

WEEKEND ISSUE
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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

- **Protests break out in Dongxing; demand unblocking the city:** Some Twitter accounts have reported that on 5th June, a large public demonstration broke out in Dongxing, a border city in Guangxi bordering Vietnam. More than a thousand people gathered together to demand unblocking the city and easing strict COVID-19 restrictions. While Chinese media reported on 25 Ma that the lockdown would be lifted, restrictions were imposed again as new cases were found. After these protests, on June 6th, the local authorities issued a notice (Image 1) to placate the public, stating that the residents of Dongxing who have green status on their COVID-19 tracking app will be allowed free movement.
- **Open letter from a Shanghai entrepreneurs' group does the rounds:** The letter signed by entrepreneurs and investors from Shanghai is being shared on Twitter and Telegram. However, it hasn't been found on Chinese social media yet. The open letter describes the current situation in China as follows: "the external environment is embattled on all sides; internally, the government's creditworthiness has collapsed; the date of unblocking, that is, the date of foreign capital leaving the country and the date of domestic capital fleeing, followed by a large-scale bankruptcy of enterprises, reorganisation and liquidation will break the last glimmer of the illusion of the public about economic recovery. Millions of graduates have to join the wave of unemployed people, and then social unrest is inevitable." The letter says that the entrepreneurs and investors who have written this letter "have invested hundreds of billions of RMB in Shanghai and the whole country, and employs millions of employees".

II. News in China

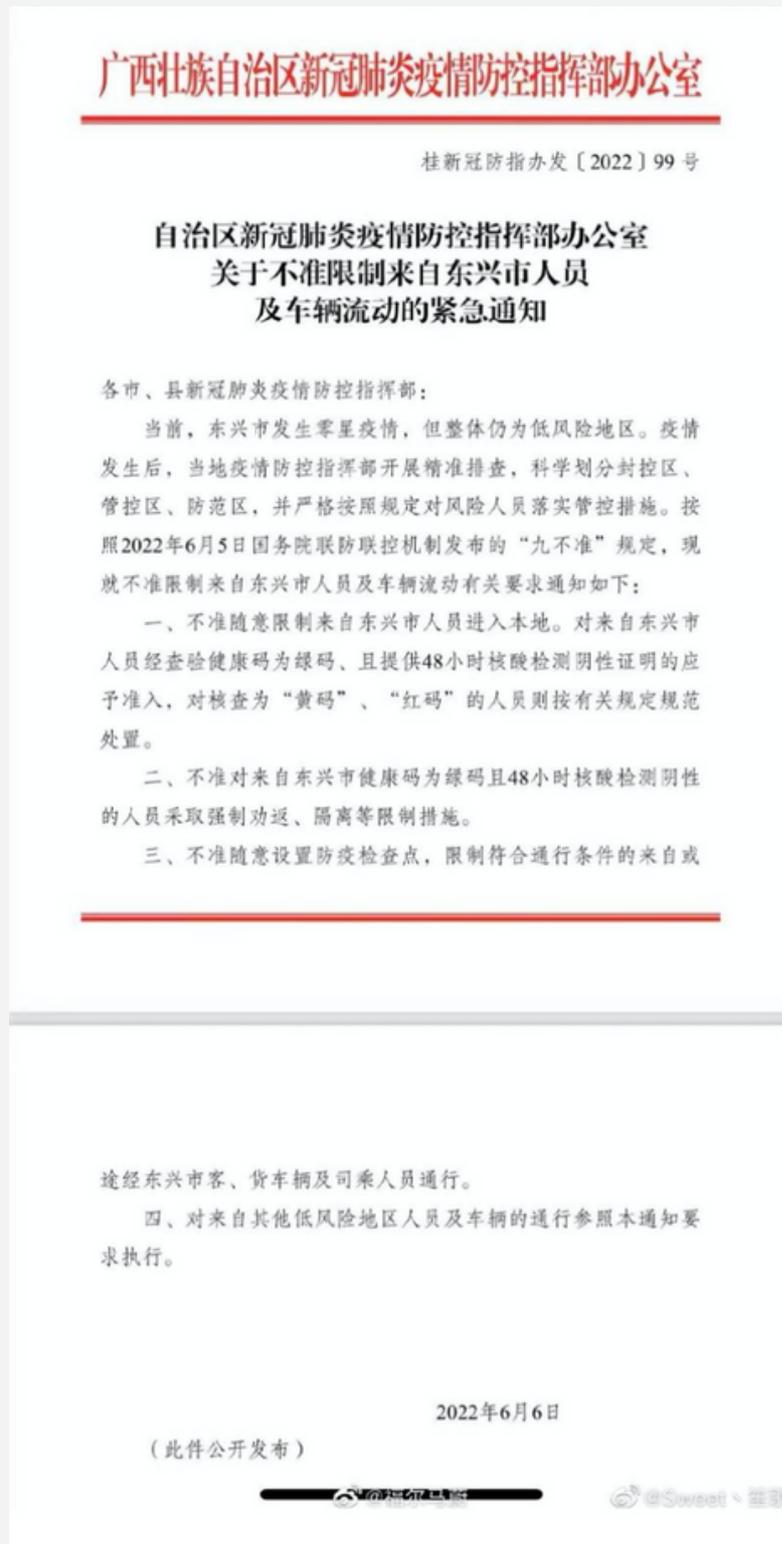
- On May 31st, Chinese state media reported that the 6th Party Congress of Chongqing was concluded, wherein 43 representatives were elected to attend the 20th National Party Congress, including Chen Min'er who was re-elected as the Party Secretary of Chongqing. Chen Min'er is the third member of the Politburo to be elected after Hu Chunhua, Vice Premier of the State Council of the Communist Party of China, and Li Xi, Secretary of the Guangdong Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China. According to convention, the party congresses of all provinces and municipalities directly under the Central Government of the Communist Party of China will conclude before the end of June.
- China responded to Sri Lankan President Gotabhaya's statement that Sri Lanka could not obtain the \$1.5 billion loan from China. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said that China would assist Sri Lanka in overcoming the current difficulties. He also stated that Chinese financial institutions liaised with Sri Lankan agencies to find a way to manage China's overdue debt.

