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DAILY CONVERSATIONS IN CHINESE MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHATTER IN CHINA

- **Lionhead-shaped puff pastry went viral amongst netizens:**
Wu Yang, 35, a pastry Chef from Shenyang, Liaoning province who created a palm-sized piece of puff pastry shaped like a Lion's head received millions of likes on Douyin, a short video platform. The chef credited his inspiration to the traditional Chinese folk art of lion dancing. Wu has devoted himself into creating puffs and dough sculptures based on traditional Chinese folk culture. Such creative combination of modern techniques and traditional culture has renewed interest of many young Chinese into its traditions.
- **New York Times bad review of "Wandering Earth II" sparks online debate** - Frant Gwo's 'The Wandering Earth II' has become the highest grossing spring festival film. Although the film have received fairly good reviews from Chinese ratings platform like Douban and Maoyan, a bad review by New York Times have triggered a debate on Chinese social media. Chinese netizens have responded to the review with a sense of anger stating that the review showed the impact the movie has made worldwide which is threatening to the American 'saviour' image. The film's narrative is set in a post-apocalyptic world where the mankind builds enormous engines to propel the planet to a new solar system as the sun is rapidly burning out.

NEWS IN CHINA

- At 7.49 AM local time on Monday, the China Earthquake Networks Center registered a 6.1 magnitude earthquake which hit Shaya County of Aksu Prefecture in Xinjiang. Investigators

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- have found the epicentre to be located in an unpopulated area, 141 km away from Shaya County with a depth of 50 kms. No casualties or major damage has been reported following the earthquake, according to local authorities.
 - Sichuan Provincial Health Commission issued measures to allow unmarried individuals to raise family and enjoy the benefits previously reserved for only married couples. Previously, Sichuan's laws restricted pregnancy to married women exclusively. From February 15, married couples and any individual who wants to have children will be allowed to register with the government and no ceiling will be put on the number of children. The decision was made to tackle the falling birth and marriage rates in China which shrank last year for the first time in six decades. These measures are extended to both registered residents as well as for outsiders who hold residence certificate of Sichuan.
 - China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region plans to invest 83.2 billion yuan (approx US\$ 12.3 billion) for connectivity infrastructure in 2023. Li Xuedong, deputy director of the regional transport department said that the investment is proposed for 66 road construction projects of which 22 are expected to be completed this year. In 2022, Xinjiang spent more than 74.8 billion yuan in road construction. In June 2022, a new highway passing through Taklimakan desert, world's second largest shifting sand desert, was put into operation connecting Yuli and Qiemo County in south Xinjiang's Bayingolin Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture. With these developments, length of highways in Xinjiang has reached over 11,000 km with extensive last-mile connectivity.
 - After Canada and the US, China has become third country to build a completely indigenous quantum computer. It is developed by Origin Quantum Computing Technology Co, based in Anhui Province. It is to be noted that Quantum computing has become an area of competition among countries since over 100 companies globally have invested heavily in quantum research. Quantum computers can perform certain kinds of computation more efficiently than a regular computer using quantum mechanics. In 2020, Origin Quantum had also launched China's first domestic superconducting quantum computer called 'Wuyuan' to provide computing services through a cloud platform.
 - China has become Vietnam's biggest importer of agriculture products after Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) came into effect in January 2022. Amidst rising fuel prices, inflation and disruption in supply chains, bilateral trade between China and Vietnam have achieved high growth, according to a statement by deputy general director of Dong Giao Foodstuff Export Joint Stock Co, Dinh Gia Nghia. Vietnam's major export items to China include durian, sweet potato, passion fruit along with other agricultural products. This has also helped Vietnamese companies to enhance quality of these products to further attract more demand.
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INDIA WATCH

- India has been witnessing growing interest in quantum computing with students, researchers and developers actively participating in various initiatives. With China joining US and Canada in developing an indigenous quantum computer, India needs to step up and refocus on quantum technology. Similar to the fast-growing Artificial Intelligence market, Quantum Computing has also positioned many countries against each other to acquire the leadership position. This sector possesses a huge economic potential as experts have predicted that its application is possible in the development of new medicines, lifesaving drugs, advancement of Artificial Intelligence, financial remodelling and so on. Quantum Computing hailed as the next big thing could open doors to new scientific discoveries. As a developing country, India is emerging as a talent hub for quantum computing. To foster this, Government of India has taken several initiatives to acknowledge the sector's potential. For instance, the Gol allocated a sum of INR 8000 Crore towards the National Museum on Quantum technologies and applications to enable subsequent developments in quantum computing technologies. Furthermore, in Dec 2021, the Indian Army set up a quantum computing laboratory in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh. The Department of Science and Technology from IISER, Pune have launched I-HUB Quantum Technology Foundation to further enhance the quantum tech. In addition, schemes like Start-up India and Atmanirbhar Bharat have also paved way for many startups in this area. To succeed in this endeavour, India needs to understand the true

potential of its young population. It is important to enhance focus on content related to this technology in academic curriculum to develop quantum science as a discipline in universities and also to produce skilled and educated young talents who will promote and strengthen India's position in the field.
