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DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**



**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON
CHINA AND ASIA**

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I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Flashlight before the earthquake captured in Camera:** On a viral video uploaded on Weibo after the January 8 earthquake in Menyuan County (in Tibet autonomous region), an explosive flashlight was captured on a CCTV camera moments before the earthquake. The viral video sparked a debate among Chinese netizens. While some netizens mentioned it as a downed power line, others argued in favour of the natural phenomenon of 'Earthquake lights'.
- **Cotton produced in Xinjiang to produce masks:** A video uploaded on YouTube which went viral among Chinese netizens claimed that China is going to use the cotton produced in Xinjiang to produce masks. Exports from Xinjiang are currently banned for the global markets on the issue of human rights violations. The information has not been confirmed officially.

II. News in China

- On January 11, Central Economic Workshop(CEW) proposed reforms in public service policies, especially in areas such as education, health care, old age, and housing. According to CEW, there is a growing demand for a better standard of life, and the public services have to cope with this transformation. According to reports, China is restructuring its public service delivery system with expectations that by 2035 there will be a 42.6 per cent surge in demand for these services.
- In a press conference held by State Council Information Office, the Ministry of Civil Affairs briefed about future reformation steps in public service delivery. In reply to a question asked during the press conference regarding the elderly care service, the head of the Department of Elderly Care Service stated that the party is very much cognizant about the ageing population and will adopt the necessary reforms, such as encouraging community-based nursing centres, so that an elderly person can avail the services in 15 minutes.
- European Union is preparing to impose a 70 million Euro fine on Poland, for not abiding by the verdict of the European Court of Justice. The verdict was regarding the dissolution of the disciplinary committee of the Polish supreme court-claimed to be in contradiction with the EU law. This verdict has added fuel to deteriorating EU-Poland relations. Against this backdrop, Xi Jinping called the Polish President on the same day of the development coming to light.
- Chinese foreign minister officially condemned the Kazakh unrest and vowed to help Kazakhstan in fighting against the 'three evil forces of terrorism, separatism and religious extremism. He referred to the anti-government protests as terrorism and offered cooperation from Chinese law enforcement and security agencies.

- Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that Lithuania should immediately correct its wrongdoing. In a routine press conference, the ministry's spokesperson remarked that Lithuania should not become a “chess piece” for anti-china forces. The statement from the ministry came after the US Trade Representative Katherine Tai's comments supporting Lithuania to counter China's “economic coercion” made the news.
- It has been reported that foreign ministers from Iran, Turkey, and the Gulf will soon visit China and meet separately with the Chinese Foreign Minister. The talks are expected to be around the Iran Nuclear Deal.

III. India Watch

- During his five-nation visit, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi has now landed in Sri Lanka, which is going through an economic crisis due to depreciating foreign exchange reserves. Wang Yi stated that stronger Sino-Lankan relations are not to “target any third party” and added that China-Sri Lanka bilateral relations should not be interfered with by any “third party”. The same terminology was used when China shifted its solar plant from Northern Sri Lanka to the Maldives over “security concerns by Third-Party”. These statements should be taken as a success for Indian diplomatic assertiveness because the Chinese are recognizing the fact that India cannot be isolated while forming any policy step in South Asia and, most importantly, in the Indian Ocean.
- With unrest in Kazakhstan, the importance of Russia for regional security has been emphasized again. China's outreach to the leaders in the region in the aftermath of the Kazakhstan unrest is of significance for understanding how China and Russia fare in Central Asia's regional dynamics.