

11.8.21

DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**



**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON
CHINA AND ASIA**

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I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Unsettling violent video shared on Weibo:** A graphic video is being shared by Chinese twitter accounts as well as Weibo users in which a person is seen attacking a traffic policeman with a cleaver. The incident is said to have taken place in Dianbai in Guangdong province. Violence against policeman in Dianbai where there are many water routes leading to Guangzhou, Jiangmen, Macao, Zhuhai, Haikou and even Hong Kong is rare as pointed out by Weibo users.
- **Olympics and COVID-19 fears continue to dominate Weibo in non-flood affected areas:** Henan and parts of southwest China are using the platform mainly for aid and connectivity amidst flooding. However, the Olympics and stress over growing COVID-19 cases is continuing to dominate Weibo trends.

II. News in China

- Qu Country in South West China is struggling with immense flooding; CGTN's Instagram has posted videos of a motorcyclist being washed away by the water. National media and newspapers have not covered the flooding taking place there.
- Continuing with their crackdown on off-campus teaching, the Chinese Ministry of Education has directed that all provinces and autonomous regions will have to submit their implementation progress work on the 15th and 30th of each month starting from August 30 .
- People's Daily has carried a piece about infrastructure development in Tibet which focuses mainly on the Lalin Railway. This post comes after the Chinese Propaganda Department carried a piece over the same on 10.8.21 (see our previous report).
- People's Daily has carried a commentary while Xinhua has reported on rising COVID-19 cases in the US; this comes as the Delta variant spreads rapidly across China itself citing some tension on social media amongst citizens.
- People's Daily has carried an article by Nong Rong, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan which talks about support for China across Pakistani political establishment and the focused cooperation between the two over Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

- Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka Qi Zhenhong has met with the country's Minister of Health, Pavithra Wanniarachchi, to discuss an upcoming batch of medical supplies that China will be providing to Sri Lanka.
- Global Times Editor-in-Chief Hu Xijin has published a scathing piece targeting Lithuania calling it a 'crazy country' that is going to 'pay the price for making radical moves' with respect to Taiwan.
- Director-General of the Department of Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Liu Jinsong met with Nepal's Ambassador to China and highlighted that both countries have been "linked by the ancient Silk Road since the beginning of history".

III. India Watch

- Growing focus in Chinese media and official departments on the Lalin Railway is a matter of important insight for India. As China's dam building focus grows in the region and India-China water politics becomes more tense, New Delhi must look at the strategic advantages the rail network provides to China's infrastructure development and military in the region.
- The meeting between China's Sri Lanka Ambassador and Sri Lanka's Minister of Health highlights the continued focus Beijing is providing to Health Silk Road diplomacy. Importantly, Wanniarachchi opposed the politicisation of the pandemic and even highlighted how over 80 % of Sri Lankan vaccines are from China. India's own health diplomacy in its own neighborhood must be strenuously focused on matching China's narrative in South Asia, already being aided by its International Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine Cooperation (which does not include India).
- All in all, Chinese officials have met with counterparts from Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka over the past two days to discuss strong existing ties, future cooperation with a focus on BRI and promoted health silk road diplomacy. Concurrently, China's weight in Afghanistan continues to grow as Taliban-Beijing ties strengthen. Beijing's political and economic clout in South Asia and India's immediate neighborhood is hence at one of its all-time highs post-COVID.
- In continuation with our earlier assessments that Xi Jinping has not physically attended any event post return from Lhasa and instead sent written speeches or replies, he has now written back to foreign youth representatives of the "International Youth Leaders Dialogue" project on August 10. This hints again at his presence at Beidaihe, which is poised to be underway about this time. (Read our earlier assessments from the past week to see our focus on Beidaihe.)