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A NEW DOOR OPENS

Journey of change takes Xinjiang villagers to better lives

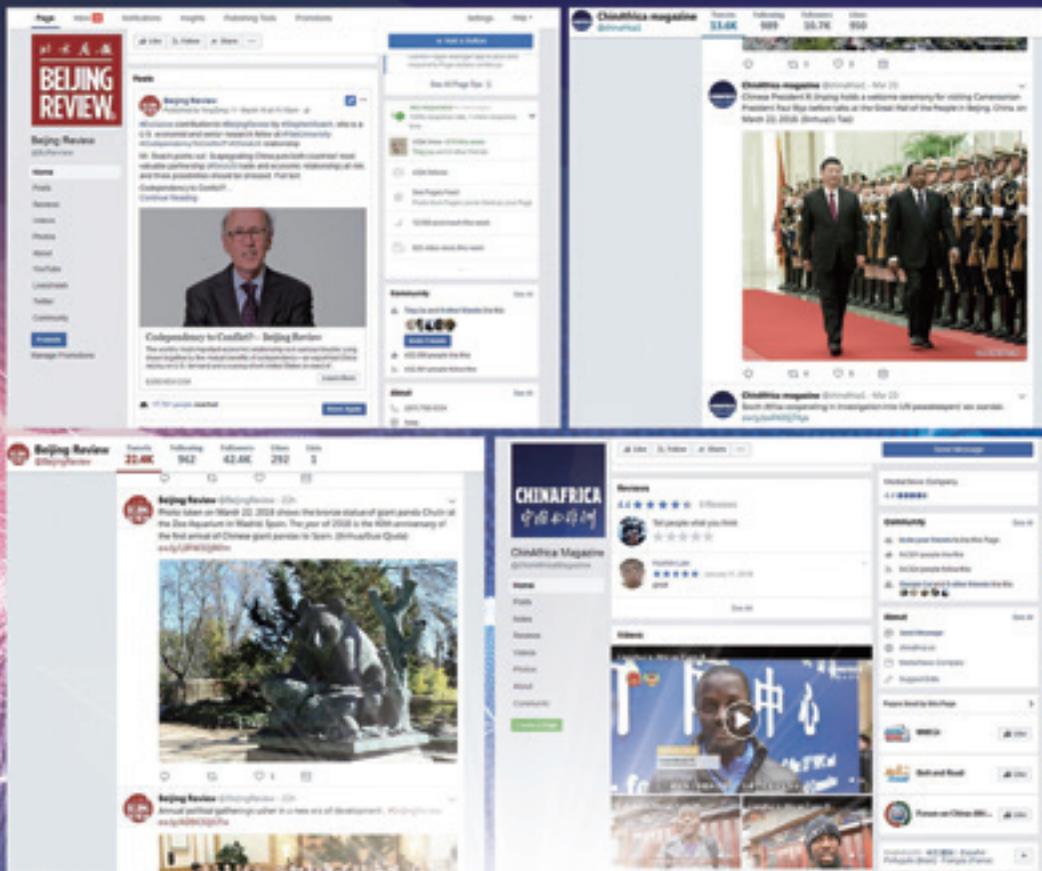


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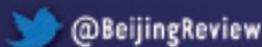
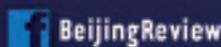
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Beijing Review Designated 'Foreign Mission' as U.S. Ramps Up Chinese Media Suppression

The U.S. State Department has designated the U.S. operations of six more Chinese media companies as "foreign missions." According to a list provided to the Chinese Embassy in the U.S., the six media outlets are *Beijing Review*, *Economic Daily*, *Jiefang Daily*, *Social Sciences in China Press*, *Xinmin Evening News* and *Yicai Global* (also known as China Business Network).

At a press briefing on October 21, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the move was aimed at "pushing back on Chinese Communist propaganda efforts here at home."

In a letter sent to *Beijing Review*, the State Department said *Beijing Review*'s U.S. bureau has to register details about its property and travels and visits by its employees with the U.S. Government. It is tantamount to imposing political surveillance over the daily lives of Chinese reporters in the U.S.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian responded on October 22, saying that the U.S. had made the move based on a Cold War mentality and ideological bias, adding that the designation has seriously affected China's media operation in the U.S. and disrupted cultural exchanges between the two countries.

Associated Press called it "a move that will further foment tensions in already deteriorating ties between the world's two largest economies as President Donald Trump seeks to boost his anti-China credentials ahead of

November's election."

Beijing Review, established in 1958, is China's only national news magazine in English. Its raison d'être is to facilitate communication between China and the rest of world by providing timely, accurate and first-hand information on economic, political and cultural developments in China. Since the first issue, it has been considered as a first-hand source on China.

As of this month, 15 Chinese media entities have been listed as "foreign missions" by the U.S.

The adding of the six media entities is the most recent activity by the U.S. to escalate tensions with China. Aside from engineering the arrest of Chinese telecom company Huawei's chief financial officer in Canada, the Trump administration has closed China's Consulate General in Houston, cooked up the conspiracy theory that a Chinese lab produced the novel coronavirus, indicted several Chinese citizens on espionage charges and kicked out 60 U.S.-based Chinese journalists. It has imposed strict limits on the travels of Chinese diplomats, designated the Confucius Institutes that promote educational and cultural links as "foreign missions," and meddled in Hong Kong and Xinjiang affairs.

We strongly urge the U.S. to stop its political oppression and arbitrary restrictions on Chinese media organizations and bring China-U.S. relations back on track. ■

WRITETOUS



Send an e-mail: editorsoffice@bjreview.com

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CIIE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers of the Third China International Import Expo (CIIE) take their oath at the National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai on October 18.

Over 4,800 people were sworn in as volunteers and went on duty that day.



Greening Expo

Visitors take photos at the Shanghai exhibition area of the Fourth China Greening Exposition in Qiannan Buyi and Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Guizhou Province, southwest China, on October 18. The expo will end on November 18.

Vaccine Progress

About 60,000 volunteers have been given novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccines developed in China as part of phase-3 clinical trials, with no severe side effects reported, a Chinese official said on October 20.

Four potential vaccines have entered international phase-3 clinical trials so far, according to Tian Baoguo, an official with the Ministry of Science and Technology, at a news conference in Beijing. All trials are progressing well, he said.

According to Tian, the most common adverse reactions in the phase-3 trials are mild pain and swelling at the injection site, followed by fever.

Two inactivated vaccines

developed by China National Biotech Group (CNBG), which is affiliated to Sinopharm, and the Wuhan Institute of Biological Products have started phase-3 clinical trials in 10 countries, with more than 50,000 volunteers taking part, Sinopharm Chair Liu Jingzhen said.

Sinovac Biotech, another vaccine developer, said its partners in Brazil, Indonesia and Turkey have established monitoring systems for adverse reactions in accordance with internationally accepted standards. So far, no severe adverse reactions have been reported.

High-Speed Train

Chinese train maker CRRC Changchun Railway Vehicles on October 21 rolled out a new type of

high-speed train which can run on different rail systems.

The train, with a standard speed of 400 km per hour, has been developed to cope with different rail systems on international routes, making international rail travel more convenient.

The company said the train can operate in temperatures between minus 50 degrees and 50 degrees Celsius, and also under different traction power supply systems and meet transportation standards of different countries.

The company is ready to take orders for customized high-speed trains and train products.

There are currently four main railway track standards around the world. When ordinary trains run between countries with different

gauges, they need to replace their bogies, which takes time and effort.

As the new CRRC train is equipped with gauge-changing bogies, it can change its rail mode during cross-border travel, greatly improving the efficiency of travel across rail systems.

Going Digital

Yiwu China Commodities City, the world's largest small commodity market, launched an online platform on October 21, a key step toward digital transformation.

The www.chinagoods.com website relies on resources of 75,000 physical stores in the Yiwu market and serves 2 million micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the upstream industrial chain.

Yiwu, a city in Zhejiang Province in east China, sells commodities to about 200 countries and regions every year. It has been seeking new opportunities through digital transformation amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the January-September period, Yiwu saw its exports grow 5.1 percent year on year. It handled 4.73 billion parcels, ranking second nationwide.

Employment Report

Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwest China issued a report on the employment of ethnic groups in the region on October 20.

The report, released by the Xinjiang Development Research Center, concludes that governments at all levels as well as enterprises in Xinjiang and other provincial level administrative regions have helped people of different ethnic minority groups find jobs and safeguarded their basic rights such as work and development rights.

In recent years, local governments in Xinjiang have been promoting job opportunities for workers of ethnic groups both within and outside the region, and have formulated favorable policies and regulations related to employment.

Xinjiang has invested heavily in vocational training over the years. Statistics indicated that the region arranged skill training for about 6.96 million people from 2014 to 2019.

Over the past five years, the region has helped nurture 379,400 new entrepreneurs, who have given jobs to 827,400 people.

At the end of 2019, the number of people insured for basic endowment, unemployment and work-related injuries in Xinjiang reached 18.91 million, with a coverage rate of more than 90 percent.

War Exhibition

An exhibition commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Chinese People's Volunteers' assistance in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea (1950-53) opened at the Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution in Beijing on October 19.

Wang Huning, a senior Communist Party of China official, called it a war for justice that safeguarded peace and resisted aggression.

On October 19, 1950, on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s call for help, Chinese volunteers crossed the Yalu River on the China-DPRK border to assist in the war till a truce was signed in 1953. A total of 2.9 million volunteers fought in the war and over 197,600 of them died.

The exhibition features photographs, weapons used during the

war, artwork and other memorabilia. It will run through the year till the end of February 2021.

Port Power

The island province of Hainan in south China has started construction on a shore power project at the Port of Yangpu to reduce pollution by ships berthed at the port, according to a report by Xinhua News Agency on October 19.

Contracted by the Hainan branch of State Power Investment Corp. (SPIC) with an investment of 97.2 million yuan (\$14.5 million), the project covers 15 berths at the port and has a maximum power supply capacity of 16.28 megavolt ampere.

The main part of the project is scheduled for completion by the end of 2020, according to Sun Qunli, General Manager of SPIC Hainan, who said ships docking at the port will be able to use shore power directly instead of relying on their own oil-fired power generation.

The project will reduce nitrogen oxide, sulfur oxide and suspended solid emissions by over 95 percent, or 1,168 tons a year, according to Sun.

Drug Users

Around 227,000 impoverished people with a history of drug abuse have shaken off poverty since combined efforts for narcotics control



Machine Wins Potato Race

A new potato harvesting machine on display in Fengbu, a village in Guyuan, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in northwest China, on October 20. The new machine can harvest 80 tons of potato a day while a person can harvest only 1 ton.

and poverty alleviation were stepped up in 2018.

The situation in 34 of the listed regions where drug abuse used to be a serious problem has improved, leading to their removal from the priority list for narcotics control.

These figures are from a national conference held in Liangshan, a prefecture in Sichuan Province in southwest China, on October 20.

The National Narcotics Control

Commission said further efforts should be made to tackle drug problems and ensure the regions still on the list are removed at the earliest.

Du Hangwei, Vice Minister of Public Security and deputy head of the commission, said efforts are on to ensure that all the remaining impoverished people with a history of drug abuse are free of narcotics use and out of poverty by the end of the year.



Preparing for Olympics

A Chinese and a French ice maker lay a racing track at the National Snowmobile and Sled Center built for the Olympic Winter Games 2022 in Yanqing, a suburban district of Beijing, on October 18. Eight foreign and 20 domestic ice making professionals have participated in the work since October 9.

Space Launches

Aerospace experts outlined greater development of the commercial space industry at the Sixth China (International) Commercial Aerospace Forum held in Wuhan, Hubei Province in central China, on October 19.

During the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) period, China will continue building space infrastructure, enhance the capability of commercial space systems, and integrate them into major national development strategies, Fu Zhimin, chief engineer of the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp., said.

Development of the commercial space sector will also drive the high-quality development of strategic emerging sectors such as the digital economy, intelligent manufacturing and new materials, Fu added.

According to the forum, China will continue developing Kuaizhou rockets, which are low-cost solid-fuel space vehicles with high reliability and a short preparation period. The number of annual launch missions of Kuaizhou rockets will be doubled by 2023 and China will have developed world-class solid propulsion technology by 2025.

China will enhance international cooperation and expand the global resource allocation capacity of commercial space technologies and products. It will provide more commercial space launch services to international users, especially participating countries of the Belt and Road Initiative, Fu said.

Fintech Center

A national fintech certification center has been established in Chongqing

Municipality in southwest China, Xinhua News Agency reported on October 18.

Fintech refers to technology-enabled innovation in financial services.

The establishment of the center marked a significant step in the implementation of the Fintech Development Plan (2019-21), and was a measure to improve the regulatory framework for fintech, said Fan Yifei, Deputy Governor of the People's Bank of China, the central bank.

The center should aim at national strategic needs including innovation-driven development and the construction of the Chengdu-Chongqing economic circle, and build up its core competence by relying upon the unified national certification system for fintech products, he said.

It is expected to develop into a first-class certification authority, serve as a "gatekeeper" for integrity, innovation, safety and compliance in fintech development, and become the backbone in the joint governance system for fintech in China, according to Fan.

Tesla Exports

U.S. electric carmaker Tesla announced on October 19 that it will export the made-in-China Model 3 to Europe, marking another important milestone for its Shanghai Gigafactory.

The first batch of exported sedans left Shanghai on October 27 and will arrive at the Port of Zeebrugge in Belgium at the end of November before being sold in European countries.

"Relying on China's industrial chain advantages and advanced manufacturing level, the global competitiveness of the China-made Model 3 is robust," Song Gang, Manufacturing and Operation Director of Tesla Shanghai Gigafactory, said.

According to Tesla, it has overcome impacts of the novel coronavirus disease epidemic as its production and sales activities have recovered with the help of governments at all levels.

After the production capacity reaches the first-stage target, Tesla can meet needs of Chinese consumers while providing high-quality products to European consumers, Song said.

SOE Performance

Centrally administered state-owned enterprises (SOEs) reported both profit and revenue growth in the third quarter (Q3), the State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC) said at a press conference on October 20.

Revenue of these companies rose 1.5 percent year on year to 7.8 trillion yuan (\$1.17 trillion) in Q3.



Virtual Experience

Visitors view ancient Chinese architecture with virtual reality (VR) glasses during the 2020 World Conference on VR Industry in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province in east China, on October 19. Around 100 participants from 18 countries and regions discussed the VR industry ecosystem and its application in entertainment, tourism, healthcare and other fields in person or via video link.



Profitable Business

A worker feeds Suffolk sheep at a farm in Manas County, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwest China, on October 19. The county's high-quality mutton products are sold in metropolises including Beijing and Shanghai via e-commerce platforms, generating a stable income for local residents.

Their net profit totaled 474.8 billion yuan (\$71.1 billion), up 34.5 percent from the previous year, SASAC data showed.

