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DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**



**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON
CHINA AND ASIA**

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I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Prime Minister of Pakistan trends on Weibo:** Following the suicide bombing attack at a Confucius Institute in Karachi, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed his condolences and promised punishment for the perpetrators. It trended on the Weibo Hot Search, with netizens offering their takes regarding the accused.

II. News in China

- Assistant Foreign Minister of China Wu Jianghao met with the new Indian Ambassador to China, Pradeep Rawat, on 26th April. The topics discussed were the common interests of both countries and developing bilateral relations.
- A terrorist attack at the Confucius Institute of Karachi University, killed 3 Chinese nationals. The suicide bomber standing near a gate, activated the bomb when the institute's shuttle van passed by. Several Pakistani casualties were also reported. The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) has claimed responsibility for the attack. The separatists in Balochistan demand a greater share in the region's natural resources and oppose Chinese investments in the area. The Chinese foreign ministry has strongly condemned the attack.
- Beijing has begun mass testing in 16 districts, with 92 cases recorded. Efforts are being taken to prevent a Shanghai-like situation. Few instances of panic buying were reported, but most locals remain calm as Beijing authorities have had more time to prepare for a potential lockdown.
- The People's Bank of China has announced that the foreign exchange deposit reserve ratio will be lowered from 9% to 8% to improve the ability of financial institutions to use foreign exchange funds. The RMB has fluctuated significantly, with a depreciation rate of 3.2%. The Russia-Ukraine war has increased global risk aversion, accelerating the Sino-US currency cycle and weakening market expectations.
- China's homegrown vaccines developed by Sinopharm and Sinovac, which target the Omicron variant of COVID-19, have been approved for clinical trials. After completing the trials, the Sinopharm vaccine might be used as a booster shot. The research for a vaccine targeting the Omicron variant started in December 2021.
- China has opposed US interference in the Tibet issue. Wang Wenbin, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, said that US interference in China's internal issues was under the garb of religious freedom. China addressed the questions regarding the Panchen Lama's whereabouts, saying that he was an ordinary Chinese citizen who wished to live a normal life. Wang also emphasized that the Chinese government places importance on religious freedom.
- 'Xuelong' and 'Xuelong 2', China's research icebreakers, returned to Shanghai from

an Antarctic expedition. The ships were tasked with replenishing essentials and staff rotation at China's Zhongshan station and Great Wall station. They also undertook marine observations and oceanic ecosystem research. Xuelong clocked 33,000 nautical miles, while Xuelong 2 clocked 31,000 nautical miles.

- USA sent 'USS Samson' a naval destroyer through the strait of Taiwan, which it considers international waters. However, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has accused the USA of 'provocative naval activities' and alleges that the move sent wrong signals to 'Taiwan independence forces'.

India Watch

- India has suspended tourist visas for Chinese nationals in a retaliatory move toward China. China has not allowed Indian students to enter even after repeated talks, destroying the students' academic years.
- India-China relations remain frozen, with no disengagement along the border, even after the Foreign Minister of China's surprise visit to India last month.
- Even with political and diplomatic tensions, China is India's trade partner, with India having a \$77 billion trade deficit. Electrical and electronic goods, machinery, and fertilizers comprise most of the trade. India must reduce its dependency on China if it wants to have the upper hand in transactions.