

25.01.22

*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

- **California's Disneyland Resort celebrates the Chinese Lunar New Year:** California's Disneyland Resort bustled with New Year Flavours as the Chinese Lunar New Year arrived with red lanterns, golden dragons, and cheerful drum beats. People were seen welcoming and experiencing the charm of Chinese Spring Festival Culture. Celebrating the year of Tiger, tiger theme-inspired facemasks along with characters like Mickey and Mulan can be seen wearing red jackets all over the places, as reports Xinhua News agency. Tourists can be seen enjoying the Chinese snacks, taking pictures with cartoon characters, and being lined up for Chinese calligraphy artists to write a character for their blessing, some popular characters being love and longevity. Images of the event were extensively shared on Chinese social media as US' strong anti-China stand post COVID and xenophobia towards Asians had been a cause of concern.
- **Update on kidnapping of an Indian Teenager from Arunachal Pradesh trends:** Kiran Rijju the Minister for Law and Justice, Lok Sabha MP from Arunachal Pradesh tweeted on the matter stating this is not the first time that the PLA has been involved in the abduction of Indians. His tweet mentioned that in September 2020 the PLA kidnapped 5 boys from the region of Arunachal Pradesh, who were released after a week. This tweet has trended on Weibo.

## II. News in China

- On the afternoon of 25th, President Xi Jinping delivered an important speech "joining a shared Destiny to the Future" over a video summit in Beijing, marking the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the five central Asian countries. Xi with the other five heads watched the video of the historic development of China and Central East Asian Relations and looked forward to the upcoming amiable relationship with the countries. The Heads of five Central countries attending the summit were: Kazakhstan President Tokayev, Tajikistan President Rahmon, Kyrgyzstan President Zaparov, Uzbekistan President Mirziyoyev, Turkmenistan President Berdymukhamedov.
- Kuwait News reported that according to China's graft watchdog, three senior Chinese officials including Cai Esheng, former vice-chairman of the China Banking Regulatory Commission, Meng Xiang, former supreme court official and former deputy director of the national food administration, Xu Ming, have been expelled from the Communist Party for alleged corruption and are booked under criminal investigation.
- Seven officers in the PLA have been promoted to the rank of General. The biggest highlight of this promotion to general is that there are 5 political commissars in the 7 people promoted.

- Cathay Pacific, the flag carrier of Hong Kong, is likely to suffer a loss of HK\$1.0-1.5 billion ( \$128-\$193 million) per month from February owing to strict COVID-19 restrictions. As claimed by Cathay's report, the losses for 2022 could overtake last year's total consolidated loss of approximately HK\$5.6-6.1 billion. The airline is exposed to a great loss because it has no domestic market to rely on and is based in a finance center that has supported mainland China's "zero-COVID" plan. Augustus Tang, the CEO of Cathay Pacific, in his statement, said that the passenger flights have fallen to two percent of their pre-pandemic capacity and cargo flights that were in strong demand have also decreased to twenty percent of their earlier capacity.
- Kuwait times reported that the disappearance of Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison's WeChat account was followed by the allegation of Chinese "interference" by the senior member of his government. But Tencent, the owner of WeChat, contradicted the claim and said that the prime minister's WeChat account was neither hacked nor removed from its platform. Morrison's WeChat account appears to have been replaced with another titled," Australian Chinese new life".On October 28, 2019, the name of the account was registered by Fuzhou 985 Technology Co.Ltd. Nevertheless, the posts of the accounting date back to February 1, 2019, including Morrison's first post which reads: " I'm very happy to open my official WeChat account."
- With the lifting of major restrictions in the northern city of Xi'an, one of China's longest coronavirus lockdowns comes to an end. Considering Xi'an as a "low-risk area", residents with no symptoms were allowed to leave the city, while economic activity and public transport are running at full capacity. On the other hand, with the outbreak of covid cases in Beijing and the Winter Olympics being around the corner, authorities are implementing strict covid rules over its residents.
- Shares in Evergrande, a debt-ridden Chinese property tycoon, made a comeback in the market after a state firm official was elected for its board, making a way for the government rescue plan. Evergrande, after remaining in debt of more than \$300 billion, was able to close nearly four percent higher yesterday. The rebound in the shares was observed after the appointment of Liang Senlin of China Cinda Asset Management, one of the country's four biggest asset managers to Evergrande's board. China's property firms have lately struggled due to Beijing's drive to control excessive debt in the real estate sector and direct rampant consumer speculation.
- To assist the Chinese side with the investigation, the identity, photo, and personal details of the kidnapped teen from Arunachal Pradesh have been shared by the Indian Army to the Chinese side. However, the response is still awaited. Military intervention in such abductions has remained the norm along the LAC.

### III. India Watch

- The political commissars are the real-life embodiment of CPC's famed tenet "the Party commanding the gun" and are responsible for supervising officials at the same level. Therefore, Xi Jinping's centralized replacement of political commissars can be interpreted as sending his reliable people to watch every move of the army at the sensitive moment. The Central Theatre Command has seen a change of both Political Commissar and the Commander. The Area of Responsibility for the Central Theatre Command includes the capital Beijing and the neighbouring provinces of Tianjin, Hebei, Shaanxi, Shanxi, Henan and Hubei. Change of personnel in both the important positions show the level of importance Xi attaches to securing the Capital and the neighbouring areas with his own people before the 20th party congress. This can be further validated by the fact that Lin Xiangyang, the previous commander of the Central Theatre Command had been in the role since August last year. On 22.1.22, Politburo member and Vice Chairman of CMC, Zhang Youxia emphasized when attending an enlarged meeting of the CMC Discipline Inspection Commission emphasized that it is necessary to deeply understand the spirit of President Xi's important instructions, resolutely implement the strategic policy of comprehensively and strictly governing the party. He also emphasized on putting the party's political construction in the first place, ensuring that all levels always firmly maintain the core and welcome the victorious convening of 20th party congress. All of these political instructions will be now carried out by the recently appointed political commissars.