

9.8.21

DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**



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

- **Weibo reacts to exercises by Indian army:** Videos of Indian armed forces carrying out operational exercise in Nyoma Advanced landing ground have been shared by many military observer accounts on Weibo. Over Weibo, comments suggest that social media is viewing these as a move by India towards increased combat preparedness.
- **Weibo closely following India's UNSC presidency:** Comments and posts argue that "India is using its rotating chairmanship to keep Pakistan out of discussions on Afghanistan related crisis at the UNSC. And Pakistan should be included."
- **Dissident from Hubei Province trending:** A case of a dissident named Yin Xuan from Daye City, Hubei Province has come to light in social media. He was sentenced to 4.5 years of jail for "using social hot spots and other issues to fabricate false information and uploading it to Twitter and other foreign websites." The verdict listed three of his tweets as crimes, two of which were videos of conflicts between officials and the people, and the third one was a group photo with his friends with the license plate of "Fujian D8964" with a post to commemorate June 4th.

II. News in China

- Jianjiao Buluo (Pepper Tribe), a media platform that used to raise and amplify the voices of factory workers (particularly women), announced their closure on 9.8.21. It used to release stories and data regarding marginalised groups such as exploited sex workers, lower-income transgender women and factory workers in China.
- Non-mainstream media suggests that among the top officials, only Sun Chunlan is present in Beijing and has not gone to Beidaihe. Since she is already 71 years old and will be retiring soon, she would not have had much contribution to give to Beidaihe; furthermore, keeping her age and health in mind, she was tasked with meetings and appearances closer to home. That is why there are news updates about her from 29th July to 6th August. Whereas all the updates about Xi do not require him to be present anywhere such as sending congratulatory message to Turkish president on 50 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, sending a written speech for the First Meeting of the International Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine Cooperation and more.

- Construction of the no. 8 tunnel of the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway network has been completed. The railway is China's flagship Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project in Indonesia, constructed by China Railway Third Bureau.

III. India Watch

- Weibo's reaction to India's presidency is no surprise; however, the call for inclusion of Pakistan on the table --especially with respect to Afghanistan -- shows the innate intricacy of the 'iron brotherhood' Beijing and Islamabad share. The ties are being viewed extremely and increasingly favorably by Chinese public --especially when India's power is the topic of discussion.
- With regards to the trending dissident story on Weibo, 64 is a common way of referring to the Tiananmen Square protests in Chinese language as 6 denotes June and 4 denotes the date (4 June) when the demonstrations were violently shut down by Beijing. This verdict shows how sensitive the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) continues to be about the Tiananmen incident especially when referred to it in foreign internet platform. It also is further proof of how room for dissent and any form of potential democratization remains extremely limited in China.
- Completion of tunnel 8 which is 2,190 meters long in the Jakarta-Bandung rail network goes to show that China's BRI projects (which had been adversely impacted due to COVID-19) are picking up again, with Chinese workers once again gaining entry into foreign borders. India's focus on its outreach via initiatives like the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI), Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and the newly ideated US-led Group of 7's Build Back Better World (B3) must strengthen with immediate focus. Importantly, rebuilding active linkages via Act East Policy (AEP) with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a matter of priority. As borders open and state-visits begin, diplomatic outreach must actively strengthen at the top level.