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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Russia Gets A New Name On Weibo:** Ever since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the ongoing conflict has garnered much attention from Chinese citizens. With many taking to Weibo to voice their opinions, the current conflict has always seen mixed reactions from netizens, ever since its onset. Some support the invasion as the best way to curb the US; urging the CCP to do the same for Taiwan, while others have shown empathy for the Ukrainians and condemned the act of the Russian military. As multiple hashtags regarding the Ukraine invasion have trended on Weibo, a notable Chinese social platform, with many focusing on Russia's undeniable win, recent news has shown otherwise. Many netizens have expressed their views on the trajectory of the invasion, flouting the military's actions as immoral and the country's efforts as useless; draining Russia of its resources against a powerful NATO. Amidst growing opinions, the term *cài'é*, which means "weak Russia" has been trending due to a number of memes being posted under the tag. Netizens have taken to Weibo to post memes and commentaries on Russia's fading victory under the popular terms "[Weak Russia](#)" and "Weak Goose". However, on the other side, a section of netizens have condemned such behavior and shed light on the need to address the gravity of the situation for both the Ukrainians and the Russians rather than reducing it to a meme fest for entertainment.
- **Netizens Contribute to Wisdom and Opinions to the CPC's National Congress:** Chinese netizens have taken the active role of participating in a new initiative launched by the Communist Party of China (CPC) to solicit public opinions and

suggestions on the work of the CPC at the Party's upcoming 20th National Congress. For the first time in the history of the Party, will citizens get an opportunity to play an active role in decision making. Netizens have lauded the CPC's efforts of demonstrating a strong commitment to democracy and its tradition to pool wisdom from the public. From April 15 to May 16 of this year, designated online platforms like Weibo, the websites and mobile apps of People's Daily, Xinhua News Agency, and China Media Group, opened special sections for netizens to share their views and ideas. More than 8.54 million pieces of opinions and suggestions were collected, over 97 percent of which were submitted under real names. Participation from diverse sections of societies, ranging from personnel of state organs to self-employed individuals and netizens was seen, who spoke on a wide range of topics, including full and strict Party governance, socialist cultural advancement, ecological progress and people's well-being. Some took to the platform to upload existing policies, others came up with new views and ideas to enhance existing schemes.

NEWS IN CHINA

- Ahead of the long awaited National Holiday week, China is celebrating the 73rd birthday of the People's Republic of China on the first day of the National holidays with more than 200 thousand citizens gathering at the historic Tiananmen Square to celebrate the day, by tradition with pride and honor. The country is also blessed with new achievements on its birthday from the week ahead—the development and recent certification of

the first homegrown jetliner, the C919, making it ready for market operation. Secondly, China's own space station lab module Wentian successfully completed in-orbit transposition at 12:44 PM Friday; this is the first time the country will receive messages from space from its own Chinese Taikonauts. Lastly, the country's all-women basketball team reached the final of the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup for the first time in nearly 30 years. Even when the team lost in finals, their performance gained immense respect and popularity all around the globe, bringing a sense of joy and pride to China. Leaders from all over the world, UN Sec-Gen Antonio Guterres, US State Secretary Anthony Blinken, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, and Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif sent their heartfelt congratulations to the country on its special day. With the environment filled with patriotism and pride, the Chinese government's efforts in creating stability, even during the pandemic has allowed many citizens to still enjoy the national holiday.

- During difficult economic times in China, factory activity has seen significant growth for the first time in the last three months, according to data released last Friday. [An1] The National Bureau of Standards (NBS) reported a rise in the Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) to 50.1 from 49.4. On the other hand, the official non-manufacturing PMI fell to 50.6 from 52.6 in August, in September. However, the manufacturing boom rebounded in September due to stimulus measures and cooling weather. China's economy continues to recover as all three indices are in its expansionary range this month.

According to the composite PMI, while China's enterprises continue to expand significantly, the pace has slowed. Caixin Insight Group senior economist Wang Zhe factored the pandemic's significance in affecting enterprises. In addition to the complex pandemic situation, strict COVID protocols and government controls continue to negatively impact the economy. While the country is bouncing back on track, September has seen weak manufacturing supply and demand; the job market too was weak, logistics and transportation were sluggish due to pandemic controls, the cost of production and prices continued to decline and purchases and inventories declined as well. As a result of which, market optimism declined significantly. Due to mainland China's ongoing strict zero-COVID policy, the World Bank cut mainland China's GDP growth forecast from 5 percent to 2.8 percent for 2022.

