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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Public scandal of Chinese official caught on camera having an affair with another employee:** Wei Feng, the [vice mayor](#) of the city of Huai'an in Jiangsu province eastern China was suspended on January 20, 2023, after his affair with another married official Dai Lu became public last week. Dai Lu's husband caught them both in the act after installing a hidden camera, after which he reported the matter to the local authorities, who formed a team and investigated the accusations. Eventually it was concluded that Wei Feng and Dai Lu had "inappropriate contact" with each other. This tabloid tale has stirred a lot of debate on mainland social media. Many individuals have shared their opinions online. "The deed between Wei and Dai is adultery, breaching a life of discipline," said Peng Xinlin, a professor at Beijing Normal University's College for Criminal Law Science.

NEWS IN CHINA

- Since the start of the spring festival travel season, more than 1,800 aircraft and more than 200,000 people have entered and exited Shanghai's two airports, [Pudong and Hongqiao](#). According to operational statistics, the number of average daily domestic flights at Pudong Airport and Hongqiao Airport is projected to be approximately 700, with an average daily incoming and outgoing passenger count of 81,700 for the Pudong Airport and 90,000 for the Hongqiao Airport. On 20th January, the demand for tourists and relatives visiting their loved ones and the travel of passengers has grown significantly. With the increase in the flow of passengers, both airports have opened self-service centers to avoid congestion.



Other popular regions, including South China, Northeast China, and Southwest China, have also seen an increase in passenger flights by different domestic airlines in China.

- On January 20, the People's Bank of China approved the National Interbank Funding Center to declare the current month's Loan Market quote Rate (LPR) which is 3.65% for one-year LPR and 4.3% for more than five-year LPR, both of which remained constant. LPR which has been on pause for five months in a row since the change in August of last year. In 2022, the LPR was reduced three times: first was in January, then May, and then in August. The one-year and five-year LPRs were cut by 15 and 35 basis points, respectively. According to the central bank statement, in order to maintain appropriate and adequate liquidity in the financial system, 779 billion yuan in MLF operations were carried out on 20th January, and the winning bid rate was 2.75%, the same as last month and has remained the same since August 2022. According to Wen Bin, chief economist of Minsheng Bank, the interest rate drop is primarily intended to complement the overall efforts of macro-control measures. To relieve the negative pressure on the real estate market, it is projected that the LPR for more than 5 years would decrease even more in the coming months. Cutting RRR and interest rates, encouraging financial institutions to properly lower the financing costs of the real economy, strengthening financial institutions' capacity to extend credit, and expanding measures to stabilise economic development would assist increase in market confidence.

- Because the demand for shopping and cultural tourism increased in various places during the Spring Festival, the State Administration for Market Regulation has stated that market supervision will be strengthened even more so that product prices remain stable and consumer rights and interests are protected. The priority is going to be focused on people's livelihoods, in which all districts will be concentrating on changes in offline and online market rates of grain, eggs, as well as other commodity prices, and serious investigations will be taking place dealing with price fraud and other behaviour patterns, anything that disrupts the market price of a commodity, as well as other focus is going to be on tourism industry, such as standardising the price order of scenic spots, catering, shopping, and so on to investigate and deal with.
 - More than 1.17 million oxygen devices have been provided to citizens living in rural areas of the country by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs in response to recent complaints about a lack of medical resources that have been observed in rural areas of China. These oxygen devices that will be provided, will all be free of charge and distributed in more than 600,000 villages across the country. Despite the fact that 77% of the first batch of oxygen generators have been installed in rural health centers, there is still a significant shortage of medical supplies in rural areas. The very first batch of oxygen generators was distributed to 832 rural health centers in counties that are struggling with poverty.
 - Xinhua News Agency conducted an
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interview with Fatih Birol, Director-General of the [International Energy Agency](#), on January 20, 2023. In this, Birol told reporters in Davos that China has been an important promoter of clean energy technology, ranking among the top in the world in solar energy, wind energy, electric vehicles, and other fields. According to the International Energy Agency's "Renewable Energy 2022" report, the increase in global installed capacity over the next 5 years is expected to be nearly double that of the past 5 years, with photovoltaic power generation and wind power accounting for 90% of the new power generation capacity. According to the analysis, between 2022 and 2027, China will account for roughly half of the world's new renewable energy capacity. Birol said that 2023 would be a "particularly tough year for the energy industry" owing to geopolitical events, global energy consumption, and other uncertainty.

INDIA WATCH

- China aims to dominate [renewable energy](#) due to its growing strategic importance. Beijing first relied on Western R&D, indigenous investments and subsidies to set up its renewable energy industry. Made in China 2025 focused R&D on sustainable energy technology. Thus, Chinese companies like State Grid Corporation, CATL, BYD, and Three Gorges Renewables have made significant investments in smart grids, smart meters, battery storage facilities, electrical cars, and hydropower development. These companies have also patented these critical technologies and currently possess most renewable energy patents to restrict future innovation and

maintain global dependency on China. Chinese renewable energy dominance has increased India's dependency on China in the renewable energy sector. Trade and investment in renewable energy projects and infrastructure have made China a vital energy partner of many South Asian and Southeast Asian nations. Chinese equity investments have supported 12,622 MW of South and Southeast Asian solar and wind generating projects since 2014. Despite the development disparity with China, India has committed to carbon neutrality by 2070, 10 years after China. In the last six years, India has established two high-level initiatives—the International Solar Alliance (ISA) with France in 2015 and the One Sun One World One Grid–Green Grids Initiative (OSOWOG-GGI) with the UK in 2021—to promote renewable energy. India and Washington launched the US–India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership at the 2021 Leaders' Summit on Climate. Thus, the world community views New Delhi as a climate industry partner due to these affirmative actions. Countries that are fairly worried about China's intentions to obtain an unfair edge in the renewable energy business have sought out New Delhi to boost their counter-balancing measures. The UK and EU countries are interested in green energy technical transfers and funding green projects to improve India's clean energy infrastructure. Furthermore, the US wants to expand sustainable energy cooperation with India. India can grow its renewable energy industry with these recent breakthroughs. India may develop technical standardisation regulations using its leadership and diplomatic might. India may use the QUAD platform to encourage

solar and ocean energy use for naval operations. South Asian and Southeast Asian nations may also conduct combined military drills utilising solar and wind energy to assist combat operations.
