

WEEKEND ISSUE
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DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**



ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON
CHINA AND ASIA

PREPARED BY
Samikshya Das (Research Intern)
writetous.orca@gmail.com

I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Weibo Post by Embassy of Iceland Sparks Wave of Jokes:** After the Icelandic Embassy announced their busy 'post-pandemic' travel season, implying that the Covid-19 "gloom is over," everyone on Weibo became suddenly Icelandic, lonely, and desperate to return home. The Weibo post by the Embassy said, "I am Icelandic, please get me home."
- **Chinese Sports Brand Li-Ning Registers Its 'Ning Coffee' Brand:** A new challenger has entered the Chinese coffee market. Li-Ning, which is a very famous brand of sneakers has the potential to become the country's largest athletic coffee chain, with over 7000 locations.
- **Chinese censors go after 'last generation' references on social media platforms:** Censors sponsored by China's ruling Communist Party (CCP) have removed references to a viral film that spawned the "last generation" meme, which arose as a form of protest against the country's zero-COVID policy's continued lockdowns, mass incarcerations, and compulsory testing. PPE-clad police officers appear outside someone's flat in the video, attempting to force them to travel to an isolation camp despite the fact that he had recently tested negative for COVID-19.

II. News in China

- According to official notices placed online, judicial authorities around China are forming "people's legal battle militias" to assist law enforcement, seeking attorneys aged 18 to 45 who are "in good physical shape." The militias would be organised in support of "our online forces," according to a notification issued by justice bureaus in Shanghai, Guangdong, Hubei, and other areas. Under an altered administrative punishment law that took effect in July 2021, China allowed local officials at the township, village, and neighbourhood level to implement the law, as well as operate a substantially expanded "grid management" system of social control in both rural and urban areas.
- China will give another batch of food for primary and secondary school pupils through its embassy in Liberia, comprising over 1,000 bags of 25 kg rice and 500 jars of powdered milk and vegetable oil, according to Ren Yisheng, the Chinese ambassador to Liberia. Ren also claimed that China and Liberia have achieved excellent cooperation outcomes in the domains of healthcare, food security, human resources development, and infrastructure construction in a special remark made on the Africa Day of School in Liberia's coastal city of Buchanan. Cooperation is also happening in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 243,000 pupils are currently fed through the school feeding programme across the country.
- On the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, Chinese scientists launched the latest iteration of the Jimu-1 aerostat, a gigantic helium-filled tethered airship, on Sunday to collect

weather data at a record altitude of 9,032 metres. It was the first time an aerostat of this size had reached this altitude, surpassing even the summit of Mount Qomolangma, known in the West as Mount Everest at 8,849 metres. The airship's surface is constructed of a high-tech composite fabric that can endure temperatures as low as -70 degrees Celsius. It weighs roughly 2.6 metric tonnes and has a capacity of 9,060 cubic metres. Scientists can use the aircraft to collect atmospheric data, analyse the moisture transport process, and measure changes in black carbon, dust, methane, and carbon dioxide, among other things.

- After weeks of closed management to ward off COVID-19, Shanghai's financial hub will progressively reopen businesses such as shopping malls, vegetable markets, and hair salons starting Monday, according to the city's deputy mayor. According to vice mayor Chen Tong, Shanghai has been aggressively encouraging the opening of business outlets and the return of staff to assure the supply of everyday requirements. Shopping malls, department stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, and pharmacies will progressively restore in-store operations in a controlled manner, while vegetable markets and hair salons will gradually resume limited on-site activity.
- Between Thursday and Saturday, Chinese Ambassador to Australia Xiao Qian visited the state, meeting with officials, businessmen, and people with cultural and educational backgrounds. "China is our number one commercial partner in Australia, and we want to strengthen that relationship," Matthew Schofield, head of the Australia China Business Council's Victoria branch, said. "The fact that there is mutual respect and a willingness to develop our common ground and the areas of commonality in terms of our commercial endeavours and future industries are focused," he said of the relationship. After the COVID-19 pandemic, Schofield told Xinhua that he would like to see more economic exchanges between the two countries.
- China's central bank will release a collection of commemorative coins, including two heart-shaped coins, depicting Chinese fortunate culture. The People's Bank of China said that the set of seven coins will go on sale on May 20, a date traditionally regarded as romantic due to its phonetic similarity to the Chinese phrase "I love you." Three of the coins are made of gold, while the other four are made of silver. On the front of the coins are the Chinese letters Jixiang, which means auspiciousness, while the reverse sides are decorated with traditional designs like deers, calabashes, and peonies, which are all symbols of good fortune and well-being.
- According to official data, China's urban rail transit networks reported a significant drop in passenger trips last month. According to data from the Ministry of Transport, the country's urban rail transit lines reported 1.29 billion passenger

trips in April, down 41.1 percent year on year. The monthly traffic dropped by 19.4 percent, or 310 million passenger journeys. According to the government, China had put 275 urban rail transit lines into service in 51 cities by April, bringing the overall length of rail transit networks in urban areas to 8,904 kilometres.

- Starting May 15, China will make the application for living allowance for financially challenged disabled people and nursing care subsidy for those with severe disabilities available online. According to a joint statement made by the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the China Disabled Persons' Federation, the new rule will relieve the pressure of onsite visits for individuals with disabilities. Qualified candidates can apply for the two types of subsidies in the most convenient government offices starting in April 2021, independent of their registered residence location.

III. India Watch

- China is closely aligning its Belt and Road Initiative, Global Development Initiative, and Global Security Initiative, all of which it supports, with the Africa 2063 Agenda and other African development agendas, as well as actively implement the consensus reached at the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation's Eighth Ministerial Conference. As a result, China is continuing to assist Liberia in dealing with humanitarian crises such as COVID-19 and food insecurity, as well as provide assistance to promote Liberia's economic and social development and contribute to the peace, security, prosperity, and development of Liberia and other African countries. China is continuing to expand its influence over the African countries, in every way it can.
- This year commemorates the 50th anniversary of China and Australia establishing diplomatic relations. China and the state have a mutually beneficial relationship, with increased exchanges and collaboration in fields such as education, medical science, and sports. This is the very reason the bilateral relations between Australia and China have grown a lot in the few years and not been much affected by the changing dynamics in world politics.