In September alone, their revenue hit 2.8 trillion yuan (\$419 billion), a 4.3-percent expansion from a year ago and the highest monthly growth this year.

The figure for the first three quarters edged down 4.6 percent from a year earlier to 21.1 trillion yuan (\$3.1 trillion), narrowing by 1.2 percentage points compared with the contraction in the first eight months.

Meanwhile, the net profit of centrally administered SOEs in the first three quarters dropped 13.6 percent year on year to 913.35 billion yuan (\$136 billion), as against a decline of 24.9 percent in the first eight months, according to SASAC.

"The vast majority of enterprises basically reversed the unfavorable situation in the first half of the year and returned to the normal track of business development," SASAC spokesperson Peng Huagang said.

In the first three quarters, the profit margin of centrally

administered SOEs stood above 7 percent and reached 9.5 percent in September, the highest in a decade, he said.

Logistics Cooperation

Alibaba's Cainiao Smart Logistics Network Ltd., one of China's courier giants, signed a cooperation agreement with American freight transport airline Atlas Air Worldwide Holdings on October 20.

According to the agreement, there will be three Atlas Air charter flights every week linking China with Brazil and Chile, reducing the overall shipping time from a week to three days on average.

As the cross-border trade between China and South America continues to expand, Cainiao's parcel volume to regional countries exceeded 8 million in Q3, double the number in the previous quarter.

"Our partnership with Atlas Air will help us establish an efficient, reliable network to South America and other worldwide destinations by significantly reducing airfreight delivery time for the merchants

we support," said William Xiong, Cainiao's chief strategist and general manager of export logistics.

Cainiao is expected to operate about 1,300 charter flights by the end of 2020. The global operating networks will enable it to enhance its logistics capabilities and offer customers faster deliveries globally, according to company sources.

John Dietrich, President and CEO of Atlas Air Worldwide, said he is "excited to support Cainiao and Alibaba's fast-growing e-commerce business and its global expansion in South America."

Digital Growth

Shandong Province in east China will ramp up efforts to bring its digital economy to a world-class level by 2030, according to a press briefing held in its capital city Jinan on October 19.

The province aims to foster innovative enterprises and industrial clusters in Jinan and build it into a national leading technology center in computing power, arithmetic and

algorithms based on its advantages in computing power infrastructure.

Jinan has attracted 56.6 billion yuan (\$8.4 billion) in investment, covering 68 projects in 12 categories to expand its digital industry, according to official statistics.

By 2022, the city is expected to see the output value of the digital sector surpassing 530 billion yuan (\$79 billion), accounting for over 47 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP). It will be supported by technological innovation in servers, supercomputing, software, and quantum information, artificial intelligence (AI) and blockchain technologies. It is expected to be worth more than 1 trillion yuan (\$149 billion). The digital economy will account for over 60 percent of the total GDP by 2030, a plan said.

In 2019, the digital economy in Jinan accounted for about 39 percent of its GDP. Currently, more than half of China's AI computing power comes from Jinan, Ji Peide, Director of the Jinan Municipal Bureau of Industry and Information Technology, said.



Ride to Fortune

An exhibition room of Tangshan Jinhengtong Group in Lutai Economic Development Zone in Tangshan, Hebei Province in north China, on October 14. Bicycle components produced by more than 40 companies in the zone have gained a footing in the domestic and global market, with their combined annual output value reaching 5 billion yuan (\$745 million).

THIS WEEK WORLD



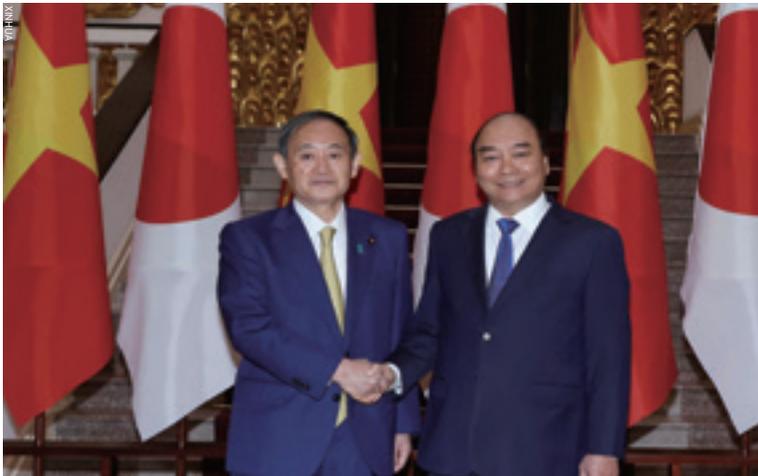
EUROPEAN UNION

European Council President Charles Michel and German Chancellor Angela Merkel talk in Brussels on October 16. They were attending the two-day autumn summit of the European Council that started a day before



NEW ZEALAND

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern speaks at an election night event in Auckland on October 17. Her Labour Party won a landslide victory with over 49 percent of the votes and Ardern is set to serve a second term



VIET NAM

Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc (right) with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga in Hanoi on October 19. Suga visited Viet Nam and Indonesia from October 18 to 21 on his first overseas trip after taking office



ESTONIA

Polish President Andrzej Duda, Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid and Bulgarian President Rumen Radev (right to left) at a joint press conference during the Three Seas Initiative virtual summit in Tallin on October 19. The initiative promotes investment in energy, transport and digitalization in 12 EU states in the area between the Adriatic, Baltic and Black seas



UNITED STATES

A Pumpkinfest in Lincolnshire, Illinois, on October 17. Lots of towns in Illinois are holding pumpkin festivals ahead of Halloween, October 31



ITALY

Qu Dongyu, Director General of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), attends World Food Day as well as the 75th founding anniversary celebrations of the Rome-based FAO in Rome on October 16

↓ TWO VETERANS HONORED AS ROLE MODELS

Two veterans, **Sun Jingkun** and Xu Zhenming, have been honored with the title "Role Model of Our Time" for their contributions during the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea (1950-53).

Sun, 96, born in Dandong, Liaoning Province in northeast China, took part in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea in 1950 as a volunteer and received eight medals. After the war he returned to his hometown and took up farming.

Xu, 95, born in Jiangsu Province, east China, fought in the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45). He also participated in the ensuing War of Liberation (1945-49) and the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea.

In 1958, he became a guard at the cemetery of General Yang Jingyu, a heroic anti-Japanese fighter who was killed in battle in 1940. It was his tribute to the Chinese soldiers' sacrifice in the resistance war against the Japanese.

The honors were announced on the 70th anniversary of the Chinese People's Volunteers' participation in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea.



Flu Vaccine Problem

Beijing Youth Daily

October 19

Following the news that vaccines for the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) are in an advanced stage of clinical trial, there is also an upsurge in the interest in influenza vaccines.

In the past, fluctuation in demand discouraged flu vaccine producers. They worried about sales due to the low flu vaccination rate. So now facing a rising demand for flu vaccines this year, it is difficult for them to adapt to such a drastic market change immediately.

Sales and prices are determined by

market conditions. It is necessary to resume production when there is a strong demand while vaccine manufacturers face risks or even losses when the demand goes down.

It is necessary to find a balanced method to manage this contradiction; specifically, to make an accurate forecast for demand in the vaccine market and then seize the initiative to produce flu vaccines. Market survey statistics and big data can help predict the demand for flu vaccines and vaccine producers can be prepared.

Vaccine production and supply capacity depends not only on output capacity but also on adaptability. The establishment of an early warning mechanism will help resolve the problem and production and supply of flu vaccines can become more stable and orderly.

Cosmetics Consumption

People.com.cn

October 16

The cosmetics market in China has maintained rapid growth in spite of the impact of COVID-19. An online live-streaming promotion can sell products worth tens of millions of yuan. However, new trends must be taken into account for the industry to achieve robust growth.

The younger generation is becoming the main consumer force of this industry, with their burgeoning demand for higher quality and healthier products. Also, they like choosing products based on their own preferences rather than being influenced by branding strategies.

For example, when buying a skin care product, they try it out before buying, check out other buyers' comments, and study its ingredients. Statistics show that consumers tend to choose products with natural ingredients or plant extracts, which are healthier than chemicals.

The Chinese Government has put in place regulatory measures that clarify enterprises' responsibility for the quality and safety of the cosmetics they make and sell. The enterprises have begun to add tracing codes on products so that a prospective buyer can find out more

"An increased role by China in the international arena should be expected and considered logical. Everybody should more or less accept that this would be the case."

Georgios Iliopoulos, Greek Ambassador to China, in an interview with *South China Morning Post* on October 17

"Despite worsening U.S.-China tensions, U.S. foreign direct investment in China rose...banking on the growth of China's consumer demand and responding to Beijing's measures to further open up the economy, including its financial sector."

Louis Kuijs, head of Asia economics of Oxford Economics, in an article in *China Daily* on October 21



YIPHINK

An anchor sells cosmetics through live-streaming promotion at an e-commerce logistics park in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province in east China, on May 3

about the production process.

China is the world's second largest cosmetics market with retail sales reaching 299.2 billion yuan (\$44.76 billion) in 2019. The cosmetics industry should devote time to improving the quality and safety of its products to meet buyers' growing expectations.

Personal Information Protection

Gmw.cn

October 14

Lawmakers have been deliberating on a draft personal information protection law that will define regulatory responsibilities and set legal liabilities for personal information protection.

The security of personal information is a major concern in today's information society. Various online programs require customers to register and login with their personal information. While bringing convenience, they also give rise to the risk of information leaks.

Insufficient regulations and law enforcement capacity and low public awareness have compounded the problem. If a piece of personal information is obtained and sold illegally, it might lead to crank calls, junk messages or even telecom and online fraud.

Therefore, multi-pronged measures need to be taken, such as improving individual awareness of information security, strengthening legislation and law enforcement, and clarifying legal boundaries.

Rule of law is the most effective approach to governance. The information security legislation will not only deter attempts to abuse personal information, but also help tailor China's legal system to the needs of the digital age.



BASKETBALL STAR ON PRINCE WILLIAM'S PRIZE COUNCIL

Chinese basketball star **Yao Ming** has been named a member of the Earthshot Prize Council. The award was instituted by the United Kingdom's Prince William on October 10.

Yao, a former Houston Rockets player, was elected chair of the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA) in 2017, where he is involved in the reform of the sport's management in China.

Besides, his Yao Ming Foundation is involved in building schools in impoverished areas.

The 50-million-pound (\$66 million) Earthshot Prize is meant for innovative projects to minimize the damage to the earth and environment. It will be awarded each year for the next 10 years.

Jack Ma, founder of e-commerce giant Alibaba and 10 other leading figures from the fields of the environment, philanthropy, business, sports and entertainment are also on the council.



“The ban [on Huawei and ZTE telecom equipment announced by Sweden] leaves network operators with less options and risks slowing the rollout of 5G in markets where competition is reduced.”

Ben Wood, chief of research at CCS Insight, a mobile communications research and advisory company, in an interview with Reuters on October 20

“Despite the global second waves [of the novel coronavirus pandemic] and still contracting global demand, it looks like Chinese exports have been outperforming.”

Qu Hongbin, chief China economist at HSBC, in an interview with *Financial Times* on October 19



COVER STORY

EMBRACING CHANGE

Development erases poverty and insecurity in Xinjiang desert village

By Li Fangfang



A live-streamer dances during an online event to promote local farm products in Luopu, a county in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, northwest China, on September 26. Luopu and nine other last impoverished counties in the region were announced to be poverty-free by the regional government on October 19

When Chen Cheng, a government official in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwest China, was appointed head of a village deep in the Taklimakan Desert, he had to take extra precautions for safety.

Baxlaqbinam, a struggling village in Pishan County in south Xinjiang, had seen some of its residents become radicalized.

When Chen arrived there in the first half of 2017, during his visits to the villagers at their homes, he would go in a group with other officials as there had been cases where officials had been treated with hostility.

In 2017, there were 255 households in Baxlaqbinam. As one villager said, "Many of my neighbors didn't have a decent house or electricity." Many villagers had

only temporary jobs, which fetched them a meager daily income only as long as the work lasted.

Pishan was like the proverbial person in distress caught between a rock and a hard place. Bound by the desert on one side and the Karakoram Mountain Range on the other, it struggled to feed its population of 300,000 as its arable land accounts for only about 0.1 percent of the entire area. Severe desertification made it impossible for the villagers to live off the land.

Since 2014, experienced officials began to be sent to the cluster of 169 villages in the county to improve their economic situation since poverty was a major factor spawning terrorism. Chen found poverty blocked access to education and made villagers vulnerable to the influence of radicalism.

More than 95 percent of the villagers are Uygurs, the largest ethnic group in Xinjiang. They knew little about what was happening outside their village.

One feasible solution was to provide education for the children and teach them Mandarin, the standard language of China, to help them communicate with people from other parts of the country and be informed.

Another solution was to create jobs by developing industries. In recent years, with Chen's efforts, two factories have come to the village. One of them makes sofas.

The owner of the sofa factory, Xiong Tingqiang, came from Beijing. Earlier, he was growing dates in Pishan, and then he found that the traditional lifestyle promised a business opportunity. The villagers mostly sat on the floor or on their adobe bed, and Xiong realized sofas would have a good market if they were made locally and were affordable.

He started the business with Chen's help. The factory provides jobs for 30 people and its sofas are sold in nearby towns.

Bumaryam Pazil is one of the factory hands. The 43-year-old makes slipcovers for the sofas, earning 1,500 yuan (\$225) a month. Besides the income, the factory is some 200 meters away from home, which she finds most convenient.

"My husband has his job and I have mine. Everything is going pretty well now," she said.

However, things were far from well four years ago, when she got married. Her husband Kudrat Ismayil used to sell timber. Though once well off, he ran into heavy debts when his first wife had breast cancer and his son from that marriage was diagnosed with leukemia.

Kudrat said he was always wary when ▶▶

he ventured out, worrying that he would run into his debtors. "I had no money to pay them back," he told *Beijing Review*.

When Chen came to know of Kudrat's plight, he helped him find doctors. The villagers' committee also helped Kudrat and later Bumaryam to find seasonal work in other villages during the cotton-picking season and gradually, they were able to pay off their debts.

Now the villagers no longer need to worry about medical expenses, since a large proportion can be reimbursed under health insurance plans.

Kudrat has restarted his timber business. He also works as a ranger in the village wetland, which is being developed into a scenic spot as well as a nature reserve.

With the improvements, the village established a museum in 2018 to document the change in people's lives. "The difficult life shown in the museum is a thing of the past," Chen said when the museum was inaugurated. "The villagers are moving forward with hope for the future and lessons from the past." Also, he no longer needs to move in a group. "Stability has brought a sense of personal security," he said.

