Why is it always BBC that has problem at the scene?" (#为什么每次都是BBC在现场出问题#). On Weibo, the statement by Zhao, including videos was published by Global Times which did not explicitly reported the incidents of Shanghai demonstrations. One of the top trending comments which received over 6700 likes on Weibo stated: 'The BBC was always making up rumours and were engaged in anti- Chinese campaign'. Although many netizens were in support of Zhao's remarks, there were also some who wanted to know more about the incident. Furthermore, there were those who made sarcastic comments relating to the outside force narrative that became ubiquitous in China's online media sphere in response to the censored protests that have been taking place across China. Many commentators kept on demanding for the release of the video to denounce the security personnel actions during the incident.

NEWS IN CHINA

- China rolled out an action plan on 29 November 2022 to speed up COVID-19 immunisation of the elderly, especially those aged 80 and above as vaccinations in the highly vulnerable group lag behind the general population. The plan, released by the State Council's Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism, adjusted the booster vaccination protocol, and requires localities to extensively survey senior populations and ramp up services and awareness campaigns. To accelerate vaccination, the required period between primary vaccination and getting a booster has been reduced from six months to three months. The decision to make the reduction was based on studies and clinical data. The plan stated that all vaccines approved for booster shots including a nasal spray could be coupled with any kind of vaccines used for initial inoculation, which will provide a total of six immunisation combinations. Moreover, vaccination work was to be strengthened at key venues, such as elderly care and learning facilities and recreational centers, as well as for gatherings and tour groups involving a large number of seniors. Local governments are also obliged to use big data tools to identify the number of elderly people in their jurisdictions in order to evaluate their condition to rule out those who were not suitable for vaccination. Immunisation services are to be made more convenient for the elderly, including setting up expedited channels for seniors, while the deployment of mobile vaccination vehicles had to be maintained. Health education material tailored to the elderly are to be distributed to highlight the safety and efficacy of vaccines and the pressing need to get vaccinated.
 - China has launched a campaign to offer employment services to college graduates to help them land jobs. The campaign will be lasting from 28 November 2022 to 18 December 2022 and will organise a string of online and offline activities, including recruitment and assessment. The event has taken place 19 times, offering over 19 million jobs in the past decade. Some 4.45 million college graduates secured jobs via the project. The number of college graduates in China in 2022 reached 10.76 million and is expected to total 11.58 million in 2023. Earlier this month, related authorities held an online video conference to improve employment promotion policies and make arrangements for helping graduates find jobs or start businesses next year.
 - On 29 November, the Beijing Municipal Government Information Office held the 429th regular press conference on epidemic prevention and control, where they will introduce the situation and answer questions from reporters. At the meeting, Liu Xiaofeng, deputy director of the Municipal Center for Disease Control and Prevention, introduced certain protocols that all districts are to fully study and judge the epidemic situation in their jurisdictions, and optimise prevention and control measures according to the actual situation; key units such as nursing homes and welfare homes are to implement closed-loop management, strictly manage access, clean and disinfect the environment, and urge the personnel in the places to do a good job. Industries and
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units are to establish a "white list" system, do a good job in closed-loop management of personnel, reduce cross-working areas, reduce the density of dormitories, and supervise employees that they do a good job of personal protection such as wearing masks, washing hands frequently, and maintaining a safe social distance, so as to not only protect the needs of the public, but also prevent the spread of the risk of the epidemic.

- China and Russia have reaffirmed their commitment to rejecting unipolar hegemony and safeguarding international fairness and justice, a move that officials and scholars said is conducive to the peace and stability of the region and the world. State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi welcomed Russian Ambassador to China [Igor Morgulov](#) to his post on 28 Nov 2022, stating that China would provide strong support and help to facilitate his work. Morgulov, who had extensive experience in dealing with China-related issues, was appointed the new Russian ambassador to China in September 2022 and arrived in Beijing to assume his duties last month. As major neighbors, China and Russia vowed to constantly advance strategic mutual trust and practical cooperation and deepen the comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination, no matter how the international landscape evolves. Morgulov stated that the Russia-China relationship is unbreakable and the friendship between the two countries could prevail over any challenge. Scholars observed that China-Russia relations, under the strategic guidance of the heads of each state, have maintained positive growth momentum and had seen high-quality

development, setting a good example of relations between major countries.

- On 29 November 2022, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang addressed the 8th [China-Japan Business Leader and Former High-Level Government Official Dialogue](#) via video link stressing the importance of respect and treating each other "as equals". Li reaffirmed China's commitment to opening up and welcomed Japanese investment into the country. He expressed his hopes that both countries could "give full play" to the complementary advantages of their economies and strengthen cooperation in areas including the digital economy, green development, finance, medical care and care for the elderly. In a five-point document released after the meeting, the two sides pledged to strengthen economic cooperation and maritime consultations in an effort to stabilise strained ties between two of the world's largest economies. The leaders agreed to provide a fair and non-discriminatory investment environment for businesses from both countries and called for a new round of high-level economic dialogues to be held soon.

INDIA WATCH

- Assessing the [China factor](#) in the India-Russia partnership, it can be seen that both the nations exhibits divergent foreign policy strategies regarding China, with India focusing on multi-alignment and Russia on developing ties within Asia. The problem with the divergent nature of these two policies is that while seeking to extend its strategic perimeter and regional profile, Russia's engagement with India and China has highlighted the conflict of interests between these two countries, including the
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recent military stand-off between India and China in Ladakh and China's posturing in the Indian Ocean region. India's security dilemma is further captured in China's burgeoning defense engagement with Russia, which has amplified the combat capability of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) as Russia had sold S-400 missile systems to both India and China. In addition to the defense sphere, Russia is also dependent on China for power projection and financial investment to sustain its economic growth momentum. As China-Russia trade relations continue to dwarf those of India-Russia, likely into the near future, China seems to have more clout than India in maneuvering its foreign policy interests with Russia. Therefore, the task ahead for both countries is to address defense misalignment and minimize divergence of interests to avoid creating too large a wedge in the long run. Although India sees its engagement with the United States (U.S.) having more weightage in countering China's aggressive posturing, it must also try to strengthen and sustain its relations with Russia so that it has multiple strong alliances to counterbalance China. Irrespective of the India's geopolitical equations with Russia and the U.S. India's choice to pursue multi-alignment redefines its strategic autonomy and pragmatism. Given the rising military and strategic competition, how India manages its engagement with extra-regional players will be key alongside enhancing its own capabilities and preparedness.
