

17.8.21

*DAILY*  
**CONVERSATIONS  
IN CHINESE  
MEDIA**



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**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON  
CHINA AND ASIA**

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***PREPARED BY***

Team ORCA

[writetous.orca@gmail.com](mailto:writetous.orca@gmail.com)

## I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Chinese social networking service Douban sees major dip in ratings of Japanese war movies:** In a continuing example of anti-Japan sentiment, Douban has seen several movies --especially those on war and patriotism -- from Japan have their ratings go down after being "review-bombed" by Chinese nationalists.
- **Debate between Chinese netizens over Taliban continues:** In line with our assessment from 16.8.21, Chinese netizens remain divided on the line China should take vis-a-vis Taliban with many stating that aligning with a terror-group solely because it "too" is anti-US is wrong. The people's sentiment is divided: on one hand, the backlash over a whitewashing Weibo post in favor of Taliban the social media account of People's Daily led to the post being taken down. Concurrently, Afghan female filmmaker Sahraa Karimi's emotional video expressing fear over Afghanistan under Taliban has been mocked by the section of Chinese netizens supporting Taliban.

## II. News in China

- From regional to national, all news outlets in China have been extensively covering the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. The narrative is severely anti-US leadership with sweeping statements like "it's unrest took more than 800,000 of human life". Important focus has also been given to NATO's dissatisfaction with the US decision. Meanwhile, Taliban's claim that it will not allow Al-Qaeda or other terror groups to operate in Afghanistan has been cited.
- Xi Jinping has begun appearing in public again post an absence which our previous reports have documented linking his physical absence from meetings to the Beidaihe meeting. He has now presided over the tenth meeting of the Central Finance and Economics Committee which emphasized on the promotion of "common prosperity in high-quality development".
- The Central Propaganda Department and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have issued a notice requiring all departments to study a new book on Xi Jinping's diplomatic thought so as to guide their work, as per People's Daily.
- Four students of University of Hong Kong have been arrested under the National Security Law on suspicion of advocating terrorism. The students had attended a meeting paying tribute to man who stabbed a police officer before killing himself.

### III. India Watch

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day speech has been analysed in China. Modi claimed that India is facing the dual challenges of "terrorism" and "expansionism" in his speech; as Indian media has linked the latter to China's aggressive posturing in economic and maritime domains, the same has been picked up by Chinese media and journalists. The rhetoric in China has followed the line of how India is not economically strong enough to realistically limit dependence on China.
- It is possible that Beijing's delay in officially recognizing Taliban --which as per sources it had been planning on doing (see our report from 13.8.21) if Kabul fell-- could also be due to public divide in China over the Taliban. Attempts by People's Daily, which is the media mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), to publish white-washing videos about the Taliban must be viewed as attempts by CCP to push forward a more-favourable outlook of the insurgent group before making a formal policy announcement.