Women, family, future

Bumaryam started to wear make-up after she began working in the factory. "Women in the village never used mirrors before," Chen said.

Nurgul, in charge of the women's federation in Pishan, talked about the changes in women's life after they started earning money.

"When we visited their houses and talked to them, most women were shy and didn't look at us in the eyes when talking," Nurgul said. "But as they now go out of their home to work and interact with more people, they are becoming more outgoing. At their workplaces they adopt new lifestyles from their colleagues who come from other places."

Previously, when a married woman wanted to buy clothes, she had to ask her husband to buy it for her. Now she earns her own money and can buy it herself, Nurgul said.

Also, the tradition that the women would be the last to eat is also being discarded by young people, she added.



The museum in Baxlaqbinam Village opens in 2018

Nurgul was born in north Xinjiang, which has more oases and the lifestyle there is more modernized. She shares tips on health and how to tackle cultural differences with the village women, who seek advice from her when encountering a problem.

"Women are gaining respect at their workplaces and they are also learning from peers like Nurgul, who have received better education and are well informed," Wang

Jiangping, chief reporter of *China Women News* in Xinjiang, said.

"We encourage the men to share the housework and the male members in the villagers' committee are willing to lead this new trend," Chen said. "If they can't take good care of their families, how can they serve other people well?"

The change is discernible in other counties as well. In the past, the women



A villager in the county of Yutian gathers marigold for a biotech company on September 23. He also grows the flowers, which brings him an additional income



Bumaryam Pazil and her husband Kudrat Ismayil at their home in Baxlaqbinam, a village in Xinjiang, on September 23

mostly stayed at home, looking after their families. People's incomes were erratic and they were prone to poverty as the men had no work in winter, when farming came to a halt. But the new industrialized economy is helping them live a stable life full of hope.

More choices

For many families in south Xinjiang, farming is not the only way to make a living. Besides

growing cash crops such as nuts and dates, locals work in factories and raise livestock as well. Their incomes have improved substantially thanks to the companies which start businesses there.

Tursunhan Tursunnyaz is a farmer in Luopu County, 200 km away from Pishan and at the center of Hotan Prefecture. She has recently become a full-time employee at the branch factory of dairy company

Xiyuchun after a three-month internship. Her monthly salary has doubled to 2,500 yuan (\$375).

"My husband had a donkey cart when I married him 15 years ago," Tursunhan said. The couple grew corn and wheat, which brought them an annual income of around 10,000 yuan (\$1,477). Though it was nearly double of what many other villagers earned, it was still a hard life for a family of four.

Liu Xiaojun, the manager of the factory, saw the market potential in Luopu, where half of Hotan's population live. "There was no large breeding farm in Hotan," Liu said. "Therefore, it was a big opportunity for us."

The factory owns 1,100 cows which produce 11 tons of milk every day. Its dairy products are mainly sold in south Xinjiang.

"We have established a complete industrial chain and plan to sell dairy products such as yogurt and milk drinks," Liu said.

The company provides 40 jobs, mostly feeding and milking the cows. In addition, it offers advanced breeding technology to villagers who raise cows. The county government invested 75 million yuan (\$11 million) to buy cows for 3,766 households that were under the national poverty line.

Tursunhan has two cows. She plans to buy a car after selling her cows and has a driving license in anticipation.

"I have more money to spend now. I can buy clothes in the city [100 km away] and eat hotpot there," the 34-year-old said. "I am going to continue working in the factory."

Besides making extra money, she has changed her way of thinking. Unlike her mother's generation, the mother of two said she is happy with two children, and wants to offer a higher standard of living for her family and invest more in her son and daughter's education and health.

"I wish for my kids to go to college," Tursunhan said. ■

(Reporting from Hotan Prefecture, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region)

A HAND IN NEED

State-owned enterprise shoulders responsibility in anti-poverty drive

By Zhao Wei

Mutellip Toxtiroza got his first job at the age of 22. He was hired as a guard by the Jinken Farming Group, a subsidiary of state-owned enterprise (SOE) Tianjin Food Group, when it opened in Yutian, a county in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, in 2018.

"I wanted to find a job close to home and then I heard they were hiring local people," Mutellip said. "I had no diploma or technical training so a guard's job was good enough for me at that time."

In less than six months, the proactive young man had impressed his bosses and his life has changed.

Projects and technology

Chen Yuechao, deputy general manager of the company, described how Mutellip caught his eye.

"Our company's main business is mutton sheep breeding," he said. "One day, a cleaning machine for the shed stopped working. Mutellip saw that and came to help. He went under the machine and found the chain was broken. There was hardly enough space for him underneath and it was dirty. Still he did it though it was not his job."

Chen began to watch the young guard and found he was keenly interested in mechanical maintenance. Chen then started to ask him to come and observe when the machines were being repaired or cleaned. Mutellip watched and learned fast and was appointed as a technical staff responsible for electrical and mechanical maintenance.

He excelled at the job and after one year, following training, became a certified electrician and welder. Now he trains seven apprentices, one of whom is almost twice his age.

"I would dream of doing something significant in the past but I had no money or professional skills," Mutellip said. "When I worked as a guard, I earned 1,500 yuan (\$220) per month. Now I have a skill and my salary is almost double with a bonus."



The Jinken Farming Group's sheep shed in Yutian, a county in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, northwest China, on September 20

Still more changes are in the offing for him. Because of his excellent work, the company wants to promote him. However, he wants to start his own business next year. Armed with his new certificate, he plans to open a repair shop.

"The income may not be as stable as what I have now, but to have my own business is more exciting. I want to be my own boss," the ambitious Mutellip said with a smile.

Chen knows about Mutellip's plan and is happy to see the changes in the past two years. "That's why we are here," he said. "We bring projects and technology, and people seeing that want to join us. We did not have any local mechanical maintenance worker in the beginning; now we have a team."

Chen is from Tianjin, a coastal city in north China. He never thought he would be

working close to the Taklimakan, China's largest desert. He and five others were assigned to Yutian in 2018 to build the mutton sheep farm. At that time he had been married for just two years and his child was 1 year old.

"We were told that the company would send some management and technical staff to Xinjiang to help the people there upgrade the mutton sheep industry. I applied and attended the training," Chen said. "I knew the climate, totally different from that of Tianjin, is dry and windy, but I wanted to be part of the national poverty alleviation drive and my family supported me, so I came."

The farm was built on wasteland covered with reeds. Today, 65 breeding sheds stand there. It has an annual stock of 25,000 ewes, which give birth to 63,000 lambs every year. It is a comprehensive base for breeding,

“We want everyone here to have a good life. Helping local people to develop their talent is an important part of poverty alleviation.”

—Yang Jianli, General Manager of the Jinken Farming Group in Yutian, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region



Mutellip Toxtiroza (right) is now an electrician and welder at the Jinken Farming Group in Yutian on September 20

meat packaging and other services.

Mutellip's family has also benefited from the company. His father is a breeder who had some indigenous sheep. When Mutellip saw the company introducing pedigreed sheep from Australia, he suggested to his father that they follow suit since the imported sheep breeds and grows faster.

Today his family has more than 100 mutton sheep. His brother is studying professional breeding technology in the company. The family is one of the 2,500 poor ones in the area that rose out of poverty with the help of an SOE.

“We are proud of what we have done here, establishing a modern mutton sheep farm and helping local farmers breed sheep scientifically and efficiently,” Chen said. At the end of this year, he will finish his two-year tenure and return to Tianjin.

Although Chen is among the forerunners of the Jinken Farming Group, he was not the first to come to Yutian. “The sheds had been built and the office and dormitories were ready before I came. But when Yang Jianli, our general manager, arrived, there was nothing. They did not even have a room and had to live in the sheep shed for about 20 days.”

Starting from zero

Like Chen, Yang is also from Tianjin. The staff who come to work in Xinjiang can go back to their homes in Tianjin once every three months but this year, Yang has not taken any leave since mid-January, not even during the Spring Festival, a time of reunion for all Chinese families.

“China has vowed to eliminate absolute poverty by the end of 2020. As the staff of

an SOE, we have our responsibility and goals. Our work was disrupted by the novel coronavirus epidemic, so we have to catch up and finish the work,” he said.

Yang recalled the time when he started from scratch, developing infrastructure and local connection. To win local people's support, he and his colleagues came up with several business ideas, including the Free Ewes and Paid Lambs scheme.

The company gives free ewes to poor families and provides technical support to ensure the ewes on average give three births in two years. Then the company takes one lamb born to each ewe while the farmer keeps the rest.

The Mutellip family was one of Yang's first six pilot sheep breeders in the town.

“Mutellip saw our imported sheep produces better mutton and suggested his father buy imported sheep. But his father scoffed at the idea. When I heard that, I went to have a conversation with his father,” Yang said. “I told him I could give him a few ewes free, and then he could make his decision.”

“One single ewe brings an annual 802 yuan (\$117) to poor households,” he added.

This year, the company raised 63,000 sheep, creating more than 6,000 jobs. The average yearly earnings were 24,000 yuan (\$3,516).

Mutellip has not only risen from poverty, but also from a life without goals. Today he is on the way to developing his own business. Yang said he and the company will support Mutellip in whatever decision he takes.

“We want everyone here to have a good life. Helping local people to develop their talent is an important part of poverty alleviation,” he said. ■

(Reporting from Hotan Prefecture, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region)

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COVER STORY

MOVING OUT OF THE DESERT

The Darya Boyi Township in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region lies at the heart of the Taklimakan Desert, the second largest shifting sand desert in the world.

In the past it took 13 days riding by camel to reach the township, home to sheep herders, from the seat of Yutian, the county that administers the village.

When Imin Matkurban, a sheep herder in the township, bought his first mobile phone in 2016, the signal was so weak that he had to climb up a tree to get a stronger signal. Besides the lack of transport, Darya Boyi suffered from receding ground water and frequent sand storms.

In 2016 the county government started to draft a resettlement plan for the villagers and subsequently, the first batch of 396 people, including 100 children, moved into the new settlement, some 110 km away.

The resettlement community also has a kindergarten and a clinic. Imin, who herded sheep since the age of 3, barely received any education. But his two sons are in the sixth and seventh grade respectively, studying on a government grant.

In the past, the brothers went home only during the summer and winter breaks because the journey home took hours. But their new home is much closer to their school and they can go home at least once a week.

The old villages will remain open to those who want to graze their livestock there. The county government plans to develop tourism across the area to improve people's livelihood.

"The desert is rich in tourism resources. Nowadays, with better means of transportation, these resources can be tapped, attracting more young people to return to the village to work on tourism-related jobs," Jia Cunpeng, a local official, said. ■

1. An aerial photo taken on March 15, 2019 shows residential dwellings in Darya Boyi, a township in Yutian County, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwest China

2. Imin Matkurban fetches water for sheep from a stream near his old house on November 16, 2019

3. Imin's son answers questions at class in his middle school in downtown Yutian, on November 20, 2019

4. Top: Abbikhan Daman, wife of Imin, locks the door to their old house, moments before the family departed for the relocation site on November 17; Abbikhan opens the door of their new house at the relocation site on November 18, 2019

5. The relocation site on September 21



1



5



YINHAIX



2



ZHANGYI



YINHAIX



4



XINHUA

3

Outlining Priorities

New book explains philosophy behind China's development miracle

By Han Qingxiang



The author is a professor with the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (National Academy of Governance)

When reading *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* Volume III, one needs to bear in mind two important factors: One is China's national rejuvenation, and the other is

the world experiencing a level of change unseen in a century.

Starting a new chapter in building socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era is the first of the 19 topics covered, the key being how to understand the new era. Remaining true to the original aspiration and keeping the mission firmly in mind is the message expounded throughout the volume. It is also the finale of the new book.

The third volume, together with the previous two, expounds Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. The essentials of the thought are:

Historical positioning. This theory puts the "new era" into a historical perspective and answers the question of how to make China stronger after it has become a major country.

Theory of national rejuvenation. The mission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in the new era is to realize national rejuvenation. The idea is to rejuvenate the nation and see that the people are happy—lofty goals that are considered the CPC's original aspiration.

A people-centered approach. In the new era, the principal challenge in Chinese society is the gap between unbalanced and inadequate development and people's ever-growing need



for a better life. Previously, it was described as the gap between the ever-growing material and cultural needs of the people and backward social production. The change reaffirms the importance of the people-centered philosophy.

As the ruling party, the CPC must rely on the people and do everything for the people. It must regard as its goal the people's aspiration to live a better life. The national rejuvenation theory and the people-centered theory are the two cornerstones of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

Development philosophy. The new philosophy emphasizes innovative, coordinated, green and open development that is for everyone. Putting the development philosophy into practice bears on China's overall interests and requires extensive reforms.

Two plans. They refer to the Five-Sphere Integrated Plan and the Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategy. The former refers to promoting coordinated progress in the economic, political, cultural, social and eco-environmental fields. The latter means to make comprehensive moves to complete building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, further reform, advance the rule of law and



A graphic designer for a visual effects company in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province in south China, at work on October 16

strengthen Party self-governance. According to this theory, China must advance the two plans in a coordinated manner by focusing on tackling unbalanced and inadequate development.

Strategic arrangements. The third volume elaborates the "critical battles" against potential risks, poverty and pollution, indicating that Xi places great emphasis on the three issues. These are the strategic arrangements made for the new era.

Holistic approach to national security. Maintaining national security is to provide a safe environment for national rejuvenation. The Party has put in place a general national security framework. People's security, political security and the supremacy of national interests are considered the three essential elements of an indivisible whole. National security can be guaranteed only when the military is strong.

A community with a shared future. After a scientific study of the development trend in today's world, Xi concludes that the world is experiencing profound changes unseen in a century.

None of the three critical economic issues—lack of robust driving forces for global growth, inadequate global economic governance and uneven global development—has been effectively addressed. So Xi conceives of a community with a shared future for all to address these three critical issues and other global challenges to create a sound international environment.

The essential idea is that China will take an active part in global governance and offer

Chinese wisdom and Chinese solutions to the problems faced by societies.

National governance. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, especially after reform and opening up began in 1978, the CPC has led the people in creating a miracle of rapid economic growth and long-term social stability rarely seen in the world. The remarkable advantages of China's national governance system are the institutional support for this miracle.

China needs to continue to bring into full play its institutional advantages, strengthen weak areas and correct shortcomings. By making its governance more efficient, it will be more capable of addressing risks and challenges at home and abroad, and realizing national rejuvenation.

Theory of a strong party. It takes a good blacksmith to forge good tools. So Xi emphasizes that as the world's largest political party, the CPC must behave in a way commensurate with its status.

Party members must truly believe in the ideals of communism and socialism with Chinese characteristics, be politically upright, highly competent and strictly disciplined.

