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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA



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NEWS IN CHINA

- Rare ruins of the late Shang dynasty (1600-1046 B.C.) were found in Northwestern China. The Zhaigou site in Qingjian County, Yulin City in northwest China's Shaanxi Province, contains some of the most abundant remains discovered in the province. According to the Shaanxi Academy of Archaeology, the Zhaigou Site is situated on 11 hills and contains multiple functional areas, including large tombs, small cemeteries, and bronze casting shops. Among them, nine of the tombs are the largest and most high-level noble tombs found in northern Shaanxi Province. These tombs have been dubbed as having great significance in the study of the political structure of the Shang Dynasty as well as the relations between the core area of Shang culture and the northern marginal zone.
- The main health indicators of children in Beijing reached advanced levels of international standard according to reports. The Beijing Municipal Health and Health Commission in a press conference put out the report that the infant mortality rate in Beijing has dropped by 56.10 percent compared to ten years ago. According to the press conference, in 2022, the infant mortality rate in Beijing was estimated to be at 1.26 percent, and the anaemia prevalence rate of children under 5 years old was at 2.24 percent, which are respectively 56.10 percent and 37.25 percent lower than the rates in 2012. Beijing has also expanded the free screening of newborn genetic metabolic diseases which is estimated to reach more than 98 percent in 2022. Xi Shuyan, the Director of Maternal and Child Health Division of Beijing Municipal Commission of Health has said that targeting the important causes of birth defects and child deaths, Beijing has carried out integrated services for congenital heart disease, including multidisciplinary consultation, personnel training as well as information sharing. At present, Beijing has around 37 healthy and friendly community centres set up for children,

promoting the provision of early childhood development services to communities.

- According to reports released by the Rising Lab, Chengdu topped the [ranking of the new first-tier cities](#) in China. It has topped the list of the Ranking of Cities' Business Attractiveness in China 2023 put out by the organisation. Utilising data from over 17 internet companies and data agencies, Shanghai media group Yicai's research wing evaluated 337 cities at the prefecture level and above based on five first-level dimensions: concentration of commercial resources, city hub, activity of city residents, diversity of lifestyle and future plasticity. In the 2023 list, 15 new first-tier cities are Chengdu, Chongqing, Hangzhou, Wuhan, Suzhou, Xi'an, Nanjing, Changsha, Tianjin, Zhengzhou, Dongguan, Qingdao, Kunming, Ningbo and Hefei. In comparison with the previous year, Kunming returned to the new first-tier, replacing Foshan which had previously been rising in ranks. While former new first-tier cities Shenyang and Wuxi dropped to the second-tier.
- Beijing made it clear that its defence chief will not have any bilateral meeting with its U.S. counterpart at the [Shangri-La dialogue](#) as long as the former is under U.S. sanctions. This comes in the midst of the announcement that the U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will speak at the Shangri-La Dialogue on Saturday, while Chinese Defense Minister General Li Shangfu is scheduled to address the gathering on Sunday. Mao Ning, the Foreign Ministry spokesperson, on Tuesday called out the U.S. saying that Washington should "earnestly respect China's sovereignty and security interests and

concerns, immediately correct the wrongdoing, show sincerity, and create the necessary atmosphere and conditions for dialogue and communication between the two militaries".

- There are varied domestic opinions coming up about Russia and its ongoing conflict with Ukraine. Dubbed as the 'silent majority', opinions have come up about the domestic displeasure over the same. Chinese people are exposed by one netizen to have varied ideas about the conflict and do not fully support Russia or Ukraine. The Tsinghua University recently [released a survey](#), which yielded the result of more than 80 per cent of Chinese people believing the West to be responsible for the war, which is more or less equivalent to supporting Russia while less than 10 percent agreed with Ukraine's position. However, this information has to be taken with caution considering that most Chinese people don't have access to external sources. Many obtain information from official media while others gain information from "self-media" i.e., individually operated influencer accounts, which are also most often in line with the official tone.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Chinese variety show on farming becomes a viral sensation:** Chinese variety show '[Become A Farmer](#)' has become a massive success online. Featured on iQIYI, China's equivalent of Netflix, it is a documentary-style interactive reality show. The show focuses on 10 young men hand-picked out of 300 candidates to form a
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farming team which focuses on actual farm work starting from planting of the seed to the complete journey of rice germination, growth, flowering, and ultimately harvesting spanning over a period of 190 days. With its focus on hard work, meeting actual targets and the calm rural setting, it has gained great momentum especially among the young viewers. 'Become A Farmer' gained over 4.6 billion views on Weibo through the hashtag #种地吧# (Zhǒng dì ba), which when translated to English mean "Let's Plant" or "Let's Farm". It also points to China's growing trend of embracing rural themes in mainstream media.

INDIA WATCH

- The domestic Chinese population has varying opinions on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, with some supporting the Russian position while others are in favour of Ukraine. The Indian population too have made clear their varying ideas on India's stand on the war or as some quote, a 'lack of strong stand' from India's side. There are voices arguing for India to take a more rigid position on the conflict rather than the neutral act that it has been putting up. However, what needs to be considered is that currently India is heavily dependent on Russia particularly for its defence sector as well as on the Ukraine supporting allied groups led by the United States. It is also sufficiently gaining the capability to satisfy domestic needs and reap profits through its trade with Russia in their oil. India needs to balance out its national interest in this regard and maintain a position that is to its advantage.

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