

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

- **Starting a War to Just for Show:** Nancy Pelosi has been the topic of much discussion on Weibo this week, following reports that the US House Speaker is planning a visit to Taiwan. Some argue that, regardless of Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, US-China relations have already reached a low point in decades. Individual countries are challenging China's sovereignty and "deliberately creating tensions," according to China's Geng Shuang. Chinese state media outlets are unequivocal about China's official position. There are also softer positions, arguing that Sino-American relations should prioritise communication in order to avoid misunderstandings. According to Chinese social media commentators, US Representative Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan would be a clear provocation, giving the People's Liberation Army "good reason" to "wage war." This line of reasoning is similar to that of influential Global Times commentator Hu Xijin, who suggested that Pelosi's visit to Taiwan could be cancelled. On July 30, Fujian's Maritime Safety Administration issued a navigation warning that live-fire exercises would take place in waters near Fujian, opposite Taiwan.
- **Xi sends condolences to Philippine President Marcos in the aftermath of the earthquake:** On Sunday, Xi stated that he was astounded to learn that the earthquake had resulted in casualties and property losses. He also expressed his belief that people will overcome the disaster under the leadership of President Marcos and the Philippine government.

II. News in China

- Guangdong province in China rejects a special health code for the unvaccinated and warns against 'excessive' restrictions. Local authorities in China have occasionally imposed strict controls on residents in an attempt to comply with the country's zero-Covid policy. Turning the health code green requires getting tested or following quarantine procedures that vary by city. In an effort to reduce the risk of an outbreak, China's National Health Commission has warned against imposing excessive vaccination restrictions. China's vaccination rate remains low, particularly among its elderly population. According to health officials, only 61% of those over the age of 80 have received their primary vaccinations.
- In China, the digital economy has become the most important engine of economic development. China's digital economy will reach RMB 45.5 trillion in 2021, making it the world's second-largest. China and Brazil have enormous potential for digital economy cooperation. China and Brazil can collaborate extensively in the areas of AI infrastructure, education, and e-commerce. Partnerships in the digital economy and online retailing have great potential between the two countries. China may have underestimated the Chinese market for Portuguese language learning. There

are approximately 30 million Latin dance enthusiasts in China. Samba, a popular subgenre of Latin dance, has a sizable following in China. Brazil and China may collaborate in a wide range of areas related to culture and the arts, beyond from samba.

- The "Colorful Guizhou Style" spectacle is back on stage in southwest China. Almost 40 cities throughout the nation have hosted over 5,000 performances of song and dance shows. It presents the spectator about Guizhou's thriving ethnic culture. Currently, performances are scheduled on even dates, however this may vary depending on demand.
- Over the Indian Ocean, debris from a huge Chinese rocket re-entered the atmosphere. Between Borneo and the Philippines, over the Sulu Sea, the majority of the debris burned up. People had followed the rocket's trajectory because there was a chance it would hit a populated region. The new Tiangong station will be run by China for at least ten years. Compared to the International Space Station, the station will be smaller. The Chinese launcher may have dropped up to 20,000 pounds on the planet's surface. In October, a final laboratory module will be released. The rocket's final mission is scheduled for 2023, when it will transport an orbiting space telescope.
- After recovering from Covid-19 lockdowns the previous month, China's factory activity unexpectedly decreased in July. The official manufacturing purchasing managers' Index (PMI) fell to 49.0 in July from 50.2 in June. High raw material costs are still a problem for Chinese manufacturers, as they are reducing profit margins. In the second quarter, China's economy barely expanded despite extensive lockdowns. The official non-manufacturing PMI dropped from 54.7 in June to 53.8 in July. Policy restraint and the fear of additional lockdowns will probably prolong China's recovery.
- China says it is conducting live-fire military exercises near the Pingtan islands off Fujian province. Announcement comes amid rising tensions with the US over a possible visit to Taiwan by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Beijing has warned Washington of severe consequences if Pelosi were to visit Taiwan during her Asia tour. In recent months, China has been increasingly sending its fighters, bombers and surveillance aircraft near Taiwan. The governments in Beijing and Taipei disagree over who is entitled to national leadership.
- China's President Xi Jinping has stressed persistent efforts to strive ahead with diligence to realize goals set for 100th anniversary of founding of People's Liberation Army. Xi made remarks on Wednesday during a visit to Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution. Military Museum displays achievements in strengthening China's national defense and armed forces in new era.

- China's mainland had confirmed 229,594 Covid cases exhibiting symptoms as of Sunday. A six-day streak of no new cases was broken when Beijing reported one new local case that was discovered outside of quarantine limits. No new deaths occurred, bringing the total number of infection-related deaths in the country to 5,226.
- The biggest economic recession China has experienced in years is creating a generation of disgruntled and jobless youth. In China, the number of university graduates has increased, but the number of white-collar positions has not. This summer, around 11 million Chinese students will graduate from university, yet many of them will struggle to find employment. China produced 500,000 college graduates in 1990. A record 10.8 million students will graduate from college this summer. Youth unemployment rate hit an all-time high of 19%. China's biggest private education firm alone fired 60,000 employees. 14,000 gaming companies shut down and Tencent cut 20% to 30% of its gaming staff. Authorities trying to quash any dissent ahead of the October Party Congress.

III. India Watch

- The relationship between China, Brazil and India in the context of the G20 process and the independent BRICS institutional architecture is noteworthy. The changing interactions between each of these three rising powers in these various institutional contexts show some agentic similarity and difference. India's and China's approaches to the BRICS summit and the G20 meeting show a mix of status-seeking and hedging behavior. While China is taking a cautious approach, it is also exercising strong leadership while India's leadership has a very clear orientation towards developmental issues when it comes to matters of national interest. Unlike China's strategy, India's strategy is more and more seen as a response to China, with a focus on the US and the rest of the West. The shifting dynamics between Brazil and China may worsen an already-existing contest between India and Brazil for a permanent seat on the security council. The negative effects on India of Brazil's strong reliance on China for technology transfer and post-pandemic economic recovery must be taken into account.