Since the Party exercises overall leadership over all endeavors across the country, priority should be given to reinforcing its political foundations. This means following the correct political direction, upholding the Party's political leadership, fostering a healthy political environment, guarding against political risks, maintaining the political integrity, and improving political ability. ■



A road in Changshun County, Guizhou Province in southwest China, on October 21. China has built more than 1 million km of roads in rural areas over the past five years

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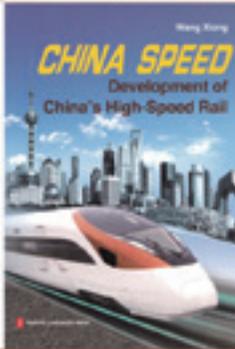
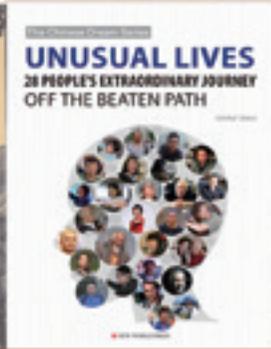
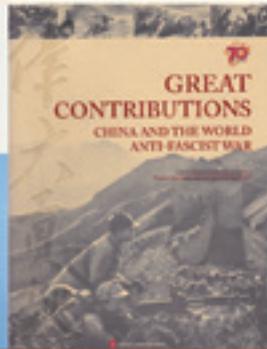
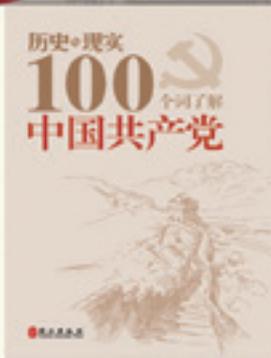
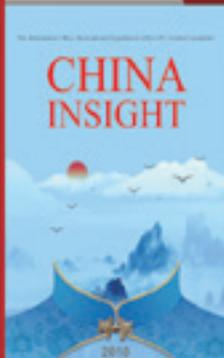
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New Band of Brothers

Points to ponder for new initiative for joint sourcing of COVID-19 vaccine By Zha Daojiong



The author is a professor at the School of International Studies, Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development, Peking University

To deal with the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, over 170 economies formed a multilateral arrangement, known as the Covax Facility, in June to secure vaccines in a cost-effective, targeted way.

Proposed by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations and the World Health Organization (WHO), the facility will seek investment to secure approved vaccines for the most at-risk groups in all participating economies. The Covax Facility is probably the biggest multilateral cooperation initiative since the Paris Agreement on climate change in 2015.

China joined the Covax Facility on October 8, a follow-up on its commitment that any vaccine developed domestically will be made available as an international public good, especially for developing countries. It is also working with a dozen other economies to develop a COVID-19 vaccine via clinical tests and joint manufacturing and distribution.

By October, four out of the nine candidate vaccines in the third and final stages of clinical trial were from China.

A long project

Scientists from around the world started developing vaccines or therapies as soon as Chinese scientists released the sequence

of the COVID-19 genome on the Internet in January.

Vaccine development is normally a lengthy process. It can take as long as a decade to ensure a new vaccine is safe and effective before it is approved for public use. So far, close to 100 vaccines are in different stages of development. Once the national regulatory approval is given, WHO will activate its evaluation mechanism for the vaccine's international distribution.

The Covax Facility will pool investment from the participants so that the developers of successful vaccines can begin mass production as soon as possible. The products will then be distributed in a fair and equitable manner among the members.

The higher-income participants will finance the vaccines from their own public finance budgets. They will partner with lower-income members supported by an advance market commitment (AMC) to secure \$2 billion by the end of 2020. Contributions to the AMC are expected to come from sovereign donors, philanthropic organizations and the private sector. If the AMC meets its fundraising target, the 92 lower-middle- and low-income participating economies in the facility will benefit.

As China is in the upper tier of middle-income economies on a per-capita basis, it is going to be a self-financing participant. It has reportedly offered to purchase doses to cover the needs of 1 percent of its 1.4-billion population.

This is a sensible move, as China would probably be capable of meeting its needs through its own manufacturing capacities. By keeping open the option of joining the purchase pool, China is in effect making a contribution to the collective effort to increase the COVID-19 vaccine manufacturing potential.

The Covax Facility is an evolving endeavor. On the one hand, its participants represent more than 70 percent of the world's population, including more than half of the Group of 20 economies. Their recovery from the pandemic is essential for the ongoing global economic contraction to end.

On the other hand, the envisioned



A researcher shows ampoules of a novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccine at the Gamaleya Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, Russia, on August 6



African diplomats visit Sinopharm, a Chinese pharmaceutical company engaged in COVID-19 vaccine research and development in Beijing, on October 15

vaccine delivery capacity is meant for the at-risk segments of those populations. Policies for the prioritization of a vaccine rollout within the economies will be led by WHO. With WHO's expertise in advising economies in need of immunization through vaccination, having the Covax Facility before the products are available is a foresighted approach.

Other challenges

However, to make a safe and effective vaccine available to large segments of the world's population as early as possible, in addition to the Covax Facility, several additional issues need to be addressed.

First, to help bring down per-dose costs, the vaccine developers should be encouraged to enlist manufacturing capacities available worldwide. For example, the Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturers Network should be roped in to enlarge supplies. If middle- and low-income economies with qualified

manufacturers are part of the effort, it will reduce cost and time for cross-border transportation of the products.

Second, vaccine developers' demand to protect their intellectual property rights has to be addressed. Economies wishing to make use of public health exceptions allowed under the World Trade Organization's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights provisions should ensure that any production under the emergency compulsory license is predominantly for domestic use. This can assuage developers' worries about potential investment loss.

COVID-19 is a national emergency for virtually all economies. Governments of economies with the capacity to produce safe and effective vaccines should see the benefit in encouraging their researchers and manufacturers to be creative in lowering the costs of the products. After all, effective, safe and timely immunization services will help restore normalcy worldwide, which in turn is in the interest of

every economy.

Third, to deal with the negative effects of any vaccine nationalism, it should be ensured that the decisions to procure a particular product are made on the basis of science rather than the origin country of the product. Vaccine provision can and in many cases is already part of diplomacy. Yet in the end, there is no higher purpose than giving priority to life.

Last but not least, to prevent any waste of global vaccine manufacturing and distribution capacities, the global supply chains for the needed ingredients should be kept open and free from interference. Faced with the unprecedented global public health challenge, there can be no justification for hoarding. ■

Stop Playing The Water Card

U.S. manipulation can't divide Lancang-Mekong countries

By Guo Yanjun



The author is a professor at the Institute of Asian Studies, China Foreign Affairs University

The Lancang-Mekong River flows through China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Viet Nam, known as Lancang in China and Mekong elsewhere.

The U.S. began to meddle over the river in 2009, when it launched the Lower Mekong Initiative with Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Viet Nam, attempting to curb China's growing influence in the region. The initiative ran in line with the Rebalance to Asia and the Pacific strategy proposed by then U.S. President Barack Obama, with the aim to modernize and strengthen U.S. alliances.

In its early days, the initiative prioritized capacity building in environmental protection, education, public health and infrastructure. Although then U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton unfoundedly criticized China for its dams on the upper reaches of the river, no substantial cooperation on water resources was conducted.

In 2012, Myanmar joined the initiative. The areas of cooperation were then identified as the environment and water, health, agriculture, connectivity, education and energy security. A series of projects such as SERVIR-Mekong, which would use satellite images and geospatial technologies to help governments and others tackle climate challenges, were proposed.

On September 14, the U.S. announced the launch of the Mekong-U.S. partnership for sustained growth of its Mekong partners and pledged to increase investment and cooperation. At the same time, it continued

to hype environmental and resources issues and tarnish China's efforts in the area. It accused China of "manipulating" the Lancang-Mekong River flows, disregarding the fact that China has been providing hydrological data for the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and downstream countries for 18 consecutive years and helping them formulate plans for flood prevention and drought mitigation.

The renewed attempt is an example of the

current U.S. strategy toward China. Compared with the policies of the Obama administration, it is more aggressive.

China's efforts

The management of trans-boundary rivers has always been a complex and sensitive issue. Some scholars think this can lead to water wars among the river-sharing countries. The Lancang-Mekong flows through six countries for 4,909 km, so its development and management remain particularly complex. Thanks to their joint efforts, no major water-related conflicts have emerged in the region.

China has always taken an active part in multilateral cooperation with regional countries. It joined the Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation mechanism in 1992. In 1996, it became a dialogue partner of the MRC, an inter-governmental river basin organization initiated by Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Viet Nam. It signed the first hydrological data-sharing agreement with the commission in 2002, promising to share data about daily river flows and rainfall data upstream during the rainy season.

At the 17th leaders' meeting between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2014, in response to





Chinese law enforcers participate in a China-Laos-Myanmar-Thailand joint patrol on the Mekong River in November 2018

Thailand's proposal of strengthening sustainable development of the Lancang-Mekong subregion, China initiated a cooperation mechanism, which gained general support.

Over the past five years since its establishment, the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC)

mechanism has been improved under the principles of consensus, equality, voluntarism, mutual consultation and coordination, common contribution and shared benefits. It has made progress in practical cooperation in many areas including sharing water resources, and has become an effective platform for exchanges between China and other Lancang-Mekong countries.

Since the mechanism was launched, China has sent emergency notifications on major changes in the outflow of the Jinghong Hydropower Plant on the Lancang-Mekong several times. The project is located in the southwestern province of Yunnan, which borders Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam.

China has always regarded ASEAN countries as a priority in its neighborhood diplomacy. The Lancang-Mekong countries are linked by mountains and rivers, and enjoy profound friendship and inherent geographical advantages in cooperation.

In 2018, China's total trade with other Lancang-Mekong countries exceeded \$260 billion, and China's investment in them exceeded \$45 billion. They have become important trading and investment partners of China. Enhanced Lancang-Mekong cooperation and friendship has become an important part of the strategic partnership between China and ASEAN that also consists of Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and the Philippines.

Reckless accusations

The U.S. has been stirring up issues between China and some ASEAN countries over the South China Sea, which has undermined regional peace and stability.

Water resources cooperation, a priority area in Lancang-Mekong cooperation, has made encouraging progress in recent years, which has also made it a thorn in the side of the U.S.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs David Stilwell recently cited a report claiming "China has been manipulating the water flows along the Mekong for 25 years, with the greatest disruption in natural flows coinciding with major dam construction and operation."

However, experts have found that after China's cascade reservoirs on the river were put into use, the flow of water in the dry season increased by 20 percent compared to the pre-dam days. The latest report by the MRC released in August also acknowledged that the reservoirs' function of storing water in the flood season for use in the dry season has helped maintain a steady flow of the waters.

At the Third Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Leaders' Meeting held online in August, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang announced that China will share annual hydrological information on the river with other regional countries, which will elevate their cooperation.

But the U.S. attempted to make an issue out of it again by asking China to share its water data, including dam operation data, saying it should be shared through MRC instead of other platforms.

The U.S. strategy is to use the water issue to create a hot spot, sow discord between regional countries, and sabotage the Lancang-Mekong cooperation. Washington has also continued to demonize and stigmatize the Communist Party of China and the Chinese Government, portraying China as a hydro-hegemonic country. But all its attempts have ended in vain.

China desires common development and is willing to work with other Lancang-Mekong countries achieve development, narrow the gap within ASEAN and help build the ASEAN community.

A seamless connection between the LMC mechanism and the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor, a trade and logistics passage jointly built by provincial-level divisions in west China and ASEAN countries, will promote the development of its central and western regions.

The Lancang-Mekong closely links the futures of the six littoral countries and win-win cooperation is their common choice, which will not be interrupted by any political manipulation. ■



The Ban Ladhan Mekong River Super Major Bridge in Laos on July 15

Copiedited by Sudeshna Sarkar
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On the Way Up

FOCAC grows in pragmatic cooperation since its inception two decades ago

By Xia Yuanyuan

On October 7, the air cargo route from Wuhan in central China to Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa became operational as the first flight took off, carrying nucleic acid test kits to detect the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), masks and other epidemic prevention materials.

It was a telling gesture with the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) celebrating its 20th anniversary the same month. FOCAC, already an important platform for collective dialogue and practical cooperation between China and Africa, has, in the wake of the global pandemic, shown its role in enhancing support between the two sides to tackle the disease.

In a joint congratulatory message to mark FOCAC's 20th anniversary, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Senegalese President Macky Sall said China and Africa are ready to jointly cope with risks and challenges. Senegal is the current African co-chair of FOCAC. They also hoped it would set an example of multilateralism and mutual benefits.

Healthcare cooperation

The China-Africa medical cooperation goes back to 1963 when the first Chinese medical team was sent to newly independent Algeria to help build up its health service capability. Since then, around 243,000 Chinese doctors and nurses have served in African countries and treated more than 220 million patients over the past 57 years, according to the National Health Commission of China.

At the 2006 FOCAC Summit in Beijing, then President Hu Jintao announced that China would assist to build 30 malaria prevention and treatment centers in Africa as part of its assistance to the continent's anti-malaria campaign. The 2015 summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, also listed public health cooperation as a priority area.

This year, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the necessity to strengthen health cooperation.

During the most difficult period in China's combat against COVID-19, African countries

stood with China firmly to fight the virus as well as a maligning campaign against China by some countries. And when COVID-19 spread in Africa, China reciprocated, sending medical supplies and experts and sharing its prevention and control experience with African health professionals at webinars.

Besides the government, Chinese enterprises and civil organizations have also chipped in. The Jack Ma Foundation and Alibaba Foundation donated essential medical supplies, including 10.6 million masks and 800 ventilators, to Africa.

"When people are determined, they can overcome anything," read the message on some of the packages. It was a quote by Nelson Mandela.

In June, the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity Against COVID-19 was held online to discuss how to tackle the challenge. Xi said at the meeting that greater priority will be given to cooperation on public health, reaffirming the commitment to initiatives and measures to help Africa build its capacity for disease prevention and control and for sustainable development.

Xi announced that the construction of the headquarters of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a specialized technical institution of the African Union (AU), would begin this year on the outskirts of Addis Ababa ahead of schedule.

He also said China, which is working on developing a COVID-19 vaccine, will make the vaccine available when it is ready as a global public good. It will be part of its contribution to ensuing vaccine accessibility and affordability in developing countries, especially in African nations.

Improving lives

In his address to mark FOCAC's 20th anniversary, Chinese State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi said the China-Africa relationship has grown from a new type of partnership into a new type of strategic partnership and then a comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership.



China has been Africa's largest trading partner for 11 successive years, contributing more than 20 percent to Africa's growth. In 2019 China-Africa trade reached \$208.7 billion, 20 times the size in 2000.



A Chinese volunteer teaches paper-cutting to students at the Confucius Institute at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, on September 21, 2018



Workers unload anti-epidemic materials provided by the Chinese Government in Cairo, Egypt, on May 10

6,000 km of railways and roads, respectively, as well as nearly 20 ports and more than 80 large power plants in Africa by 2019. These have powerfully boosted industrialization on the continent and its ability for independent development.

