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*DAILY*  
**CONVERSATIONS  
IN CHINESE  
MEDIA**



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**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON  
CHINA AND ASIA**

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## I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Growing discontent on Chinese Social media over China's harsh COVID measures:** As Omicron spreads across mainland China, extensive testing, rigorous quarantine restrictions and lockdowns have once again become something very common. As public outrage over the lockdowns grows, the hashtag "Why Can't China Lift Safety Measures Like Foreign Countries?" is top trending on Chinese social media platform Weibo, with over 490 million views as of Wednesday. In light of a recent CCTV interview with renowned epidemiologist Liang Wannian, a major backer of China's proactive zero-Covid approach and the leader of China's Covid-19 expert group, the hashtag was created by Chinese business news source National Business Daily.

## II. News in China

- China's authorities have begun a large training program for censors in order to remove non-government religious information from the country's strictly regulated internet. According to a directive issued by the Zhejiang province ethnic and religious affairs commission on March 21, training sessions for would-be "religious content inspectors" would commence, including seminars on the governing Chinese Communist Party's religion policy and regulation (CCP). To avoid face-to-face interaction during the COVID-19 epidemic, an online training programme has been established.
- According to officials and experts, a new national guideline on research ethics and governance will strengthen China's oversight of projects in frontier fields such as life sciences, medicine and artificial intelligence, with the goal of ensuring that scientific and technological progress serves the greater good of humanity. International research studies must also follow the rules of the participants' native countries and pass ethical evaluations, according to the guideline. According to the report, Chinese authorities can arrange specialists to assess overseas ventures with significant ethical hazards. The State Council, China's Cabinet, and the General Offices of the Communist Party of China Central Committee announced the country's first comprehensive guideline on increasing governance over ethics in research and technology.
- According to a local official, power consumption in the industrial sectors in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, has returned to normal levels after the city imposed a week-long lockdown on its residential communities, villages, and industrial zones in response to the current reappearance of COVID-19. Yu Xiquan, head of the Shenzhen Municipal Industrial and Information Bureau said the city has showed increased confidence in its industrial development, citing local industrial power consumption on Monday, which has recovered to levels prior to

March 13. Except for a portion of the Futian area, all government agencies, public institutions, and enterprises in Shenzhen resumed regular operations on Monday, after the city maintained zero-COVID status at the community level from March 14 to 20.

- The National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee convened a meeting of MPs from an inspection team on Wednesday to hear a report on the enforcement of the environmental protection law. The conference was presided over by Li Zhanshu, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the chairman of the NPC Standing Committee. China's environmental and ecological laws have improved in number and quality, helping to the fight against pollution, according to Li. Li stressed that faults detected during the inspection should be resolved under supervision, citing the environmental protection law as a basic and comprehensive law that plays a leadership role in the field of ecological and environmental protection.
- According to the State Grid Corporation, construction on two ultra-high voltage (UHV) power transmission projects in China began on Thursday as part of measures to assure clean electricity supply. The two 1,000-KV projects will connect the eastern towns of Fuzhou and Xiamen, as well as the central cities of Zhumadian and Wuhan, with a total investment of 10.9 billion yuan and a total length of 525 kilometres. Both projects are planned to become live next year, assisting in the promotion of renewable energy provided by offshore wind farms and solar power plants, according to the State Grid. The State Grid has completed 29 UHV projects so far, transporting more than 2.5 trillion kilowatt-hours of power, according to the company.
- Pakistan and China are prepared to improve bilateral ties and expand collaboration in areas such as information technology, e-commerce, and the digital economy. Pakistani President Arif Alvi said in a meeting with visiting Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Tuesday that Pakistan and China have had friendly relations for decades, characterised by solid unity, mutual support, and mutual assistance, with bilateral cooperation increasingly enhanced in all fields. Pakistan will continue to adhere to the one-China policy and defend China's main interests on the problems of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Xinjiang, as it has in the past, the President stated. Pakistan and China have the same viewpoints on international and regional problems, he added, and Pakistan opposes any attempt by foreign forces to stifle China's growth.
- After the UN Security Council failed to accept a resolution offered by Russia, China's permanent representative to the UN, Zhang Jun, expressed his optimism that the UN Security Council will play a constructive role in dealing with the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. On Wednesday, the UN Security Council's 15-member body failed

to pass a resolution on Ukraine's humanitarian crisis. Russia and China were the only members to vote in support of Russia's text, with 13 others abstaining. "We believe the Security Council should fulfil its core responsibility for world peace and security, as well as play its proper role in the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine," Zhang said in his post-vote explanation.

### **III. India Watch**

- On international and regional matters, Pakistan and China share the same viewpoints, and Pakistan opposes "any attempt by foreign forces to stifle China's growth". China is willing to improve strategic communication, unification, and coordination with emerging nations such as Pakistan and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in order to gain a strategic advantage over Western countries and India. Given the present economic state of Pakistan, it has imperative to hold on to any ally that serves its primary objectives. CPEC has sustained the agenda of Pakistan's economic cooperation, regional development and foreign aid especially post halted American aid to Pakistan. India must be wary of the China-Pakistan 'iron brotherhood' and its advance.