

20.12.21

DAILY
**CONVERSATIONS
IN CHINESE
MEDIA**



**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON
CHINA AND ASIA**

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I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Zhang Zhehan Story trends again:** After an opinion piece was published on WhatsonWeibo, Chinese actor, Zhang Zhehan's story has trended again who has been blacklisted since his photos at the controversial Yasukuni Shrine went viral. The netizens pointed that Zhang swiftly deleted vacation photos of him near the Yasukuni Shrine and apologized quickly for not knowing the significance of the buildings in the area. Netizens chattered that Zhang did not deserve his recent blacklisted status and he is also a victim of online fake news propagation and cyberbullying.
- **Hashtag #Huang Wei trends on Weibo:** China's popular live streamer Queen Viya is trending on social media. She allegedly committed tax fraud and provided false information regarding her personal income. She is popular with names such as Taobao queen, Viya, and her real name Huang We. Investigation report suggests that from 2019 to 2020 she evaded around 643 million yuan (\$100 million) in taxes.
- **Electronic Music gains popularity in China:** As already popular musicians and DJs were not able to travel in China due to COVID-19 restrictions, local Chinese artists have gained popularity. On social media platforms like Weibo and Wechat, there are accounts and pages of various electronic music bloggers with thousands of followers. As COVID restrictions have eased in China, people have gone back to clubs in larger numbers and the gap was filled by local artists. Some reports suggest a mix of traditional music is more popular while others claim that such West inspired music is not good for the culture.

II. News in China

- On 20.12.21, CCDI published an article emphasizing morality in the field of arts and literature. It says that literature and art professionals must uphold good morals, should cherish their influence and take the social impact of their works into serious consideration. They must work hard, practice true skills, and have a reputation for seeking truth. If a literary and art worker does not have moral integrity, he/she will not be accepted by the people or by the times. This comes after Taiwanese-American singer-songwriter Leehom Wang was entangled in controversy following her wife making allegations of adultery on him. This news was closely followed by netizens in China as covered in the newsletter dated 17.12.21.
- China held a flag-raising ceremony for the 22nd anniversary of Macao's return to China.

- State-owned enterprises have fared well this year in China. The net profits of central enterprises grew to 1.75 trillion yuan (about \$274.94 billion) from January to November. Enterprises in the petroleum and petrochemical, iron and steel as well as coal were highly profitable. Investment in R&D also increased from 0.1 percentage from the last year and now stands at 2.3 percent during the period.
- People daily published a commentary of Zhong Sheng around the US being the “biggest breaker of international rules.” The piece basically says that since WWII, the US has “repeatedly launched wars in order to maintain its hegemonic selfish interests”. It mentioned US involvement in Yugoslavia, Iraq and Syria as setting the narrative that the US bypasses the UNSC and launches war as per its own interest. The piece further stressed that US places domestic law above international law and exercises jurisdiction over other sovereign states through unilateral sanctions.
- People daily published a commentary in continuation to the anti-democracy campaign in China. Talking about “deliberative democracy,” commentary makes the case that in China people participate in democratic consultation and thereby claims that China is a democracy. The central point of the commentary was that the only difference between Chinese democracy and others is that there is no room for politicians to make promises while campaigning and break them all once elected in China.
- Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai gave her first media interview post her disappearance after she alleged Vice-Premier Zhang Gaoli sexually assaulted her through a Weibo post; she has now denied making an accusation of sexual assault.

III. India Watch

- Netizens have shown their discontent over banning of celebrities. This shows that CCP is very particular about the content that flows over the social media; its new focus on social sensitization of celebrities shows this focus. Netizens and celebrities often become victims of online fake news propagation and cyberbullying by the hands of nationalists and loyalists to CCP; they face public outrage and punishment before being proven right which is generally used as a tool to put pressure using executive power.
- Peng Shuai's retraction of her statement post her disappearance suggests that the CCP has put pressure on her to protect her perpetrator, a high ranking CCP official.
- China is working intensively to feed its population with an anti-west and anti-western-type democracy narratives even as the public remains drawn to Western culture.