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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

- **COVID outbreak in Nanjing gains traction:** Chinese infectious disease specialist Zhang Wenhong has noted on his personal Weibo account that the Nanjing outbreak has prompted nationwide stress test. China's Covid cases have risen as the outbreak has now reached five provinces. An inbound flight from Russia has been identified as the source. Furthermore, the Delta strain of coronavirus has reportedly reached Beijing.
- **The Olympics and Henan flooding continue to dominate Weibo trending lists:** Weibo users are heavily using the platform to discuss performance of athletes while building the platform as a major source of information and aid-helplines for flood victims.

II. News in China

- People's Daily has printed its third article in the series on China's mid-year economic review; the piece is focused on reporters visit to companies in the country to ask them of their financial year with positive responses from all.
- Hong Kong police have launched an investigation into Olympic Games fans who booed China's national anthem and drowned it out with chanting during a public screening. As Tong Ying-kit's conviction under Hong Kong's new National Security Law (NSL) makes headlines across the world, such crackdown within Hong Kong is increasing with persecution being according to the new precedents being set by the HSL hearing.
- Death toll in Henan flooding rises to 99 as per Xinhua; credibility of these statistics is questionable as the data is heavily censored by China. Meanwhile China's defence and police forces have become exceedingly engaged in flood-relief operations based on mandate given by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).
- China is reportedly set to make it easier for scientists to access research funding from the central government as it tries to drive innovation and catch up with the US on technology. Process will be streamlined and academics will have more discretion in how to use grants.
- Interestingly, People's Daily has not carried news on US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken's India visit. However, Global Times has published a scathing opinion piece saying it is a 'dangerous path' for India to depend on Washington while simultaneously calling out US' 'two-faced China policy'.

III. India Watch

- A United Nations Security Council report has stated that militant group East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) remains active in Afghanistan. This group seeks to establish a create a Uyghur state in Xinjiang and has moved fighters across Afghanistan's border into China. China has long targeted ETIM in a bid to end its operations considering it a major 'threat' to its national security. India must view China's interests in Afghanistan –beyond economic, political and connectivity ambitions –in tandem with Beijing's focus on ending ETIM's operations; China seeks to urge both the Taliban and the Afghan government to aid this venture.
- As the annual conclave of Chinese Communist Party heavyweights in Beidaihe draws near, speculation is swirling over President Xi Jinping's plans for top appointments going into his expected third term -- and about whether Xi will even attend the gathering at all. If no information comes out of Beidaihe next month, that could signal Xi's absence. Such a development may indicate that Xi has consolidated power to the point that he makes personnel and policy decisions on his own without party elders and other leaders having their usual say.
- A joint statement by Pakistan and China has referenced Jammu and Kashmir which India has strongly objected to; it is important for New Delhi, especially as it takes on the role of President of the UNSC on August 1, to ensure that China-Pakistan rhetoric on India's integral issues is kept to the bare minimum if not resolutely shut down, especially on multilateral forums as it breaches Indian strategic autonomy.
- Li Liqun, a liberal political commentator who wrote under the pen name Li Huizhi, and has lived under constant surveillance for nearly four years, took his own life by drinking pesticide on July 22. In a now revealed suicide note, Li had asked repeatedly for a medical reprieve after he suffered a stroke in March 2020, but his requests were ignored.