Cooperation in other fields, from science, education, culture, health, to people-to-people exchanges, peace and security, is also making significant headway, Wang said.

In 2018, the Malawi Government launched a satellite TV project with assistance from the Chinese Government for 500 rural communities. It has since become an important channel for local people to access information from the outside world.

Strengthened trade

In August, a cocoa trading center was opened in Hunan Province in central China. The African Cocoa Marketing Center in Changsha, capital of Hunan, will initially buy

cocoa mainly from Ghana, before bringing in products from more African countries.

"I am confident that every tasty chocolate enjoyed in China has some quantity of Ghana's premium cocoa as part of its ingredients," Edward Boateng, Ghanaian Ambassador to China, said.

In recent years, Hunan has strengthened trade cooperation with African countries. Last year, the First China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo was held in Changsha. The expo, announced at the FOCAC Summit in Beijing in September 2018, was established to boost two-way exports and imports in terms of goods and services. The event saw 84 deals worth \$20.8 billion in trade, agriculture, tourism and other fields.

Even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, China-Africa economic and trade cooperation has not come to a halt. Over 1,100 Chinese projects continue operating in Africa. During the first four months of this year, China's investment in Africa grew by 4.4 percent compared with the same period last year. Bilateral trade reached over \$80 billion in the first half of this year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce of China.

More plans for cooperation are on the anvil. China will support Africa in developing the Single African Air Transport Market, a flagship project of AU Agenda 2063 with the opening of more air routes and sea lanes connecting China and Africa by Chinese and African airlines and shipping companies. They will also cooperate in building smart cities in Africa and enhancing African countries' information and communications technology to safeguard public security, counter terrorism and fight crime. A China-Africa Energy Cooperation Center is planned in Africa to facilitate the implementation of related projects. ■

Many flagship projects, such as the AU Conference Center in Addis Ababa, the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway and the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway, are operational today. China had helped build more than

National Pioneers

Individuals and organizations honored for their outstanding work in poverty alleviation **By Lu Yan**



Born in the 1980s, Huang Xiaoyong is an entrepreneur who used to run a foreign trade company in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, with an annual turnover exceeding 10 million yuan (\$1.5 million). Had Huang stuck to his original trajectory in life and stayed put in Shenzhen, he would have nothing to do with farming later in life.

However, in 2014, when Huang's home county Shicheng in Jiangxi Province in east China introduced a series of policies to encourage business and attract investment in a bid to facilitate poverty alleviation work, he returned home and devoted himself to developing modern ecological agriculture and teaching his fellow villagers how to make more money.

"As an entrepreneur, I have the responsibility to help the poor families around me rid themselves of poverty as soon as possible,"

Huang told *China Youth Daily*.

Huang received a national award on October 17 in Beijing for his outstanding work in the field of poverty alleviation. The day was also the seventh National Poverty Relief Day and the 28th International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

The national awards for outstanding work in the field of poverty alleviation, initiated by the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, are given annually since 2016. Individuals are awarded as role models for shaking off poverty themselves or assisting others to do so. Since 2018, organizations, too, have received accolades for their contributions to poverty alleviation.

The award ceremony received more public attention this year as the deadline for the country to eradicate absolute poverty looms. "The

awards encourage people in poverty-stricken areas to eradicate poverty through hard work," Wang Sangui, a member of the expert advisory committee of the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, told *China Youth Daily*.

Common prosperity

While running a startup business elsewhere before, Huang remained concerned about the development of his hometown, especially Aobei Village, where he was born and raised.

There are over 2,000 people in Aobei. The per-capita arable land there is meager. Also, the village is located in a mountainous area, which made it difficult to increase the villagers' income and develop the village.

Huang returned to his hometown and with his business experience, set up compa-

Villagers collect the fruits of oil-tea camellia at a planting base in Lishui, Zhejiang Province, east China, on October 18

YINXIN



national funding earmarked for water and soil conservation.

By reading books and learning from experts, Huang gained knowledge about water and soil conservation and organized villagers to protect the healthy vegetation growing on the mountains and harness mountain streams for flood prevention, water storage and irrigation. The restituted flooded land was transformed into a renowned agricultural sightseeing park.

In 2019, the total output value of the park exceeded 12 million yuan (\$1.8 million), directly boosting the income of more than 200 people from over 130 poor households in Aobei and surrounding villages.

Under Huang's supervision, several local entrepreneurs and relatively wealthy villagers in 2019 established an industrial alliance to maximize the advantages of each company and jointly deal with risks through resource sharing and real-time communication.

At the beginning of this year, as the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) hampered the sales of a large number of agricultural products, the industrial alliance coordinated its resources and helped farmers sell their produce online.

"Nowadays, my biggest wish is to forge a mature alliance, and with the policy support of the county government, everyone can live a good life through their own efforts," Huang said.

At the award ceremony on October 17, 99 poverty reduction pioneers like Huang received the national honors. In addition, several

organizations, including government offices, companies, a philanthropic foundation and a news media outlet also received the accolade.

Green poverty alleviation

While Huang has been awarded for leading his fellow townsmen out of poverty, Zhang Qi, head of the China Institute for Poverty Reduction of Beijing Normal University (BNU), received the award for research on poverty alleviation theory, policy and practice.

Since the late 1980s, Zhang has devoted himself to research on rural economy and poverty alleviation policies. "I was born in the countryside, so I know what poverty does to a person. This is why I should do research on poverty alleviation," Zhang said.

As China's poor people mainly live in remote rural areas, Zhang and his team mostly connect with farmers. Every year, the China Institute for Poverty Reduction sends out small teams to the poverty-stricken mountainous and rural areas of Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Gansu and other provinces to track the progress of poverty alleviation, as well as uncover the difficulties and problems in poverty alleviation.

The institute constructed China's first green poverty reduction index and in 2014 for the first time released the China Green Poverty Reduction Index Report, emphasizing the connection between poverty alleviation and green, sustainable development.

Zhang and his team spent three years on the index. "We want to publish reports on a regular basis to prove that green poverty reduction is the most sustainable means of poverty alleviation and strong support for rural revitalization," Zhang told *China Pictorial*.

He said that green poverty alleviation, achieved through endeavors such as developing rural tourism and agricultural industry, have yielded remarkable results in recent years.

When he joined BNU in 2003, he was the only professor there to conduct poverty reduction research. Over the years, the research team he led became bigger and bigger, and in 2011, a poverty alleviation research center was founded, which grew into the China Institute for Poverty Reduction in 2017.

Now, the 30-plus experts there have carried out more than 100 research projects on poverty alleviation. Their research has attracted the attention of government departments and social organizations, illuminating policy making. ■

nies. Through research, he found the purple shale soil commonly seen in Aobei to be rich in nutrients such as potassium, calcium and phosphorus, and perfect for growing quality fruits.

Together with his business partners, Huang in late 2014 started to cultivate large patches of barren hills and fields in order to set up a modern agricultural industry demonstration park.

He had never expected his efforts to go down the drain in the following year. Shicheng suffered severe flood and large-scale landslides that swept across his new orchards. Millions of yuan vanished, while the reconstruction and restoration cost time and more money.

Despite villagers voicing their doubts, Huang remained confident about the prospect of developing ecological agriculture. With the help of the local government, he obtained a



Zhang Qi, President of the China Institute for Poverty Reduction, Beijing Normal University, receives an award for research on poverty alleviation on October 17

COURTESY/PHOTO

Prescription for Poverty Reduction

China's experience may inspire poverty alleviation programs in other parts of the world By Ding Ying



Products from an underdeveloped mountainous region on sale at a poverty alleviation event in Luzhou, Sichuan Province in southwest China, on October 17

The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has not only affected the economies of countries and regions but also poses a challenge to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of ending poverty by 2030.

October 17 was a poignant reminder of that. It is the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, which began to be observed 27 years ago. The theme this year was acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all.

The year 2020 is crucial for China, which has to meet the twin goals of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and eliminating absolute poverty by the end of the year. Though hit by COVID-19, China's

poverty alleviation goal is anticipated to be met, which will mean China can achieve the first of the 17 SDGs of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 10 years ahead of schedule. It will also become the first in the world to end absolute poverty, which will have a significant impact on the rest of the world.

"I am confident of achieving the goal of poverty eradication this year," President Xi Jinping said during an inspection tour in Ankang in Shaanxi Province, northwest China, in April.

Targeted policies

In the past four decades since reform and opening up began in 1978, China has lifted

850 million people out of poverty. At the end of 2019, the number of the rural poor in China fell to 5.51 million from 98.99 million in 2012.

Fabrizio Hochschild Drummond, special adviser to UN Secretary General António Guterres, highlighted China's achievements in poverty reduction in a recent interview, saying, "China's own national success in reducing poverty accounts for a very large part of the global poverty reduction over the past decades. I think there's much that can be learned from what was achieved by China. And I think many other countries are trying to learn."

While a vaccine for COVID-19 is still being explored, China has an effective prescription for poverty. Having met over 70 percent of the global poverty alleviation target, it is a credible source of expertise. China's success is based on targeted policies, efficient mobilization of financial and social resources, an advanced environmental protection concept, and the wide use of hi-tech, especially Internet technology.

But the biggest factor is the pragmatic leadership. In 2013, Xi visited Shibadong, a remote village in the mountains of Hunan Province, central China, where he proposed targeted poverty alleviation. It meant implementing tailored measures according to different local conditions so that there would be no waste of resources. Locally adapted distinctive targeted poverty reduction measures are likely to be effective for impoverished demographics in other countries as well.

China has established an effective mechanism to ensure precision in identifying target groups for poverty alleviation, accurately identify the causes of poverty, set clear targets, tailor measures to specific circumstances, and take concrete actions, particularly in areas with large ethnic minority

populations. The projects were carefully planned and officials assigned to carry them out based on local needs.

Government officials, teachers, medical workers, academics and entrepreneurs have contributed to the campaign. Over the past three years, more than 200,000 “first secretaries” have been sent to villages to help in the work. Millions of township and village officials are working on poverty alleviation throughout the country.

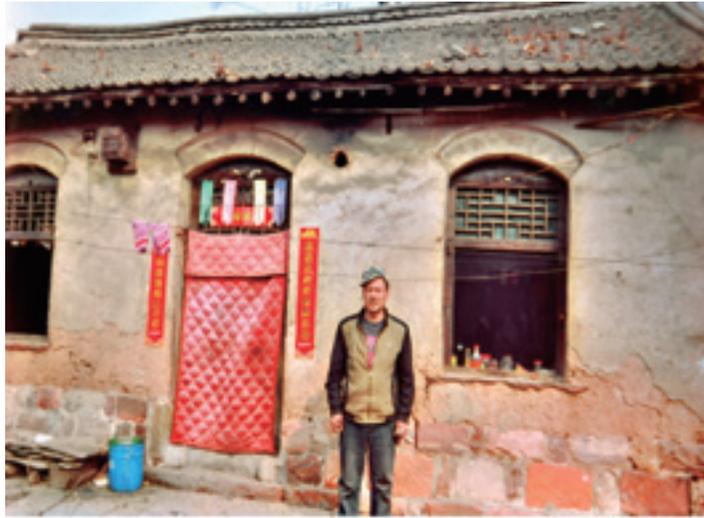
To fund the work, 214 billion yuan (\$30.6 billion) additional funds were allocated for impoverished regions between 2018 and 2020.

Sustainable growth

The poverty reduction campaign is based on environmental protection. Xi said in a development-oriented poverty reduction conference in 2015, “Many impoverished regions now blame their condition on their surroundings. However, looking at it from another perspective, if these regions wish to become prosperous, it is precisely by relying on their natural surroundings that they will do so.”

The concept that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets has been promoted. Accordingly, eco-tourism has become a new industry. Shibadong, for example, is promoting eco-tourism with better infrastructure. Last year, the village received more than 600,000 visitors attracted by its improved facilities, landscape as well as the unique Miao culture. The industry has created more jobs. Villagers are operating restaurants and inns, and working as tour guides and shuttle bus drivers.

Internet technology has been the silver bullet of the campaign. According to the China Internet Development Report 2020, by the end of 2019, China had 1.31 billion mobile Internet users, more than 94 percent of the population and 32.17 percent of all mobile Internet users in the world.



A woman sweeps the courtyard of her renovated house in a village in Zuoquan County, Shanxi Province, north China, on October 16; Her husband poses for a photo in front of their old house

The rapid growth of the Internet has played a significant role in educating and changing mindsets in poverty-stricken areas, harnessing their creativity, and narrowing the information gap between developed and underdeveloped areas.

By providing telecommunication and express delivery infrastructure, the government has enabled people in poor areas to hitch their wagons to the express train of e-commerce. By the end of June, 98 percent poor villages had optical fiber network and 96.6 percent townships were covered by express delivery service. All poverty-stricken counties have set up e-commerce service centers.

The development of e-commerce has

contributed significantly to poverty alleviation. Statistics from the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) show in 2019, online retail sales of products from poverty-stricken counties reached 239.2 billion yuan (\$34.3 billion), a year-on-year increase of 33 percent, providing jobs and incomes for 5 million farmers.

Internet companies are encouraged to partner with poor regions to promote e-commerce. Data from e-commerce giant Alibaba Group shows that as of June, more than 1.2 million vendors from poverty-stricken counties were selling their products through e-commerce platforms Taobao and Tmall.

Live-streaming has become a new effective marketing approach. MOFCOM data show that the first half of this year saw over 400,000 live-streamers promoting more than 20 million items. More and more officials, celebrities and Internet stars are participating in live-streaming marketing campaigns for public welfare.

The official standard for being considered out of poverty means an annual per-capita income of 4,000 yuan (\$570) in rural areas, with basic food and clothing needs met and education, basic medical care and housing guaranteed.

However, it is still not enough for building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, which is the development target during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20). To achieve moderate prosperity, in the remaining months impoverished households will be given loans, skill training and employment support while those unable to work will come under comprehensive social security. Efforts will also continue to make the lives of those who have risen above the poverty line better. ■

A Steady Uptrend

China's economic recovery picks up steam in the third quarter **By Li Xiaoyang**

With the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic largely brought under control at home, China's GDP expanded 4.9 percent year on year in the third quarter (Q3) as business activities gradually resumed, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on October 19. The Chinese economy reported a 6.8-percent slump and 3.2-percent growth in the first and second quarters, respectively.

It also reversed a 1.6-percent contraction in the first half (H1) of the year, up 0.7 percent year on year in the first three quarters.

