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DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**



**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON
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I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Shanghai lockdown improves neighbourhood connectivity:** Shanghai is witnessing a continuous surge in infections and the city's 25 million residents are stuck in their homes. This lockdown has given people the opportunity to come out of the digital cage and get to know their neighbors as seen on Weibo and WeChat. Residents are able to get time to familiarise themselves with their neighbors and with their surroundings. Since individual deliveries have been stopped, people from different apartments are connecting over WeChat to purchase or order groceries in bulk from wholesalers.
- **Chinese citizens are using a new emoji for a positive COVID-19 test result:** Chinese netizens are using the ewe (a female sheep) emoji to refer to a positive COVID-19 test result or a person who has tested positive for the virus. The emoji reflects a sheep which is trending now.

II. News in China

- On April 16, Egypt started the construction of vaccine cold storage facilities sponsored by China's Sinovac. Chinese Ambassador to Egypt Liao Liqiang said in a ceremony for the project that the facility will help Egypt in storing vaccines more efficiently. This 2800 Square meters storage facility will be able to contain 150 million doses and will boost Egypt's campaign to boost 70 percent of its population by mid-2022. The ambassador also ensured that China will continue to cooperate with Egypt over healthcare facilities for the well-being of the Egyptian people.
- On April 19, President Xi Jinping promoted the digitalization and intellectualization of government operations and administration to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their services during the 25th meeting of the Central Commission. He emphasized on the structuring of digital government guidelines on advancing the reform of the fiscal system below the provincial level, guidelines on establishing and improving a system for officials' off-office audit of natural resource assets, a plan on improving the system of financial support for innovation in the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025), and guidelines on improving the incentive mechanism on science and technology.
- As of April 17, Erenhot, the largest land port on the China-Mongolia border, has witnessed robust growth in freight trains between China and Europe. According to the local railway authorities, the port handled a total of 863 China-Europe freight trains. This port now assists 57 China-Europe freight-train routes, linking over 60 overseas terminals across more than 10 countries.
- On April 19, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Solomon Islands' Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade Jeremiah Manele signed a China-Solomon Islands intergovernmental framework agreement on security

cooperation. Chinese Foreign Ministry (MOFA) spokesperson Wang Wenbin said that China's security pact with Solomon Island does not pose any threat to any other entity having interests in South Pacific Region. Wang assured that cooperation between China and Solomon Islands is based on transparency, mutual trust, and openness.

- On April 20, Chinese State Councilor and Minister of National Defence Wei Fenghe talked to U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin over phone. Wei emphasised that China will defend its national interests and dignity and US should not underestimate China's determination. The talk revolved around enhancing mutual trust, strengthening dialogue and exchanges, and managing risks and crises to develop healthy bilateral military-to-military relations. Austin said that the United States is willing to strengthen military exchanges and cooperation with China in a candid and transparent way, and the United States adheres to the one-China policy.
- On April 21, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed a Global Security Initiative to promote security for all in the world. The proposal was put forward in the keynote speech delivered by President Xi at the inaugural ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2022. He emphasised the vision of common comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security to maintain world peace and security.

India Watch

- China is claiming that the security pact with the Solomon Islands is based on maintaining social order, providing humanitarian assistance, and natural disaster response to assist the Island in building its capacity to safeguard itself. Solomon Islands has also confirmed that there was no agreement regarding a military base. However, keeping in mind its strategic location, this agreement can be amplified into an arrangement for China's military base in the Indo-Pacific. China also targeted the US over the sudden visit by Senior Diplomat and Indo-Pacific Coordinator Kurt Campbell and the absence of the US from the Island nation for the last 30 years. This highlighted China's intention to fill the place left by the US in the region. Australia is also concerned about the lack of transparency of the agreement and China's propinquity with the Island. It is also suspicious about the potential deployment of Chinese security forces on the islands. The issue is a concern not only for Australia but other members of the Indo-Pacific region and especially QUAD as it has the potential to alter the security and stability of the region. The lack of cordial relations between big powers and small nations has given China a chance to be the substitute next door.