- Two Chinese nationals aged 22 and 28 were arrested on the charges of cheating in the university online entrance examination of Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo, Japan. The 22-year-old passed the exam by allegedly taking photos of the questions during the exam and sent them to a 28-year-old man who was not in the exam room for the answers.
- On June 5th, Chinese state media reported that Li Shulei, the former vice president of the Central Party School in charge of daily work, has taken over as the Deputy Minister of the Central Propaganda Department in charge of daily work, replacing Wang Xiaohui. Xiaohui has been transferred to become the Secretary of the Sichuan Provincial Party Committee. Non-mainstream Hong Kong media believe that Li Shulei has ties with Xi and has even written for state media about Xi's time in Fujian.
- In the wake of controversy over Chinese Confucius institutes, the UK Conservative backbenchers have now launched a bid to ban China's Confucius Institutes from operating in the country and has garnered cross-party support. The UK raised concerns that they are used for spying as well as censoring topics on political grounds.
- China showed strong discontentment over the US announcement of new arms sales and a \$120 million aid for related technical support to Taiwan. Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman Tan Ke called it an "interference in China's internal affairs" by once again defying the sovereignty of Taiwan.
- On June 7th, Chinese state media reported that Cui Maohu has been appointed Deputy Head of the United Front Work Department, and the Chief of State Administration for Religious Affairs which became a part of the UFWD in 2018.
- China responded to the European Parliament's resolution of slandering China over the human rights situation in China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and calling on the EU and its member states to impose sanctions on Chinese authorities while banning goods imports suspected of being involved in forced labor. A spokesman for the Chinese delegation for the EU demanded that the European Parliament stop attacking China over human rights issues in Xinjiang and terms it as China's internal affairs.

III. India Watch

- China's Confucius Institutes are public educational and cultural promotion programs funded and arranged currently by the Chinese International Education Foundation. These Institutes can be considered as a tool of Beijing's diplomatic outreach deployed with the purpose of fulfilling China's goals in different parts of the world. The Confucius Institutes are institutions which intend to promote links with Chinese businesses abroad.

Image 1 (See in Social Media Chatter in China, point 1)



Notice issued by local authorities in Dongxing, China.