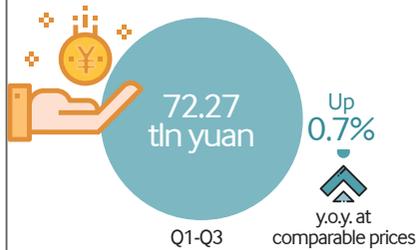
Major economic indicators showed further rebounds in Q3. The industrial output rose 5.8 percent year on year. Retail sales of consumer goods registered the first quarterly expansion this year, up 0.9 percent. Fixed assets investment and foreign trade also saw first year-on-year turnarounds in the first three quarters,

growing 0.8 percent and 0.7 percent respectively, NBS said.

Over the past months, the government has introduced measures including tax relief, cuts in lending rates and the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) for commercial banks, reduction of rental and power costs and issuance of consumption coupons. They have helped ensure business growth, stabilize employment and boost consumption amid epidemic containment.

China's Economic Performance

GDP



Growth by Sector

AGRICULTURAL

Value added of agriculture (crop farming)



INDUSTRIAL

Total value-added of industrial enterprises above the designated size



Livelihood

CPI



PPI



Total new jobs created in urban areas



Troika of Economy

INVESTMENT

Total fixed assets investment



EXPORT

Total value of imports and exports of goods



National per-capita disposable income of residents



CONSUMPTION

Total retail sales of consumer goods



Online retail sales of physical goods



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics; designed by Pamela Tobey)

"The improvement of key indicators shows the strong resilience and vitality of China's economy, which is expected to continue to recover in the fourth quarter," Liu Aihua, spokesperson for NBS, said at a press conference in Beijing.

The International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook report released earlier in October projected China's economy to grow 1.9 percent this year, 0.9 percentage point higher than the June projection.

"Given external uncertainties caused by global epidemic spread and uneven recovery of industries and enterprises in different regions, more efforts are needed to further improve livelihood and support enterprises to achieve the annual growth target," Liu added.

Warming up

NBS data showed that value-added industrial output, which measures the activity of large enterprises with an annual business turnover of at least 20 million yuan (\$2.98 million), went up 1.2 percent year on year in the first three quarters, compared with a decline of 1.3 percent in H1. The output of state-owned enterprises saw a 0.9-percent year-on-year growth while that of the private sector went up 2.1 percent year on year.

Supporting policies of the government have helped boost confidence and eased the burden of domestic business operators during the epidemic, Liu said.

According to the State Taxation Administration, tax and fee cuts saved 1.88 trillion yuan (\$281 million) for enterprises in January-August.

The National Development and Reform Commission has pledged to extend the policy of cutting electricity prices by 5 percent starting from February to the end of this year for companies except those in sectors with high energy consumption.

Optimistic expectations have stimulated production. Data released by NBS at the end of September showed that the purchasing managers' index (PMI) for the manufacturing sector reached 51.5 in the month, up from 51 in August. The index had remained above the expansion-contraction threshold of 50 for the seventh consecutive month.

"Although the epidemic and floods affected industrial production over the past months, the rise of domestic demand has driven up industries including equipment and vehicle manufacturing," Wen Bin, chief researcher with China Minsheng Bank, told *Beijing Review*. Output by the hi-tech manufacturing and equipment manufacturing sectors rose 5.9 percent and 4.7 percent year on year, respectively.

The resumption of industrial production has backed up the growth of consumption. Although retail sales of consumer goods went down 7.2 percent year on year to 27.33 trillion

yuan (\$4.08 trillion) in the first three quarters, the decline narrowed 4.2 percentage points from H1. Online spending expanded 9.7 percent for the January-September period, compared with 7.3 percent in H1.

Notably, auto sales grew 11.2 percent in September, staying above 10 percent for the third consecutive month as pent-up demand during the epidemic was released. "The recovery of the auto market has contributed much to the rise of consumption," Wen said.

Trade and investment

Customs data released on October 13 showed that China's foreign trade in goods totaled 23.11 trillion yuan (\$3.44 trillion) in the first three quarters, up 0.7 percent year on year, reversing the decline in H1. Imports and exports of private companies expanded 10.2 percent, playing a key role in driving overall trade growth.

According to Li Kuiwen, spokesperson for the General Administration of Customs of China, rebounds in exports were driven especially by rising sales of anti-epidemic supplies and products for working from home such as tablet computers. The resumption of domestic demand also boosted imports.

China remains an investment magnet with resumed business activities and improving environment. In the first nine months, foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow went up 5.2 percent year on year to 718.81 billion yuan (\$107.5 billion), the first increase in both yuan and dollar terms this year. FDI in the service industry totaled 559.68 billion yuan (\$83.6 billion), up 15 percent year on year, and the growth for the hi-tech service sector jumped to 26.4 percent, the Ministry of Commerce said on October 16.

But the performance of different sectors is uneven. According to Wen, fixed assets investment in the real estate sector has grown fast while the recovery in manufacturing and infrastructure is slow. The new capital channeled in the manufacturing industry declined 6.5 percent year on year in the first three quarters despite a narrowed contraction.

To better attract investment, the manufacturing industry needs to accelerate the elimination of excess and backward capacity and develop high-end industrial chains through independent innovation. Investment in new infrastructure and urbanization also needs to be increased, Xu Hongcai, Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Commission under the China Association of Policy Science, told *Beijing Review*.

China's consumer inflation growth caused by lack of supplies earlier this year has eased, as the consumer price index (CPI), a main gauge of inflation, rose 3.3 percent year on year in January-September, 0.5 percentage point slower than that in H1, the NBS said on October 15.

Wang Youjuan, an NBS statistician, said the

easing can be attributed to moderating food prices, especially vegetables and pork, along with the resumption of logistics as impacts of the epidemic and floods eased.

NBS data showed that food prices, which account for nearly one third of the weighting in China's CPI, climbed 0.4 percent month on month in September, contracting from 1.4 percent in the previous month.

CPI growth will further moderate in the coming months. Since the producer price index (PPI), which measures inflation at the factory gate, declined 2 percent in January-September, the central bank needs to keep increasing lending for manufacturers and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to drive up PPI, Wen said.

Domestic employment has seen steady recovery, which helped ensure people's income. According to NBS, a total of 8.98 million new urban jobs were created in the first three quarters, or 99.8 percent of the annual target. The surveyed unemployment rate in urban areas came in at 5.4 percent in September, 0.2 percentage point lower than August. After allowing for inflation, the national per-capita disposable income of residents rose 0.6 percent year on year to around 23,000 yuan (\$3,441) in the first nine months, compared with a 1.3-percent decline in H1.

"However, college graduates and migrant workers still face pressure in finding jobs, which calls for more powerful pro-employment policies," Zhao said.

Against challenges

While China's economic recovery is firming up, the weak performance of the global industrial chains amid the COVID-19 pandemic is still posing challenges.

Since the domestic demand has not yet fully recovered, more efforts are needed to boost online consumption including improving services of e-commerce platforms and increasing the provision of benefits for low-income people through fleshing out the social security system, Xu said.

According to Wen, the government should further reduce taxes and fees to ease the burden on enterprises and ramp up the issuance of special local government bonds. The central bank also needs to roll out more RRR and lending rate cuts.

"Since the recovery of China's economy is closely related to the performances of global market, it still needs to widen the opening up and expand international cooperation for common resumption," Xu said. ■

CITY SPECIAL



A public service big data platform developed by a Fuzhou-based software company (ZHANG RENFENG)

GIVING WINGS TO BUSINESSES



A passenger checks in at a subway station in Fuzhou using the facial recognition system on May 14 (CHEN NUAN)

In Goosun, an egg farm in Fuzhou, capital of Fujian Province in southeast China, 600,000 laying hens start the day at 4 a.m. every morning to lights that are activated automatically and breakfast served by a conveyor belt. A 1-meter-high robot then strolls around, using its sensors to collect data, including temperature, humidity and light, for better management.

In Fuzhou, which has been building itself into a model of the digital economy, digitalization is now a common trend for companies and factories across industries.

Digitalized factories

"The more digital we become, the more we benefit from it," said Yu Jie, President of Goosun, adding that digital technology enables almost impeccable decision-making as it boasts abundant and comprehensive data, while in the past decisions were based on experience and speculation.

Thanks to digitalization, which lowers costs and widens profit margins, Yu said his egg farm has withstood the negative impact of the novel coronavirus disease epidemic, maintaining positive growth so far this year.

Jingfeng, a textile manufacturer based in Fuzhou, said it achieved 10 percent growth in output and profitability between January and August, despite constricted market demand amid the epidemic.

"As soon as our salespersons input customers' needs into our management app, their information will be matched with data from our factory, such as price, stock and available assembly lines, and the system will decide whether to take orders and arrange delivery or production accordingly," plant manager Fu Chongxian said, adding that the smart system helps the factory save almost 70 million yuan (\$10 million) in labor, energy and raw materials costs every year.

According to a report released at the recent Digital China Summit in Fuzhou, digitalization has driven down costs by 17.6 percent and increased revenue by 22.6 percent for manufacturing enterprises, while logistics enterprises have seen costs falling by 34.2 percent and revenues rising by 33.6 percent.

A total of 426 projects in the digital sector involving a total investment of 331.6 billion yuan (\$49 billion) were signed during the summit. The projects cover fields such as artificial intelligence, 5G, industrial Internet, and blockchain. The investment will promote industrialization of the digital sector and digitalization of the industrial sector, said Zhao Long, Vice Governor of Fujian Province, at the closing ceremony on October 14.

Business environment

In addition to digitalization, the business environment in Fuzhou has also been improved in recent years to facilitate industrial development.

In Mawei District, an application was submitted for registering a hotel management company and a license and five seals were issued in a few hours. However, in the past, companies needed to go to designated shops for seals after they got their license.

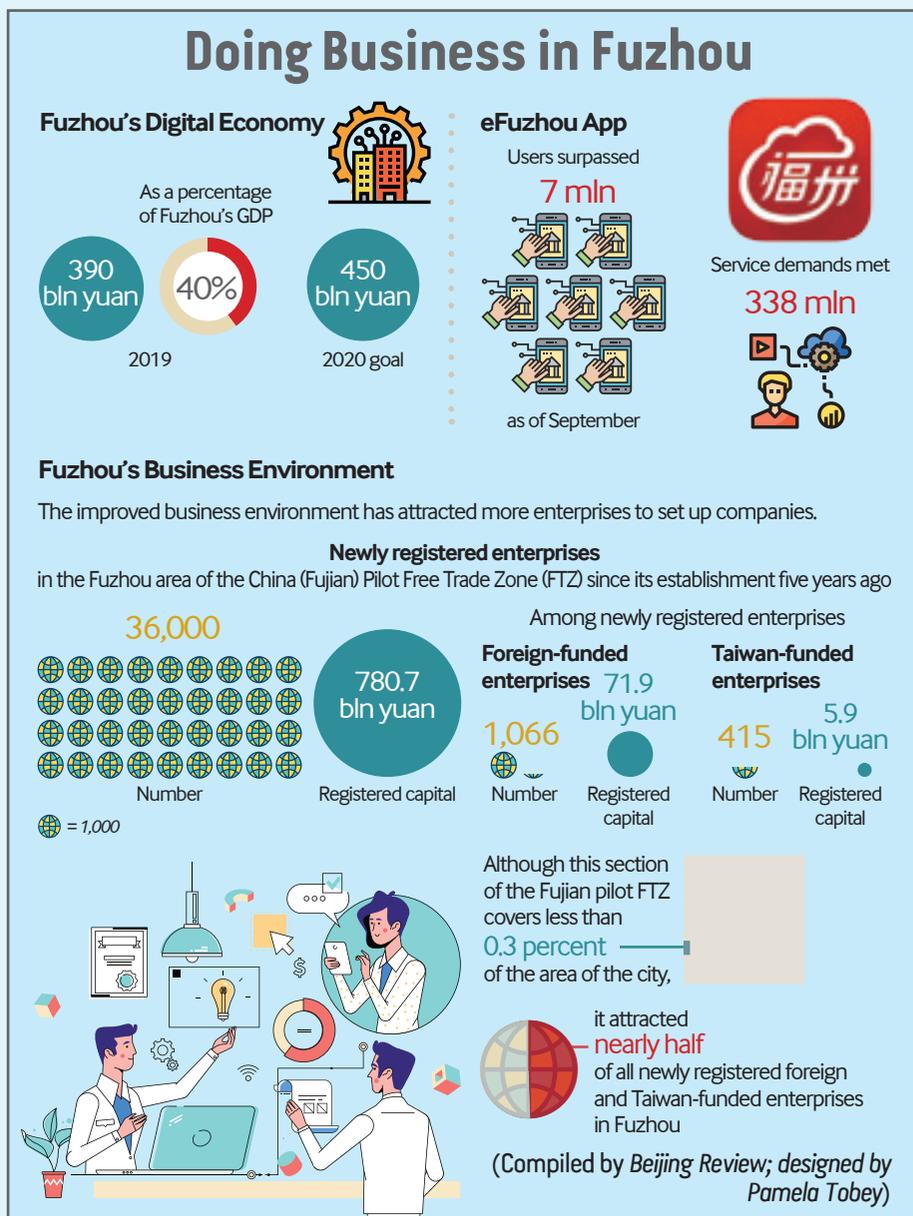
In April 2019, Mawei carried out a reform to enable companies to get seals at the same time they collect the license. Now the practice has been adopted across the city. The Fuzhou Administrative Service Center issues business licenses and seals two hours after application.

Improvement of government services has made business registration more efficient and convenient.

The commitment to "serving the entire life cycle of a company" aptly captures the business environment of Fuzhou. Fuzhou has pushed forward reforms in key areas and carried out a three-year campaign for optimizing its business environment. The city has rolled out measures

for supporting the development of private businesses and provides customized services for companies.

The Fuzhou Light Industry Import and Export Co. submitted the required documents to the Export-Import Bank of China (China Eximbank) at 10 a.m. and received 10 million yuan (\$1.5 million) of loans at 8 p.m. on the same day. The Fuzhou branch of ▶▶



CITY SPECIAL

China Eximbank opened a “green channel” in February to finish application evaluations in hours to provide loans for the company to facilitate its purchase of anti-epidemic materials.

Ample financing helps increase development momentum. During the epidemic, securing quick loans to resume production was crucial for an enterprise’s survival and development. Fuzhou took a series of measures to improve the efficiency of financial services to make it easier for enterprises, especially private businesses and small and micro enterprises, to get loans.

Leading financial institutions such as the China Development Bank and the Bank of China have signed strategic cooperation agreements with Fuzhou to support high-quality industrial development. Fuzhou has also strengthened policy support to reduce enterprises’ financing costs, encourage financial institutions to issue loans to enterprises and support enterprises to get financing directly from the capital market.

Going public is an effective way of direct financing. Fuzhou has put in place favorable policies to support enterprises going public and promote a multi-layer capital market. As of mid-September, Fuzhou had 87 listed companies playing a leading role in the city’s industrial transformation and upgrading.