- The China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) on Sunday, announced that they will recruit 12 to 14 new reserve astronauts for future spaceflight missions. Seven to eight will be spacecraft pilots, and five to six will be spaceflight engineers and two payload specialists, added the CMSA. The spacecraft pilots will be recruited from the in-service pilots of the armed forces, according to the CMSA. The spaceflight engineers will be selected from those already engaged in scientific research and engineering work in aerospace engineering and related fields, while the payload specialists will be researchers who specialize in space science and applications. As the organizer of the recruitment, the CMSA for the very first

time, selected two payload specialists from special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macao. The entire recruitment of new astronauts is expected to be completed in one and a half years, said the CMSA.

- Ahead of the CPC's 20th National Congress and the country's National Day, protestors from the UK and the United States have taken the floor to protest against the human rights violence carried by the state upon the country's ethnic minorities— the Uyghurs, Tibetans and also the people of Hong Kong. In the United States, protestors gathered in the campus of the University of California, Berkeley on October 1, waving the Tibetan flag and the colonial-era flag of Hong Kong and placing a tombstone effigy inscribed with the estimated death toll under CCP rule since Mao Zedong proclaimed the People's Republic of China from Tiananmen podium on October 1, 1949. The protest was timed to coincide with a visit to the school by Zhang Jianmin, the Chinese consul in San Francisco, to take part in the Berkeley China Summit symposium. Protests also turned out in San Gabriel, Los Angeles, and Park City, Montreal, with signs that read "Destroy the CCP!"
 - The State Council at an executive meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang on Monday decided that China will offer tax concessions for private pension plans that enjoy policy support and are run commercially to meet people's diverse needs. The development of policy-supported and commercially operated private pensions will be beneficial to the old-age insurance program as it helps
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reduce the costly burden on the state due to China's growing aging population and can also better meet people's diverse needs and enhance social security safeguards. Personal income tax concessions, as decided, will be made available for those participating in the private pension scheme, entitled to a contribution deduction of up to 12,000 yuan (\$1,670) per year from their annual taxable income. The policy will be applied retroactively to Jan 1 this year.

- China has the confidence and capacity to maintain its major economic indicators within a proper range and ensure sustained healthy growth this year, Premier Li Keqiang said on Friday. During a meeting in Beijing with foreign experts who are recipients of the Friendship Award of the Chinese Government, Li said that the Chinese economy, despite downside pressure, has now taken on a general momentum of steady recovery. The Premier attributed reform and opening-up policies to China's rapid growth stating that the nation will continue to commit to deepening reform that cut red tape and enhance compliance oversight and services and bolstering of opening-up to ensure strong momentum of growth. Li mentioned China's affinity to promote global coordination in the innovation of science and technology with a more open attitude and enable the outcomes of innovation to better benefit the world. Furthermore, he lauded the foreign experts as envoys of friendship between China and the rest of the world. The meeting saw the premier meeting with 42 ambassadors and representatives from international organizations in Beijing on Friday where he mentioned amongst his foreign

counterparts, Beijing's unwavering commitment to a path of peaceful development; a national policy of reform and opening-up and pursuing win-win cooperation and expressed China's willingness to work with various nations to enhance understanding; eliminate misunderstandings, seek consensus, properly manage differences and expand cooperation in the process of dialogue and communication.

INDIA WATCH

- As both India and China, two large manufacturing economies struggle to jumpstart their pandemic affected economies, India is seeing significant growth as foreign investments are shifting to India as China struggles to reopen its market with strict COVID19 protocols. Amidst it all, Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has emphasized on the advancement of technology to significantly contribute to the economy of the country. In the same lines, under the 100 lakh crore rupees (USD 1.2 trillion) mega project, PM Gati Shakti, Modi's administration is creating a digital platform that combines 16 ministries. The portal will offer investors and companies a one-stop solution for design of projects, seamless approvals and easier estimation of costs. Fast-tracking projects will give India an advantage, especially with China still largely closed to the outside world and companies increasingly adopting a China-plus-one policy -- finding other countries to expand in or source from -- to diversify their businesses and supply chains. Asia's third largest economy is an attractive space for investors for its cheap labor, large skilled, English-speaking population. However,
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rickety infrastructure development factors in most investors shifting away from India. So, for India, to efficiently milk the new opportunity of a shifting global chain supply, it is necessary to not only redevelop its infrastructure, but also invest in creating effective economic hubs. The recently introduced, Public Linked Incentive scheme can also provide India with many avenues for efficient development, and it could be just a matter of time before India takes the upper hand away from China in production.
