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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Chinese students made an ‘invisibility cloak’ that evades security cameras:** The [InvisDefense coat](#) developed by a group of four students from Wuhan University is a low-cost coat that can hide the human body, day or night, from the security cameras monitored by AI. Professor Wang Zheng of the school of Computer Science at Wuhan University oversaw the project. The group won the first prize at the “Huawei Cup” sponsored by Huawei Technologies Co as part of the China Postgraduate Innovation and Practice Competitions. The students carried out hundreds of tests over three months on campus security cameras to come up with a best pattern which strikes a balance between fooling both the camera and the human eye. The accuracy of pedestrian detection was reduced by 57 percent.
- **The phenomenon of “slash youth” in China grabs attention:** Working in a stable main job while working part time has become a new form of employment for some young Chinese in recent years, which is known in China as “[slash](#)” or “amphibious.” On Chinese social media such as Weibo, WeChat and Douban there are many posts related to side hustles, with a variety of content. A group with more than 200,000 members on Douban named “The Day of Side Business Failure” has appeared on trend list many times. According to a study, “amphibious youth” with one or more side jobs accounted for 17.34 percent of China’s working youths.

NEWS IN CHINA

- China appointed New Party Chiefs for three provinces. The Communist Party of China Central Committee has recently appointed Yi Lianhong, Yin Hong and Hu Changsheng as party secretary of eastern Zhejiang province, eastern Jiangxi province and northwestern Gansu province respectively. A few days ago, three other provinces Liaoning, Shaanxi and Fujian also had their new party chiefs appointed.
 - On Tuesday, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee convened a meeting to analyse and study the economic work in 2023. The meeting emphasised on achieving an overall improvement in the economic performance characterised by higher quality and reasonable growth. The meeting also stressed on expanding domestic demands, strengthening the resilience of industrial and supply chains and making greater efforts to attract foreign investment. Furthermore, the meeting also focused on combating corruption. Noting It was noted that the focus should be on both political and economic elements; corruption in sectors with high concentration of power, resources and wealth; and corrupt low-ranking officials, whose misconduct directly affects people's lives.
 - Four new COVID-19 vaccines were approved for emergency use on mainland China within two days from 3 PM last Sunday to 4 PM this Monday. The vaccines include three recombinant protein-based vaccines and one nasal spray influenza virus vector vaccine. The four companies, namely SinoCellTech, Clover Biopharmaceuticals, Wantai BioPharma and WestVacBiopharms announced the approval of their vaccines. Among them, Wantai vaccine developed together with the University of Hong Kong and Xiamen University Wantai vaccine developed together with the University of Hong Kong and Xiamen University is the first nasal spray vaccine in the world to be approved for clinical trials. The vaccine is delivered via syringe through a special tip designed to produce a mist. The authorities are doubling down on their efforts to vaccinate vulnerable groups as fast as possible and are making plans to kick off a fourth dose in the country. With the approval of 4 new vaccines, there are now a total of 12 CovidCOVID-19 vaccines available in China, including 5 inactivated vaccines, 4 recombinant protein vaccines, 1 adenovirus shot, one recombinant novel coronavirus vaccine for inhalation and one nasal spray influenza virus vector vaccine.
 - A forum held in China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to mark the 30th anniversary of the 1992 consensus stressed the One-China principle and opposed "Taiwan Independence." The 1992 consensus refers to the alleged outcome of a meeting between Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) and the Taiwan based Straits Exchange Foundation.
 - A special freight train deemed the first banana train departed from the Vientiane station in Lao capital on Wednesday. The train carries 25 cold chain containers loaded with 500 tons of fresh Lao bananas. The train will travel along the China-Laos
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- railway to Changsha, capital of southern China's Hunan Province making it the first "banana train" that travels directly to a specific Chinese city since the China-Laos Railway was put into operation a year ago. Since the commencement of its operation on December 3, 2021, the railway has transported more than 8.5 million passengers and 11.2 million tons of freight. The railway has significantly reduced land transport cost by as much as 40 to 50 per cent and potentially increased the aggregate income of Laos by up to 21 per cent after connecting the land-locked country to the vast Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) network, according to data from World Bank.
 - According to the website of Ministry of Education, the 2023 National Master's Admission Examination will be held from December 24 to 26, 2022 as scheduled dispersing any worries that it might be delayed due to the recent COVID-19 restrictions. Utmost efforts should be made to ensure that the exam takes place as scheduled and all candidates can participate safely, the ministry said in a notice. A record 4.57 million candidates signed up to take the postgraduate exam. Experts estimate the number will increase next year.
 - The nation's top pandemic response body eased several control measures as authorities hinted towards moving away from 'Zero Covid' and looking to co-exist with the virus.

INDIA WATCH

- Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a massive

most ambitious multinational, multi-modal infrastructure project of China which connects Asia with Africa and Europe via land and maritime routes. The project aims to improve regional integration, increasing trade, and stimulating economic growth. The railway line developed with Laos is one such example of this project. India on the other hand, does not support the BRI and had declined to join the same because of security concerns. In a virtual meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) hosted by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told that "connectivity projects should respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and respect international law." This point was of course made in reference to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is built on Indian territory that is illegally held by Pakistan. In addition, India has also voiced its concern in the Indian Ocean region with the Hambantota port in Sri Lanka which has been leased to China for a period of 99 years. Despite its concerns, trade between China and India is flourishing. Last year, the India-China bilateral trade hit a record high of over USD 125 billion crossing the USD 100 billion mark in a year. There is no denying that China-India relations are characterised through both competition and cooperation. With its economic growth, India has also begun to boost its influence in the region by investing in infrastructure projects and developing bilateral ties. Although some may believe that both the countries are competing fiercely to spread its influence in South Asia, it should also be noted that South Asian countries' economic cooperation

with China, India or any other country is not exclusive. Infrastructure development is always conducive to regional economic development. Whether China and India can keep their differences under control will be of great significance to South Asia and Asia as a whole. As the two largest economies in Asia, they also need to assume responsibility to make due contributions for regional development. As a torchbearer of Nehruvian Idealism in its foreign policy and philosophy of “Vasudeva Kutumbukam” India needs to tread carefully and maintain its strategic sobriety while being vigilant towards its geopolitical pitfalls.