Improved rankings

According to an evaluation of Fuzhou’s business environment by the China Business Environment Research Center of Xiamen University, it is equivalent to the 43rd economy among 190 economies in the world in 2019. The evaluation was conducted based on Doing Business 2019: Training for Reform, a World Bank Group flagship annual publication measuring the regulations that enhance business activity and those that constrain it.

Fuzhou has accomplished the target set in its three-year business environment optimization plan. The plan, released in June 2018, called

for improving the city’s business environment to the standard of the top 50 economies in the World Bank Doing Business report.

Fuzhou’s business environment now ranks 28th among 190 economies, 15 spots higher than in 2019.

The improvement of the business environment could not have been done without the government’s efforts. According to the 2019 government information disclosure report published by the Fuzhou Government, 2,237 online examination and approval procedures have been standardized.

Fuzhou has also improved its business environment through digitalization and building a credit system. It has established the Public Service Platform for Small and Medium Enterprises to help enterprises solve their problems. It has also established the Credit Fuzhou website, which enables users to check enterprises’ and individuals’ credit records. Fuzhou’s government services are becoming more open, transparent and efficient through digitalization. ■



An intelligent conveyor system at the textile workshop of Fuzhou-based company Jingfeng on September 27 (XINHUA)



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Stable Home Prices Amid Control Policies

China's housing market remained generally stable in September, with slight month-on-month growth in home prices in major cities, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed on October 20.

New home prices in the four first-tier cities—Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen—rose by 0.4 percent month on month in September, down 0.2 percentage point from a month earlier, according to the NBS.

On a monthly basis, new home prices edged up 0.3 percent in 31 second-tier cities, and rose 0.5 percent in 35 third-tier cities.

Prices of resold housing in first-tier cities edged up 0.9 percent month on month in September, with the growth slowing by 0.1 percentage point over the previous month. Second-tier cities saw slower month-on-month growth of resold housing prices, while the price rise in third-tier cities remains unchanged from the previous month at 0.6 percent.

On a yearly basis, Beijing saw new home prices up 3.8 percent last month, while new home prices in Shenzhen jumped 5.3 percent year on year.

The stable prices came amid sustained government efforts to rein in housing speculation over the past few years, with each city rolling out targeted measures to keep housing inflation within a proper range.

China's home prices surged in 2016 when speculators took advantage of favorable lending policies to buy homes via leveraged borrowing, contributing to what many feared was a housing bubble.

To contain the risks, the central authorities have implemented various restrictive policies such as higher down payment ratio for second homes and crackdowns on shadow banking loans to speculators.

In September, local governments continued to maintain the principle that housing is for living in, not for speculation, and adopted measures to keep housing prices and market expectations stable, Sheng Guoqing, a senior NBS statistician, said.



A residential community in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province in north China, on October 10

September and October are traditionally considered peak sales season for developers as both demand and supply climb. Developers increased market supply in September with several firms introducing promotional policies to attract potential buyers, Zhang Dawei, chief analyst with real estate agency Centaline Property, said.

In addition, developers have stepped up bidding for land auctions in recent months. Land sales in 50 major cities exceeded 3.13 trillion yuan (\$468 billion) as of October 19, up 17.9 percent from the same period in 2019, data from Centaline Property showed.

China has seen a notable rebound in real estate investment in recent months as the economy gradually recovers from woes brought about by the novel coronavirus disease.

The latest NBS data showed that prop-

erty investment in the first nine months jumped 5.6 percent year on year, with investment in residential property rising 6.1 percent.

With the real estate market gaining momentum, China has adopted stricter control measures to rein in housing speculation, Zhang said, citing an increase in the number of housing policy adjustments by local governments in the past few months.

Housing prices were likely to see a mild uptick in October, but targeted control policies would forestall rapid price hikes and help maintain a stable housing market, Zhang said. ■

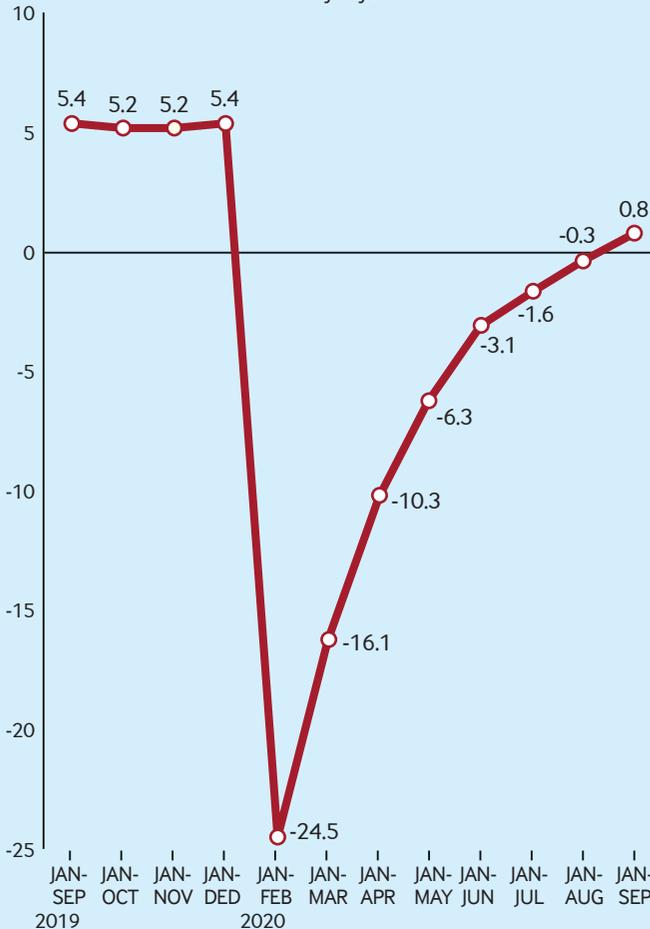
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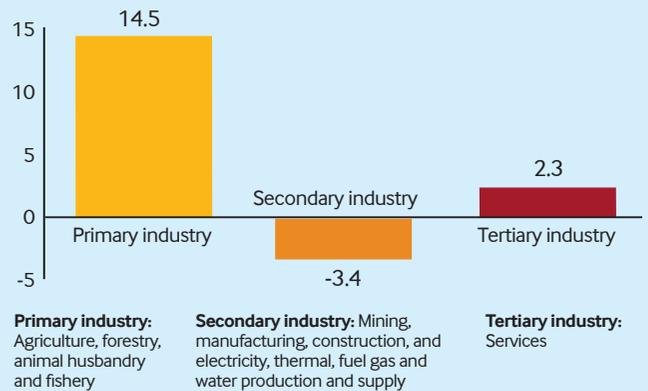
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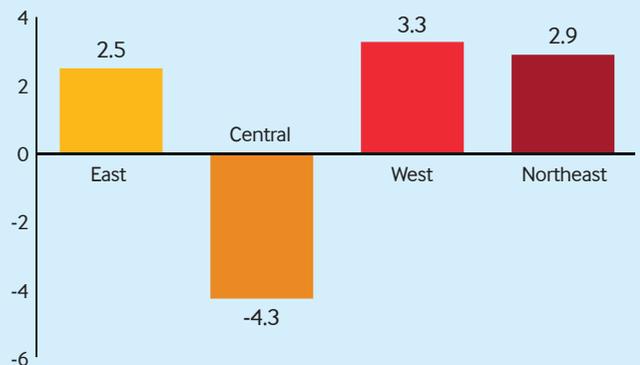
Fixed Assets Investment Growth in China
(% y.o.y.)



Fixed Assets Investment Growth in China by Sector
January-September (% y.o.y.)



Fixed Assets Investment Growth in China by Region
January-September (% y.o.y.)



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)

Sales of passenger cars, including sedans, sport utility vehicles, minivans and multipurpose vehicles rose 7.3 percent year on year to

1.91 million
units in China in September.

Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in the northwest saw its railway freight top **45.8 million** tons in the third quarter of 2020, up 10.6 percent year on year.

China's civil transport airports are expected to reach **241** by the end of this year. During the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20) period, construction of the Beijing Daxing International Airport and expansion of 15 hub airports was completed.

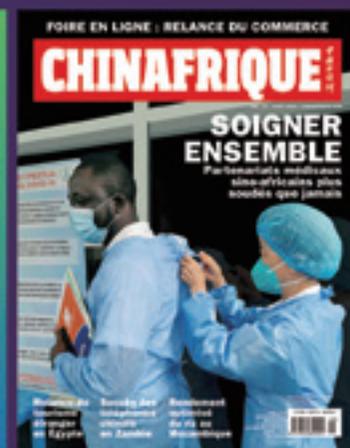
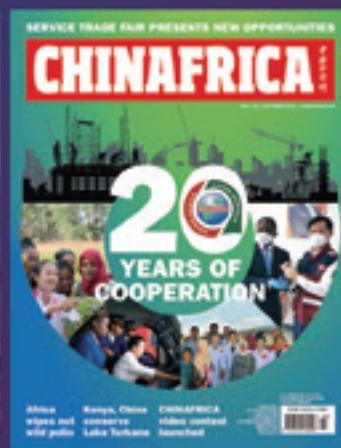
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Civilizational Evolution

Knowledge of the ancient Chinese and Greek cultures can promote understanding between China and the West By Pan Yue



The author is the first deputy president of the Central Institute of Socialism

China and the West today once again find themselves at a crossroads of reciprocal understanding.

The spirit of classical civilization remains deeply embedded in modern-day civilization. America and Europe inherited the genes of the ancient Greek and Roman societies just as other regions have continued the traditions of their own ancestors. The difference in cultural gene pool more often than not guides countries and regions onto distinct paths of development.

Ancient civilizations and their destinies

The political order of modern European and American civilization at its core features a combination of ancient Greek and Roman political essentials, Christian beliefs, and industrial culture, with ancient Greece's society considered the most fundamental source of modern Western civilization. Likewise, the path contemporary China has carved out for itself is deeply rooted in the legacy of ancient Chinese civilization. This type of ancient Chinese society found stability during the Qin (221-207 B.C.) and Han (202 B.C.-A.D. 220) dynasties, but an actual formative evolution had already occurred as early as the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.)

China throughout the 5th to 3rd century B.C. faced a historical situation similar to that of ancient Greece. Both fell into times of social chaos and political turmoil caused by internal conflict, before eventually establishing a road to unification. In both countries, the positive force driving the move towards unification was not one with a kingdom at heart, but in fact proved one sprouting from a military power operating on the peripheries

of society. Many of their intellectuals, too, committed to the cause of national consolidation and to that end produced numerous philosophical and political propositions.

Nevertheless, the drive for unification resulted in two rather different outcomes for both empires. The empire of Alexander the Great fell apart only seven years after the merging of ancient Greece, and its three successive kingdoms battled each other throughout the following century before being eventually annexed by the Roman Empire. The Qin State unified China by defeating the houses and forces of all surrounding states. Although the Qin Dynasty collapsed 14 years later, another unified empire, the Han Dynasty, emerged in its place. Subsequent rulers adopted and adapted the systems of both Qin and Han, a practice passed down for generations—spanning more than two millennia in time.

Beliefs and doubts

The different results of similar historical conditions can be credited to contrasting roots of civilization.

A general governance trend during ancient China's late Warring State Period combined a pattern of morals and ethics as advocated by Confucianism with punishments advocated by Legalism. "Unity" became the common political pursuit for rulers across all states. Yet with none willing to settle down as a mere local regime, all sought to unify the entire country. There was, in fact, no disagreement on whether the country should be unified, and the players competed against one another as to determine the final unifier. This obsession with "unity" became the most prominent characteristic of Chinese politicians for many a dynasty to come, with the same chain of events influencing ancient Chinese advisers and philosophers alike. Unearthed bamboo and silk documents from the Warring States Period verify the notion that, at that time "various schools of thought integrated with each other." The integration of those philosophical thoughts aimed to construct a "unified order." The Warring States Period

became a melting pot of philosophical ideas. In this sense, the Qin State was not responsible for unifying the nation—it merely merged into a unified China.

The unification movement of ancient Greece derived from continuous conflicts between city-states. The produce of classical Greek civilization most cherished by Westerners today, makes up for a minute portion of Greek history, namely the golden age of Athenian culture under the leadership of Pericles (495-429 B.C.), an era that brought about the greatest achievements of ancient Greek democracy. After that golden age, which lasted only several decades, the city-states of Greece fell victim to fierce, self-inflicted, internal strife. The aftermath of those warring city-states days saw Athens and Sparta alternately dominate Greece. Both brutally massacring residents of the other at various occasions.

American historian William Scott Ferguson concluded that "the city-states of Greece could not be integrated." He likened each city-state to "a single-celled organism with a unique internal structure." The only way any could evolve, was by self-replicating. They could force replication onto their peers, but those "cells," albeit old or new, could never come together to forge a strong nation-state.

The foundation of Greek city-state politics wasn't democracy, but autonomy. A city-state could choose to adhere to any political system, and never surrender to any form of external authority. Only permanent residents of the city-state had the right to determine which political system would be adopted. However, "absolute autonomy" meant "absolute regionalism," making unification one impossible feat to accomplish. The Greek city-states opposed not only the creation of territorial states, but also the establishment of a federal state with Macedonia. These city-states did not forge a workable federal system until the day they were conquered by the Roman Empire. City-states considered their own interests superior to those of the Greek community at large.

No matter how harsh their competition



The Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion, one of Greece's historical landmarks, on August 2. Ancient Greek civilization to this day is considered the most fundamental source of modern Western society



Inside a museum in Changsha, Hunan Province in central China, visitors admire a silk painting unearthed from a Warring State Period tomb, on March 28, 2014

and rivalry, the seven powers of the Warring States Period, together with intellectuals from the various schools of thought of that time, all believed in the same unified order and that the stage divided state should quickly come to an end.

The Greek city-states, at that very same point in history, lacked a common ruler, and their different alliances caused infighting. No one believed in a "unified order" of any sort.

The power of unification

According to the rites of the Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 B.C.), if a vassal state was hit by a plague or famine, other vassal states should offer a helping hand. When a vassal state organized major celebratory activities or funerals, other vassal states should send representatives to express their congratulations or condolences. Such "neighborly" acts strengthened the notion that all vas-

sal states belonged to the same "Chinese world." By stark contrast, the Greek city-states had no such binding responsibilities. Even a newly established city-state had no obligations to its parent city-state, going to great lengths to furthermore highlight its independence. Even during the Greco-Persian Wars, the common identity of the Greeks played only a negligible role in uniting them as one.

The different roots of both vast civilizations eventually led them down two drastically different paths of development.

China has continuously sought to establish unity between regions, ethnic groups, and languages. Despite several periods of internal division caused by factors like dynastical collapse or invasion by nomadic tribes, a sense of unadulterated unity remained mainstream throughout history. This thinking to this day has fostered the collectivism as presented across Chinese civilization.

