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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Zhengzhou COVID testing point launches nucleic acid VIP service:** One of the new trending topic [hashtag trends on Weibo](#) is 'Zhengzhou Testing Point Launches VIP Service'. The launch of this local VIP service comes at a time when some regions in China are ending free COVID-19 tests, however mandatory negative PCR test results are central to China's Zero Covid strategy. The testing point in question, located in Huiji district of Zhengzhou, Henan province received national attention after locals circulated the photo of its public notice on Chinese social media. On this testing point, people get special 'express' testing with test results coming out within an hour for a fee of 320 yuan. They can have a total twenty express tests within a timeframe of 2 years. These services are only meant for corporate VIP customers. Multiple reactions were observed on social media where some commentators were quite apprehensive about the viability of these tests while others consider it to be a good business opportunity.

NEWS IN CHINA

- On November 15, the [Ministry of Culture and Tourism](#) issued a notice on further optimizing the prevention and control measures of the new crown pneumonia epidemic. It was proposed that cross-provincial tourism operations will no longer be managed in conjunction with risk areas. This means that for counties (cities, districts, banners) and districts (counties) of municipalities with high-risk areas, travel agencies and online travel companies no longer need to suspend the operation of inter-provincial group tourism business in and out of the area. In addition, the notice also

detailed that inter-provincial tourists need to take inter-provincial transportation with a negative nucleic acid test certificate within 48 hours, promote the advancement of prevention and control gates; compact cultural and tourism administrative departments at all levels and the responsibilities of various industry entities, and strictly implement the national unified prevention and control policies. The notice also requires that travel agencies and online travel companies need to suspend inbound and outbound group tours and 'air ticket + hotel' business, and temporarily not resume the group tour business in land border port cities. Henceforth, the notice emphasizes that local cultural and tourism administrative departments must resolutely implement the important deployment of the Party Central Committee to further optimize the prevention and control work, and promote the prevention and control work of the cultural and tourism industries to be more scientific and precise.

- The Central Cyberspace Administration of China, the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, and the National Energy Administration jointly issued a notice to carry out comprehensive pilot projects for digital, green, coordinated transformation and development in provinces: Hebei, Liaoning, Qiqihar City, Heilongjiang, Yancheng City, Jiangsu, Huzhou City, Zhejiang, Jinan City, Shandong, Shenzhen City, Guangdong Chongqing High-tech Zone, Chengdu City, Sichuan, Lhasa City etc. Pilot work will start

in January 2023 for a period of 2 years, focusing on the green and low-carbon development of the digital industry; the dual-informatization and coordinated transformation of traditional industries; the low-carbon smart governance of urban operation; and the dual-informatization and coordinated policy in mechanism construction and other aspects.

- On November 16th, the "Memorial Edgar Snow the Symposium on the 50th Anniversary of Snow's Death" was held in Beijing to commemorate 50th anniversary of the death of Edgar Snow, an old friend of the Chinese people and a progressive American journalist. The organizers of the symposium included a number of professional institutions that study the history of Sino-US exchanges. The symposium not only inherited the red friendship, but also promoted the people-to-people bond between China and the United States through non-governmental forms, and implements the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping's instruction on "making good use of red resources" with practical actions. The organizers of the symposium also included a number of professional institutions- the China International Friendship Research Association, the China Edgar Snow Research Center of Peking University, the Edgar Snow Memorial Foundation of the United States, etc.
 - During the G-20 summit held in Bali, Indonesia, Xi met his European counterparts to discuss issues of strategic importance. French President Emmanuel Macron emphasized the role of China in playing a role of the mediator in the
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current Russia- Ukraine war. Similarly, the newly elected Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni too accepted the Chinese invitation to visit Beijing as a part of flurry diplomatic activities between China and European leaders. However, Xi had “emphasized that China’s position on the Ukrainian crisis is clear and consistent, advocating ceasefire, cessation of war and peace talks”. In addition, Xi also emphasized that “The international community should create conditions for this, and China will continue to play a constructive role in its own way”. However, such Chinese rhetoric were highly criticized by the Chinese analysts in Europe who believed that China as a mediator would be more concerned about looking into its’ own geopolitical benefits rather than providing a truce in the conflict. With regards to China’s stance on Russian-Ukraine conflict, China in G-20 summit declared that it was ready to work with Russia to pursue a well-coordinated approach to high-level exchanges and exchanges in various fields, deepen pragmatic cooperation and facilitate personnel exchanges.

- During the [APEC Leaders meeting](#) held in Bangkok on November 17, 2022, Xi called for stronger economic cooperation among countries in the Asia-Pacific, warning against the impact of big power contest and protectionism. He expressed his views on boosting upon connectivity, promoting inclusive growth, and building “stable and unimpeded” supply chains to protect the movement of goods and services. This comes amid the increasing China-US contest for influence in the Asia-Pacific region, which is central to Washington’s

Indo-Pacific strategy. Xi too marked his positive comments on maintaining diplomatic ties with [Japan](#) as well and cited that the issues of North Korea and Ukraine which could prove to be the further areas of cooperation between the two and stressed the remarkable achievements established by both the nations in order to promote peace and prosperity the APEC region.

INDIA WATCH

- As [India](#) will hold the presidency of the G20 Summit from 1st December 2022 for a one-year period, the Chinese Foreign Ministry during the G20 Summit 2022 mentioned that maintaining good relations between Beijing and New Delhi is in the interests of both countries and their people. A handshake between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the G20 summit has led to speculations on what the gesture meant in the context of Sino-Indian relations. But it is not an indication of any change so far, of India’s stand vis-à-vis the military stand-off with China at the Line of Actual Control (LAC). This gesture might be part of the reason that China being a part of major multilateral institutions will likely pave the way for a more structured engagement between the Indian Prime Minister and the Chinese President in the coming days to remove the strains from their bilateral relations, spoiled by the situation at the LAC. As the next host of the G20 and Shanghai Cooperation organization (SCO), India is keen that all the members of the group actively participate in all the meetings and the
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summit under the Indian presidency and Xi is also going to be present in both these meetings. Another key element for an engagement between Modi and Xi also stems from the fact that both the leaders are likely to lead their respective countries for a few more years. Xi has already been re-elected for a third term as the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Political pundits in India also predict a victory for the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) under Modi's leadership in the 2024 parliamentary elections. This means that despite their outstanding differences and the prevailing situation at the LAC, India will have to engage China under Xi's leadership. But as the recent meeting between US President Joe Biden and his Chinese counterpart showed that despite differences on outstanding issues, the two sides can find ways of engaging with each other to ensure their differences do not turn into a conflict. Perhaps, India is also likely to follow that example as it engages with China at the highest political level. But even if it decides so, it will continue to keep up its guard along the LAC to deal with any future encroachment into its territory and military escalation at the borders with China.
