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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA



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NEWS IN CHINA

- China launched a new BeiDou navigation satellite from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center, Sichuan. After it enters the orbit, the new satellite is to be connected to the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System. This will be the 56th satellite in the BeiDou family and will also be the first backup satellite for the BeiDou-3 system. The satellite was launched on 17 May 2023 by a Long March-3B carrier rocket, marking the 473rd flight of the Long March carrier rockets. According to the 13th China Satellite Navigation Conference, China plans to send more backup satellites for the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System aiming to improve its stability.
- China established a base for archaeological research and the protection of cultural relics in South Asia and Southeast Asia in Kunming, Yunnan Province. It was built jointly by the government of Yunnan province and the National Cultural Heritage Administration. The newly established base has a specimen exhibition hall and warehouse, and rooms collection, analysis, and restoration of cultural relics. Yang Decong, deputy head of the Yunnan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, said that this will help improve cooperation between the academic institutions in South Asian and Southeast Asian countries for archaeological research.
- President Xi Jinping called for all-out efforts for rescuing the people who went missing when a deep-sea fishing vessel overturned in the central Indian Ocean. Xi also urged for the activation of; the emergency response mechanisms in the relevant departments. Currently there are 39 people missing, including 17 Chinese nationals, 17 Indonesians and five from the Philippines. He also ordered for the further strengthening of the efforts for investigation and early warning of the safety risks related to the deep-sea operations. Li Qiang, the Chinese Premier, called for efforts to strengthen measures to ensure

safety of the fishing vessels.

- According to a meeting of the law enforcement inspection groups of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, inspection of law enforcement in the wetlands will be carried out in six provinces between May and July. The NPC Standing Committee will task the local legislatures in eight additional provinces with inspection of law enforcement. The meeting's agenda states that legislators will look at law enforcement based on seven aspects, including how local governments and other authorities carry out their duties to conserve and restore wetlands. In late October, the NPC Standing Committee will deliberate on the report the inspection carried out regarding the law enforcement.
- Chinese Premier Li Qiang has spoken with his Dutch Counterpart Matt Rutte and hailed the Netherlands as China's priority partner in the European Union. He also said that both the countries should practise multilateralism and oppose a new cold war. This is in line with the call by Qin Gang, the Chinese Foreign Minister as he said that China and Europe should jointly stand against a "new cold war". He said they should collaborate deeply and promote development and prosperity of China and Europe. Tan Jian, the Chinese ambassador to the Netherlands, reiterated that the restrictions on the export of chip technology will have consequences. This exchange between China and Netherlands becomes important in the light of deteriorating relations between China and Europe since the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

- The value of onshore and offshore yuan has seen a fall on 17 May. This is the first such weakening of yuan in five months that is impacted due to the geopolitical tensions and the loss of steam in China's post-Covid recovery. Official data suggests that the economy is losing momentum resulting in a wobbly economic recovery. Ken Cheung, the foreign exchange strategist at Mizuho Bank, said that the weakening of yuan is also a result of disappointing official data. Maybank stated that the geopolitical tensions between China and the West are affecting the value of yuan. However, on the same day, the foreign direct investment in China has seen a 2.2 per cent rise in January-April 2023.
 - The arrival of the Turkish Airlines cargo plane at the Zhengzhou Xingzheng International Airport in the province of Henan marks the launch of the air cargo route that links Zhengzhou to Istanbul. The opening of such a route is believed to enhance cooperation in areas of trade and economy between China and Turkey as well as with the countries along the Belt and Road. The cargo service that uses the A330-200F aircraft is set to run three times every week. The data from the Zhengzhou Customs shows that the value of trade between Henan and Turkey totalled at 3.2 billion RMB yuan. The airport authority stated that the airport also plans to launch more such cargo routes linking Zhengzhou with other foreign destinations like Seoul, Budapest, Bangkok, Manila and Ho Chi Minh City.
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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **News about “Central Asia Forum” trends on Chinese social media:** [#中国-中亚论坛时间](#) trended on Chinese social media. The Xinhua News Agency posted information about how Xi’an is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilization and that it has 5,000 years of civilization and a history. Zhang Qian, a young man in his twenties, travelled to the west connecting the Chinese civilization and Central Asian civilization resulting in the establishment of a Silk Road. Xi’an thus became the starting point of the Silk Road. China’s direct investment in the Central Asian countries has exceeded over US\$15 billion. The first China-Central Asia Summit was also held in Xi’an, the place of origin of the mutual acquaintance and intertwined destiny. Chinese netizens of Xi’an praised the initiative and welcomed the foreign leaders to Xi’an.

INDIA WATCH

- The opening of the air cargo route from Henan to Turkey is an important aspect of China’s connectivity projects in West Asia in line with its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China’s growing trade with Turkey, and with the West Asian nations in general, is of great significance to India. For India, Turkey can be a key strategic partner in West Asia. The West Asian region in general is important for India’s energy security. India should thus aim for better connectivity that would help secure its energy supply. Development of connectivity projects, like that of the cargo routes, will also help India gain a gateway

to the Central Asian region. However, India faces several challenges despite positive opportunities for engagement, like terrorism, political instability, and the regional dynamics between major countries like Israel, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. China’s strategy of manoeuvring through these dynamics while acting as a peacemaker between traditional rivals is helping it secure its interests. India should thus strategically calculate its West Asia policy while enhancing cooperation and partnerships with countries in the region, like Turkey.

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