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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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NEWS IN CHINA

- Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC), the country's leading plane-maker, is expected to launch China's AG600 amphibious aircraft in the market by 2025. A series of major test missions are scheduled to take place this year, AVIC said. The AG600, also called "water dragon" and Kunlong, plays an important role in combating forest fires, maritime search and rescue, and other operations. AVIC aims to push the deliveries of AG600M aircraft, which specialises in firefighting and belongs to the AG600 family. To acquire the airworthiness certification, the plane-maker has scheduled flight test and ground test missions this year.
- The latest data released by China's central bank showed that household deposits rose at a record high in January, and the issue of "excess savings" sparked discussions of weak consumption after the epidemic. Chinese state media said that the transformation of residents from excess savings to consumption has become a top priority for China's current economic work.
- Authorities in the Mongolia Autonomous Region recently unraveled a drug case seizing around 80kg of drugs and arresting over 100 suspects. The suspects arrested have been accused of smuggling drugs from international territories to 20 provincial regions as per the public security bureau. As per authorities the sourcing and sale of the drugs took place through online platforms in order to find clients.
- Hong Kong Legislative Council President Leung Kwan-yan and Chief Executive John Lee are planning to have officials and legislators visit the Greater Bay Area together. In his speech at the Legislative Council's Chinese New Year Leung Kwan-yan

not only informed the attendees about the planned arrangements for officials and legislators to visit the GBA, but also stressed that the executive and legislative organs, as the governors of Hong Kong, have a long way to go, and the close exchanges between the two sides will continue unabated. He believes that the Hong Kong Government and the Legislative Council will not wait for the rabbit, and will actively plan and take the initiative to give full play to Hong Kong's advantages.

- A fire at a hotel in Suzhou on Thursday (Feb. 2) killed six people and injured 16. Comprehensive Xinhua News Agency and Beijing News reported that according to the government of Xiangcheng District, Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province, at about 6 a.m. on Thursday, a fire broke out at Changhong Hotel in Weitang Town, Xiangcheng District, Suzhou City, the fire point was close to the fire station, and it was extinguished about an hour after the fire. The accident has killed six people and injured 28.
- Wang Yi, director of the office of the foreign affairs commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) central committee visited Italy. Wang Yi is touring Europe, and is planning to visit Hungary and Russia next. Wang Yi, a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, met with the Italian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Antonio Tajani, and highlighted the importance of Italy's endeavour to support China in the belt and road initiative. Wang further emphasised on the growing China-Italy bilateral relations, and underlined some key potential areas where China-Italy

can cooperate. Tajani said that China and Italy "enjoy a long-term friendly relationship", and further pointed out China's importance to Italy. The two sides also exchanged views on the situation in Ukraine.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- A minor topic related to social security went viral in China. In China, individuals need to pay 15 years of social insurance fees prior to receiving their pension funds after they retire, enterprises are also obliged to contribute to the social security of their employees. The topic was trending on no 4 in China on Friday. Wuhan saw protests over the reduction of the government provided medical insurance for seniors. After reforms in the public health insurance system, the monthly allowance saw a reduction and Chinese retirees are not happy about it. After Wuhan and Dalian saw protest, the government censored hashtags and topics pertaining to the protest.

INDIA WATCH

- China's aviation industry is working towards developing amphibious aircrafts, which can be used in any situation. China has a strong defence manufacturing sector. We have seen India pushing for indigenous aircrafts for the Indian Navy, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is working towards manufacturing India's first amphibious aircraft. Some of China's indigenously developed aircraft have the capability to land anywhere in the Indian Ocean Region and return without any
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refuelling. India currently lacks indigenous amphibious aircrafts. Amphibious aircraft are important in conducting Search and Rescue and HADR, are ideal to use for rapid deployment and evacuation of forces. Amphibious aircrafts provide the flexibility to work in difficult conditions, they can be used on land as well as water. Seaplanes are critical in any conflict situation, which is a possibility given the situation on India-China borders.
