

**WEEKEND ISSUE**  
**23.07.22-24.07.22**

*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

- **China performs image exploration on Phobos:** On Saturday, the Tianwen-1 spacecraft from China returned detailed pictures of Mars' natural satellite Phobos. China is performing the first image exploration of Phobos and gathering up-close, first-hand scientific data. It made China's first probe landing on Mars on May 15, 2021, when it landed in Utopia Planitia, a huge plain on the Martian surface.
- **Beijing hosts Thematic Forum for Digital Economy:** On Saturday, Beijing hosted the World Youth Development Forum's Thematic Forum for Digital Economy. The forum intends to encourage young people to participate globally and work together to address the challenges of the digital economy. Nearly 400 politicians, scholars, entrepreneurs, heads of international organisations, and youth leaders from around the world attended. The Digital Economy Development in China 2022 research states that China's digital economy grew by 16.2% annually in 2021 to reach 45.5 trillion yuan. In order to help the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development be implemented, young entrepreneurs from many nations discussed their experiences using digital technology to empower industry development.
- **China's space station launched:** Wentian, the first lab module of China's space station, was launched on Sunday. The new module will serve as a powerful platform for scientific experiments as well as a backup for the main module. Wentian measures 17.9 metres in length, 4.2 metres at its widest point, and 23 tonnes at takeoff. The Tiangong space station being built by China is anticipated to be finished this year. A national space laboratory with three modules—the central module, Tianhe, and two lab modules, Wentian and Mengtian—will then develop from the single-module structure that it currently has.

## II. News in China

- According to the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Shenyang Institute of Automation (SIA), the robot's developer, after passing a sea trial, a remotely operated underwater robot for deep sea surveys that can dive as deep as 6,000 metres was handed over to its users. During its 17 dive operations, the Wenhai-1 collected highly accurate detection data close to the seafloor. The magnetic and gravitational fields of the planet have also been precisely measured.
- Over 660 new pulsars have been found using China's largest Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope (FAST), or the "China Sky Eye". Fast-spinning neutron stars known as pulsars are created when enormous dead stars explode in supernovae. FAST officially began operations in January 2020 and is situated in the Guizhou Province in southwest China. This radio telescope is thought to be the most sensitive in the world.

- According to the decision taken at the State Council's Executive Meeting, which was presided over by Premier Li Keqiang on Thursday, China would implement policy measures to increase effective demand in order to boost the engine for economic recovery and growth. The meeting recognised that China's economy is in a critical phase of recovery and stabilisation. In order to produce greater physical gains in the third quarter, conditions will be put in place to guarantee that work at construction sites doesn't stop and that supply chains and linked industries continue to run without interruption. Pro-consumption policies and work-relief programmes ought to be applied whenever and wherever practicable during project implementation, according to Li.
- Jianan Wang of China wins the gold medal in the men's long jump final with a leap of 27 feet, 514 inches. It is China's first long jump gold medal at a world championship.
- Beijing has stationed permanent rescue forces and maritime administrations on its artificial islands in the disputed South China Sea. Beijing claims sweeping sovereignty over the Spratlys archipelago, which it calls its historical nine-dash line. Previously undertaken by aircraft flying from bases on the mainland or Hainan island, rescue operations will now be handled by the newly founded 2nd Flying Service Squadron of the South China Sea of the Chinese Ministry of Transport, which will be based in the Spratlys. Over parts or all of the islands, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Taiwan all have competing claims.
- After the Pentagon's Defense Security Cooperation Agency announced the Biden administration's fifth arms sale to Taiwan, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) conducted a 10-aircraft incursion into Taiwan's southwestern Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ). This is the first time Beijing has responded to an U.S. arms sale to Taiwan with sorties into its airspace. The incursion may have been part of joint cross-service "combat readiness patrols". Exchanges and contacts between China and the US about Taiwan are currently caught in a negative action-reaction cycle. Beijing has intensified its strong stance on Taiwan in response to the "strategic ambiguity" that the United States and China have adopted. Wei warned that Beijing "would not hesitate to fight, we will fight at all costs" during the Shangri-La Dialogue. Foreign Minister Wang Yi of China rejected any comparisons between Taiwan and Ukraine on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Bali and cautioned "some nations" against purposefully inciting tensions in the Taiwan Strait.
- When Sri Lanka's foreign exchange reserves were devoured, an economic crisis broke out. The largest investor in the island country is China, which has made over USD 10 billion in investments. The political turmoil in Sri Lanka puts Beijing's efforts to alter the Indo-Pacific power equation in jeopardy. The Belt and Road

Initiative (BRI) increased Chinese investment in the island country. Recently, Chinese President Xi Jinping congratulated Ranil Wickremesinghe on becoming the president of Sri Lanka and offered to support Colombo as "his capacity allows" amidst China had maintained silence to repeated pleas from former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa

### III. India Watch

- Over the past ten years, India has given Sri Lanka 8 Lines of Credit (LoCs) totaling US\$1850.64 million in industries like railways, infrastructure, defence, renewable energy, petroleum, and fertilisers. In Parliament, there was also discussion of Sri Lanka's arrest of Indian fishermen. India's willingness to assist Sri Lanka in its hour of need is unprecedented. It is making use of the opportunity to economically integrate Sri Lanka, which will aid in the development of the island nation. India has also advised Sri Lankans to look for a solution within their constitutional framework. Not only that, but India is also developing a long-term strategy to support the island nation in approaching the IMF for a financial rescue and in reviving its economy. China, in contrast, has stated that Sri Lanka must demonstrate sufficient foreign exchange reserves for three months before it will receive any assistance. Sri Lanka also requested a \$1 billion loan from China for the purchase of necessities, but China never responded. The \$1.5 billion credit line also never materialised. India's timely and significant action in Sri Lanka, where it has offered assistance while safeguarding long-term interests that could be beneficial to both nations, demonstrates the success of its neighbourhood strategy.