The West has constantly advocated separation between regions, ethnic groups, and languages. The few attempts to unify the Western world, such as the efforts of the Roman Empire and Roman Catholic Church, have done little to diminish the overall trend of detachment that still dominates Western society, one celebrating individualism and liberalism. ■

This article was first published in *China Pictorial*
Comments to dingying@bjreview.com

Should the Age of Criminal Responsibility Be Lowered?

The age of criminal responsibility in China is currently 16, with those aged between 14 and 16 facing criminal liability only if they commit serious violent offenses, such as intentional homicide, rape or robbery. China's criminal code at present holds that no child under the age of 14 can be held criminally liable, which means that children under 14 can't be arrested or charged with a crime.

On October 13, a draft amendment to the Criminal Law was submitted for a second review by the National People's Congress Standing Committee, the country's top legislature. The aim of the amendment is to better respond to serious violent offenses by minors.

The news of the age revision in the draft amendment has attracted huge attention, mostly because recent years have seen a growing number of violent offenses committed by very young people.

Dear Readers,

Forum is a column that provides a space for varying perspectives on contemporary Chinese society. We invite you to submit personal viewpoints on past and current topics (in either English or Chinese).

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Please provide your name and address along with your comments

The vast majority of Chinese believe lowering the age of criminal responsibility is a necessary adjustment. Nowadays, most children have easy access to the Internet and online contents, and thus children are found involved in criminal cases that they were unlikely to get involved in the past. Additionally, statistics from the Supreme People's Procuratorate indicate that cases of intentional injury, robbery and rape brought against minors are on the rise, and most are brought against children aged between 12 and 14. In this sense, the public's support for the adjustment is understandable, as it will help to deter potential crimes among juveniles.

Others argue lowering the age of criminal responsibility won't help as much as expected, and may even cause undue lifelong damage to delinquents. This is especially true given that many of these young offenders are themselves victims of their environments. Additionally, early adolescence is a period marked by neurodevelopmental immaturity, and the offenders have limited competence. For these reasons, some believe improving the societal and familial environments juveniles are exposed to is a preferable method of reducing crime rates. Appropriate corrective education is also seen as having an important role in helping delinquents lead a normal life, benefiting both individuals and society.

More than age

Zhang Hongwei (*The Beijing News*): The growing number of violent offences committed by juvenile delinquents has made lowering the age of criminal responsibility urgent. China's judicial system focuses on the redemption of delinquents, with punishment playing only an auxiliary role. While this dynamic is still necessary and useful, being too kind or tolerant to problematic minors can backfire, rather than assisting in rehabilitation.

Cases where perpetrators of serious violent crimes are not tried as criminals due to their young age usually trigger a strong backlash from society, especially the victims and their families, and cause society to doubt the country's judicial system.

Simply lowering the age of criminal responsibility will not eradicate crimes by minors or prevent minors from repeating offences.

Therefore, the draft amendment not only lowers the age of criminal liability for serious offenses such as homicide, rape and robbery to 12, but also establishes mechanisms for offering corrective education to minors under 16 who are exempt from criminal punishment.

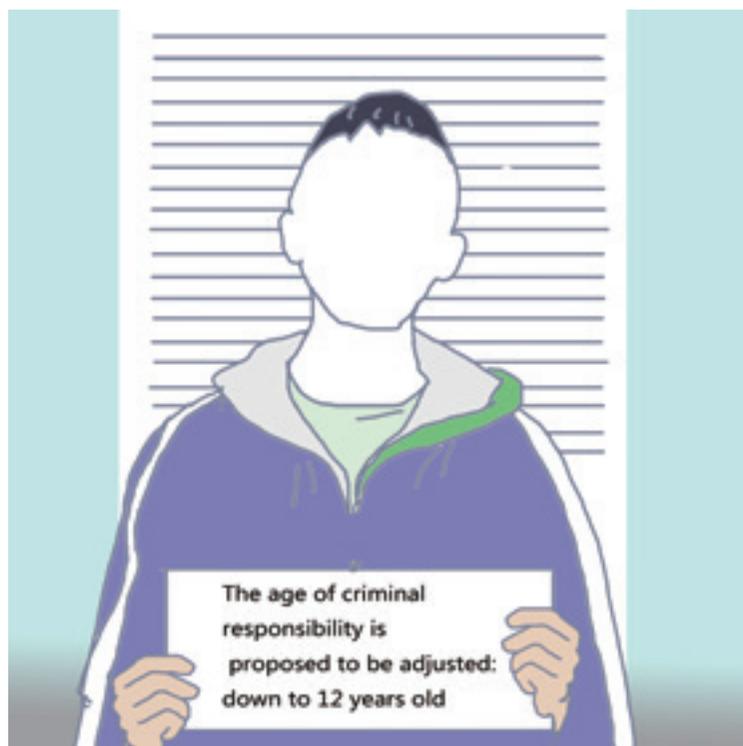
Age is only one factor in considering whether one should receive criminal punishment. Exemption, redemption, correction, and punishment for minor offenders should be carried out on a case-by-case basis.

Yu Gui (www.china.com.cn): Minors committing serious crimes is no longer news in China, and the fact that these minors are exempt from criminal responsibility plays a big role in encouraging minors to take part in crimes. As the number of minors taking part in serious crimes continues to rise, so too does public sentiment in favor of lowering the age of criminal responsibility.

In regard to the reason for lowering the criminal age, some lawyers have argued that analyses of numerous crimes reveal that minor offenders' judgment and mental maturity commonly surpasses that of ordinary minors at the same age. However, this explanation is not sufficiently convincing to warrant a change to the criminal age. These lawyers' understanding is based only on their own subjective judgment, rather than the objective facts and evidence upon which the judicial system should rely. It's thus unscientific and goes against the judicial spirit to arbitrarily change the age. Some people believe that delinquents' criminal offences arise from their mental immaturity or flaws of judgment.

This immaturity may result in ignorance of the law, a lack of understanding of the law, an inability to distinguish right from wrong, or an inability to understand the impacts of their actions on themselves or others.

Similarly, lowering the age may be viewed as a form of inaction on the part of the country's judicial system. As far as minor



offenders are concerned, the purpose of the judicial system is not to punish, but to correct their behaviors. To a large extent, their family background and even the society at large should take the bigger share of responsibility for their committing crimes at such an early age. There is merit in improving the environment in which young offenders grow up. In many countries, there are juvenile courts and prosecutors, but the juvenile judicial system in China obviously pales in comparison. Thus, the judicial system has a lot of urgent work to do to help minors correct themselves, instead of focusing on the age.

Undeniably, to some extent, lowering the age will help to deter potential minor offenders from committing crimes, but if a young child is criminalized, this stain will remain on their record, affecting them for the rest of their life. In this sense, it's difficult to predict whether lowering the age will help or not.

The experiences of some delinquents have shown that if not properly handled, criminal punishment will only spur their impulses to commit more crimes after they are released from prison.

Age not a free pass

Mo Cheng (pinglun.youth.cn): When it comes to judicial protection for minor criminal offend-

ers, on one hand, further damage to society must be prevented, but on the other hand, the juvenile's healthy growth and future development should also be taken into consideration.

Today, those under the age of 14 are not held criminally responsible, no matter what horrendous crimes they commit, and those who are between 14 and 16 years will not be criminalized unless the crimes are extremely serious. These regulations were originally enacted to protect the juvenile but in practice, they are taken advantage of by some children as a free pass to do whatever they want.

In recent years, China has witnessed a surge of criminal cases involving minors under the age of 14. For example, at the end of 2018, a 12-year-old boy in Hunan Province in central China killed his mother using a knife just because he did not want to be disciplined. Embarrassingly, this boy was free from criminal punishment as he was not 14 years old at that time, despite the fact that the crime he committed was especially heinous. According to current Chinese laws, in such cases, guardians shall be ordered to subject the minor to strict discipline; when necessary, they may also be taken in for correction by the government.

The draft amendment has been proposed in order to curb juveniles' impulse to

commit crimes by lowering the age to 12, but still it's highly dubious whether this adjustment will be effective.

Delinquents cause damage to society, while at the same time, they are also victims of unfriendly environments. Thus, neither incarcerating them like ordinary criminals, nor directly setting them free without consequence is the best choice. We now urgently need an effective correctional education system for delinquents, plus more friendly social and family environments for them to grow up in.

Meanwhile, it is also necessary to change the current judicial practice that parents are given discretion to decide where delinquents can go. Once it's proved that crimes have been committed, the young criminal offenders' rehabilitation must be placed in the hands of a correctional education authority.

Apart from these efforts, it's also important to raise both the juvenile and their guardians' awareness of the law. Preventive measures are more important in deterring crime when it comes to minors, as they are still on the starting line of life. ■

Committed to Carbon Neutrality

By Liu Yunyun



When President Xi Jinping announced that China would achieve carbon neutrality by 2060, not many people were fully aware what it would mean for the country and the world.

Carbon neutrality refers to achieving net-zero carbon dioxide emissions by balancing greenhouse gas emissions with carbon removal or simply eliminating carbon dioxide emissions altogether. It means having a net-zero carbon footprint.

Xi's pledge came in a speech at the General Debate of the 75th Session of the UN General Assembly on September 22, less than an hour after U.S. President Donald Trump attacked China for "rampant pollution." But Trump conveniently ignored the fact that the economies of the developed world, including the U.S., were powered by coal and petroleum for almost two centuries and their pollution remained completely unchecked in that period.

Meanwhile, he has often referred to climate change as a "hoax" and withdrew the U.S. from the Paris Agreement two years ago. Most recently, during a tour of wildfire-ravaged California in September, Trump said, "I don't think science knows" about climate.

Both the U.S. and China have been hit by extreme weather conditions predicted by climate change models this year. In China, heavy rains over the summer unleashed the most severe flood season in three decades, while the U.S. is facing one of its most active hurricane seasons on its southern and eastern coasts and record wildfires in western states.

China is currently the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases. But it is also the world's leading manufacturer, with exports contributing 20 percent to its GDP. In other words, one fifth of its greenhouse gas emissions have actually served consumers in other nations, while leaving a carbon footprint in China.

Notwithstanding this reality and the fact that decarbonizing is painstaking and expensive, China's bold carbon-neutral pledge comes ahead of any such promise from the U.S. In abandoning the Paris Agreement, Trump said if the U.S. remained, it

The most challenging part of the pledge for China is not the magnitude of investment in or application of renewable energies, but the social transition that it entails

would leave millions of families trapped in poverty and joblessness.

The most challenging part of the pledge for China is not the magnitude of investment in or application of renewable energies, but the social transition that it entails. Halving or eliminating coal capacity would result in the loss of millions of mining jobs, which will affect regions that depend on coal revenue. But the Chinese see every crisis as an opportunity.

As former U.S. President John F. Kennedy stated, "The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.' One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger, but recognize the opportunity." Xi's announcement suggests that he believes this transition can be managed, and that the benefits outweigh the costs.

In the past years, China has emerged as a leader in clean energy technologies, including solar panels and wind turbines, as well as the world's largest manufacturer of electric cars and buses. Its investment in clean energy will not only drive dramatic reductions in carbon dioxide emissions, but also lower the cost of clean energy, creating a spillover effect in other countries.

In addition, the share of coal in China's primary energy consumption has declined to nearly 57 percent, while non-fossil energy exceeds 15 percent. Thus, by 2050, non-fossil energy could account for more than 90 percent of total power generation, which would set China on a path to achieving net-zero emissions by 2060.

A report by Carbon Brief, a UK-based website focusing on climate science, showed that China's pledge could prevent 0.25 degree Celsius of global warming this century, which would mean temperatures would rise to 2.34 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by 2100, instead of the 2.59 degrees Celsius predicted in a baseline scenario. ■

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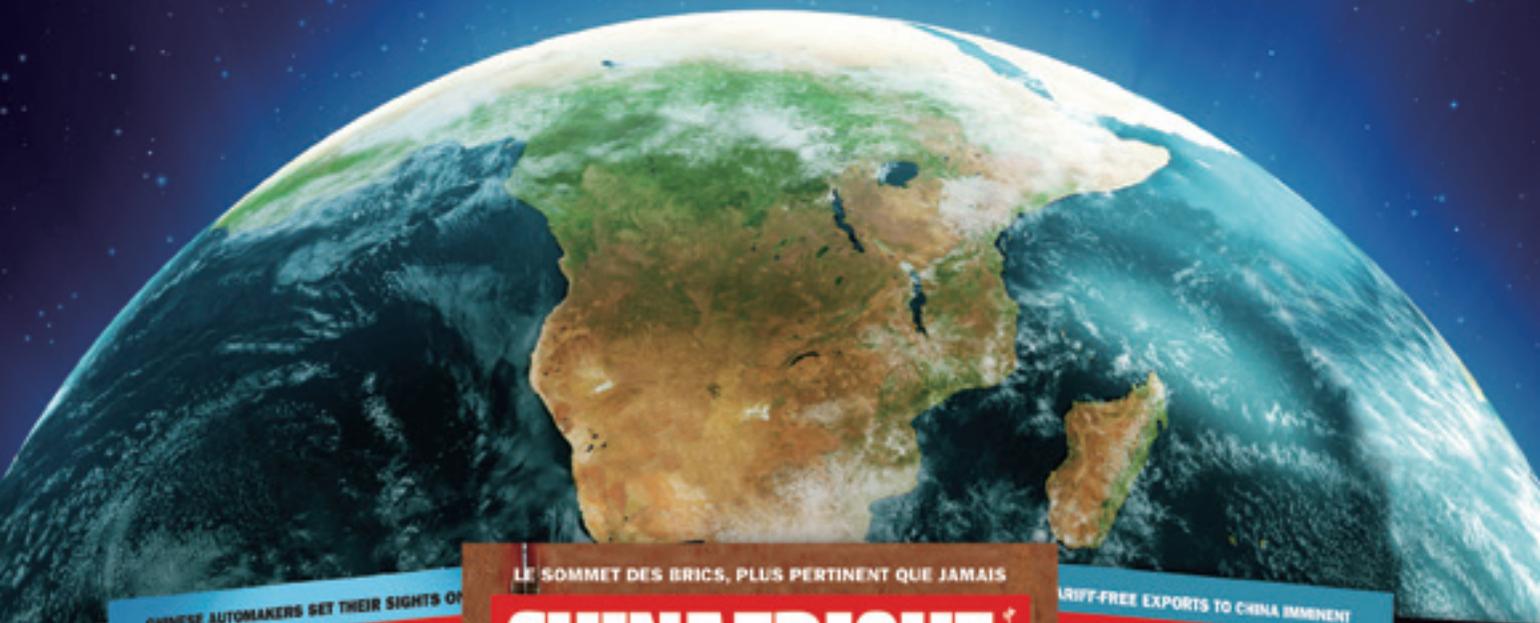
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