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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

- **Netizens discussed reasons behind naming of China's three most famous brands:** Rationale for naming brands like Future Cola, Tencent, and Alibaba were discussed. Netizens discussed that Future Cola's name came from a desire to imitate the success of Coca-Cola in China. For Tencent, the founder has to go with this name because other names of his choice were not available for registration. Alibaba's founder Ma Yun traveled around to confirm that the name is a known word for everyone. Taking a jibe at Alibaba, a netizen wrote "Open Sesame! these rich people know how to open the door but fail at closing time".
- **China women's football team has qualified for the 2023 World Cup:** Netizens on Weibo wrote congratulatory messages for their women team, while many expressed their disappointment at the men's team for failing to prove themselves on international platforms

## II. News in China

- China is constructing a new military port at Bata in the Central African Nation of Equatorial Guinea (EQG). It would be China's first port on the western coast of Africa. The US has taken this moment to reiterate its concerns about China's presence in the Atlantic Ocean and opposite the east coast of America, just 6,000 miles from Washington. EQG is a member of OPEC and according to the World Bank, EQG is well endowed with arable land and several natural resources like gold, diamond, oil, uranium, etc. All the resources are very useful for China.
- US Navy stealth fighter jet F-35C met an accident during take-off from the USS Carl Vinson and is lying on the bed of the South China Sea. Experts are of the opinion that China would be keen to get its hands on this jet. Thus, a race has begun between the US and China to reach the downed plane, as it is in international waters. Although China has refuted any interest in salvaging the jet, experts believe that it has done similar things in the past and would be more than interested to get the advanced aircraft which has provided the US Navy superiority.
- China's Ministry of Education has released the notice for 2022 National College Entrance Examination. The Ministry regulates and gives guidelines for admissions in all the major universities, colleges and schools. The entrance exams will be held from June 7th to 8th. The foreign languages in the national unified examination subjects are divided into 6 languages, including English, Russian, Japanese, French, German, and Spanish. Candidates can choose one of the languages to take the test.

- On Chinese New Year's Eve, China's Mars probe Tianwen 1 sent a selfie video. The new video was released by the China National Space Administration (CNSA). The video showed the good condition of the orbiter's parts. As of January 31, 2022, Tianwen-1 has been working in orbit for 557 days at a distance of about 3.5 million kilometres from Earth. The Zhurong rover of China's Mars mission has been working for 255 Martian days and has travelled a total of 1524 meters on the red planet, far outliving its 90-Martian-day life expectancy. The mission has sent back 600 GB of raw scientific data, and the crafts are still operating normally, confirmed the CNSA.
- China's military has reported that the Chinese border defence troops have returned an Indian national who allegedly entered the Chinese side illegally. China termed the reports of kidnapping of the Indian person by the PLA as irresponsible and an attempt to poison the atmosphere of continuous improvement of bilateral relations since the "positive and constructive" 14th round of the China-India corps commander level meeting earlier this month. Regarding any news of the kidnapping of Indian nationals from Arunachal Pradesh, the Chinese side has always denied such allegations and termed it as rumours spread by Indian media and politicians to fuel anti-China sentiments.
- China claims to have won the first battle against the Omicron in Tianjin city. The new wave of the epidemic struck Tianjin on 8th January 2022 with fast transmission speed and string concealment. The city of 14 million people responded to the new variant with "quick action, meticulous and concerted efforts". Since the report of the first case came out, the whole city was demarcated as a closed area; on the evening of the 8th, Tianjin issued the first announcement, requiring citizens "not to leave Tianjin unless necessary". Large scale COVID tests began and the city went under controlled lockdown. Now, after just two weeks the epidemic seems to be well under control and life of the citizens is gradually coming back to normal.
- There have been reports of attacks on academic freedom in Hong Kong since the imposition of the National Security Law in June 2020. While outright censorship is still rare, subtler forms of control and coercion have severely restricted academic freedom in the Special Administration Region. Some argue that there had been no government clampdown on anything from lectures to research, and no indication of a significant exodus of university academics while others say that the humanities and social sciences are under the biggest threats and many colleagues are leaving. Such news has reemerged with focus this week as the recent coverage of the last remaining Tiananmen Square memorial did rounds on social media, with many tweets disagreeing with the decision being actively and quickly censored.

- China acquired the operations rights of Israel's port of Haifa, one of the largest maritime transport hubs in the Mediterranean, last year in September. A recent report by a pro-Israel think tank has expressed concern over Chinese investment in Israel, including proximity of Chinese company to US Sixth Fleet in Haifa.

### **III. India Watch**

- An established powerhouse in global trade, China handles more ports at home than any other country in the world. These ports have helped China achieve its trading and financial ambitions. But the major cause of concern for India and other rival nations has been the large numbers of ports that China controls or partially manages in foreign countries through investments. According to one report, China has key investments in around 100 ports in at least 60 nations. China has been doing this very systematically and efficiently since the inception of the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013 by President Xi Jinping. As seen with Haifa in Israel and Hambantota in Sri Lanka, it is clear that the main purpose of these ports is not just trade but also strategic advantage that China wants to gain against its rivals. China has been on a mission of encircling India through the acquisition of ports in India's neighboring countries for years, and unfortunately, India's response has been late and somewhat very tepid. India has already allowed China's presence in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Pakistan. Recently, some actions of the Indian government have shown that India has started taking the issue seriously. For instance, India recently bagged the operation rights of a terminal at Colombo port and stopped China from coming closer to the Indian coasts. If India continues to counter China with such seriousness in the Indian Ocean region, it is still not too late to keep its dominance in the same.