

DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**

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**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON
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I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Increased chatter on Weibo regarding China's hydro-power station in Medog:** The dam is poised to be built on the Yarlung Zangbo river in Tibet. This politically important river is known as Brahmaputra in when it passes into India (and flows on further into Bangladesh). While the posts on Weibo are not giving any new information, the renewed focus on the project shows signs of mobility in its implementation.
- **Picture of Indian soldiers with MP9 and SIG 716 rifles:** A Weibo account has posted a picture of two Indian soldiers with MP9 and SIG 716 rifles with the caption that "soldiers near Nyoma (Ladakh) have been given MP9 and Sig 716. While China changed tanks, infantry vehicles, rocket launchers and anti-aircraft missiles, India has changed rifles." (see image 1)
- **Chinese legal scholar and civil rights activist indicted:** Chinese twitter accounts have reported that Xu Zhiyong has been indicted with 'subversion of state'. The posts state that Xu was detained on February 15, 2020 after writing multiple open letters and online commentaries criticizing the Chinese government, including its response to the COVID-19 outbreak in the country. It has also been reported that Xu has been beaten, threatened, and tortured by authorities.
- **China ends Olympics on a high note:** Weibo users celebrated China's 88 medals at the Olympics. Comments about performance of other countries as not great (or in sports there they beat China as unfair) continued.

II. News in China

- State media has reported on events attended by Xi Jinping, Sun Chunlan (Vice Premier) and foreign minister Wang Yi. News regarding Xi was that he has delivered a written speech to the first meeting of the International Forum on Covid Vaccine Cooperation on 5.8.21. Xi Jinping has not appeared in any meeting in public after 30.7.21 instead he has delivered written speeches. Sun Chunlan went to Xinxiang City, Henan Province to guide post-disaster epidemic prevention and control work on 6.8.21. Wang Yi attended the 28th ASEAN Regional Forum Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 6.8.21.
- Global Times praised China's 88 medals at Olympics which "particularly thrilled the Chinese public, boosted their morale and patriotism as the Chinese delegation, with the largest-ever delegation of 777 people sent overseas, bagged a total of 88 medals and ranked 2nd in the medal table, lagging the US by just one gold medal." Furthermore, with 38 gold medals, China has achieved its best result in an overseas Olympics.

III. India Watch

- The Medog county hydro-power project in Tibet is a major threat to India; it will adversely impact Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, and other states. It can completely inundate low-lying areas in these states. The Yarlung Zangbo river (Brahmaputra in India) has the richest water assets in Southwest China's Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR). Its grand canyon can create more hydro-power than the Three Gorges power stations; water politics is hence a key area of contention in the trans-Himalayan region where China has followed an 'invisible incursion' strategy. Dams --while improving public infrastructure and energy needs --are ultimately tools of marking territory and state-making in this sensitive region; India must not just view this development with concern, but take active steps to ensure that it is carried out in a mutually agreed upon transparent and rules-based manner so as to ensure national interests.
- Since Beidaihe meetings are extremely secretive, it is difficult to guess regarding its ongoings. Based on public engagements by Xi, Wang Yi and Sun, the probable period between 1-5 August is most plausible for when the Beidaihe meeting could have taken place, if it did.



Image 1: Indian soldiers with MP9 and SIG 716 rifles