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IN FULL BLOOM

Yili builds on traditions to create new opportunities

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The Next Chapter

By Yan Wei

Each year, the regional Two Sessions offer a window on political participation in Xinjiang. This year's gatherings, held in Urumqi in late January, were formally known as the Fourth Session of the 14th Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional People's Congress and the Fourth Session of the 13th Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The participants forged consensus on goals and development strategies for 2026 and beyond.

The regional people's congress is the local organ of state power. It is authorized by the Chinese Constitution to examine and approve Xinjiang's economic and social development plans, enact regional regulations and elect officials to key positions including chair of the regional government. It also hears reports of the regional high people's court and the regional people's procuratorate, an agency responsible for legal oversight. The regional people's congress consists of more than 500 deputies elected by prefectural-level people's congresses, representing the diverse ethnic groups calling Xinjiang home. The CPPCC regional committee functions as a consultative body where members from different political parties, organizations, ethnic communities and sectors of society air their opinions. It also has more than 500 members.

Apart from routine items, the adoption of Xinjiang's 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) featured prominently on this year's agenda. The regional government had drafted the plan based on the recommendations of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee. The draft was submitted to the regional people's congress for review at this year's full session. CPPCC regional committee members also offered their suggestions. The regional GDP growth target is set at 5.5-6 percent for the 15th Five-Year Plan period, as compared to a year-on-year increase of 5.5 percent in 2025 and an average annual growth rate of 5.9 percent from 2020 to 2025.

The plan details key priorities such as strengthening regional security, fostering new growth drivers and boosting all-around opening up. Sci-tech innovation, talent development, ethnic unity and eco-environmental protection are highlighted. Priority is also given to addressing challenges in south Xinjiang, where develop-

ment lags behind the north.

As for the 2026 agenda, the government work report delivered to the regional people's congress by Erkin Tuniyaz, Deputy Secretary of the CPC Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee and Chairman of the regional government, outlined several tasks.

For instance, the autonomous region will step up its participation in the Eastern Data, Western Computing initiative, developing green intelligent computing centers and promoting better integration between computing capacity and energy supply. It will continue with its three-year development plan (2025-27) for the low-altitude economy, a rapidly emerging sector that includes drone delivery, aerial sightseeing and other businesses operating below 1,000 meters above ground. Plans are also underway for future-oriented sectors such as aerospace, information technology and carbon-neutral coal-based energy.

At the same time, the authorities will accelerate development in south Xinjiang. New projects with high job creation potential and broad spillover benefits are being planned, alongside efforts to coordinate development between south and north Xinjiang. South Xinjiang, which includes Kashi (Kashgar), Hetian (Hotan) and Aksu prefectures and Kezilesu (Kizilsu) Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture, is home to a large rural population and has been a key focus of poverty alleviation and the ensuing rural revitalization campaign.

The regional Two Sessions also underscored Xinjiang's message of openness. Diplomatic envoys, representatives of international organizations, international journalists and overseas experts working in the region were invited to observe the sessions. An English version of the government work report was provided for their convenience.

These annual meetings always reveal more than policy targets. They show how Xinjiang is trying to promote innovation, inclusiveness and economic opportunities at the same time. This year's emphasis on hi-tech industries, greener development and global outreach points to a region thinking about its future. Xinjiang's next chapter will be defined not just by growth, but by tangible improvements that people across the region can truly feel in their daily lives. **XT**

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Xinjiang: Beyond Imagination

(Photo by Wang Yajuan)

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SNAPSHOTS

COLD GOLD



With the 2026 Winter Olympics being held in Italy from February 6 to 22, Hemu, a village in Altay of northern Xinjiang, deserves special mention. In winter, snow blankets the entire village, making it a popular tourist destination.

Rich in ice and snow resources, it has a part in popularizing winter sports in China and creating a new driver for economic growth. The Jikepulin International Ski Resort in Hemu boasts one of the largest backcountry skiing areas in Asia.

Hemu is also renowned for its pristine Tuvan settlement. The Tuvans are a nomadic people who also reside in Russia and Mongolia. In Hemu, they live in traditional log cabins. The distinctive log cabins are partly buried in the earth to withstand the severe cold, and the gaps between the logs are filled with moss to keep the cabins warm.

The snow season here lasts up to 220 days. The clusters of wooden cottages covered with snow present a dreamy, fairy tale-like image.

(Text and photos by Wang Yajuan)

Soon after a snowfall, tourists operate a drone to capture this pristine, snow-covered sanctuary on November 15, 2025

SNAPSHOTS





The Jikepulin International Ski Resort in Hemu, which boasts one of the largest backcountry skiing areas in Asia (VCG)

SNAPSHOTS





1	2
4	3

1. Snow covers this creek in Hemu, as well as part of the bridge over it, on November 16, 2025

2. Surprisingly, the river running through Hemu remains unfrozen while snow covers the pines and wooden cottages on the bank

3. A roadside stall in Hemu sells skewers of candied hawthorn, a popular Chinese snack, on November 15, 2025

4. The distinctive log cabins of Hemu get the first snowfall of the year on November 16, 2025

FACTS & FIGURES

Achievements and Targets

(All growth rates are year on year)

(\$1≈7 yuan)

Indicator	2025 figure	2026 target
Regional GDP growth	5.5%	5.5-6%
Growth of leading industrial enterprises' value-added output	7.7%	Around 7.5%
Growth of fixed assets investment	7.2%	Around 8%
Growth of total retail sales of consumer goods	3.6%	Around 6%
Growth of exports and imports	19.9%	Around 10%
Growth of general public budget revenue	10.5%	Around 10%
Growth of urban residents' per-capita disposable income	5.3%	Around 7%
Growth of rural residents' per-capita disposable income	7%	Around 8%
New urban jobs	488,100	Over 470,000



Sprayers produced by an agricultural machinery company in Tiemenguan City are shipped out of the factory for export to Kazakhstan on January 8 (VCG)

24.325 million tons

Grain output in 2025, with per-hectare output at 8.29 tons, ranking first nationwide

6.165 million tons

Cotton output in 2025, accounting for 92.8 percent of the national total

323 million

The number of tourist trips to and within Xinjiang in 2025, up 8 percent year on year

More than 520 billion yuan

Total export and import value in 2025, with trade with Belt and Road Initiative partner countries up 14.7 percent year on year

(Source: *Regional government work report*)



Visitors pose with an ice sculpture in Balikun (Barkol) Kazak Autonomous County, Hami City, on January 10 (VCG)

IN FOCUS

OFF TO A GOOD START

Xinjiang's Two Sessions lay out the development path for five years and beyond *By Ma Xiaowen*

T

The regional Two Sessions have reviewed the economic and social development achievements made across Xinjiang during the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) period, mapped out a blueprint for work in the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) period, and clarified the development path forward.

Erkin Tuniyaz, Chairman of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional People's Government, presented the regional government work report on January 27.

Last year was of special significance, being the 70th anniversary of the founding of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region as well as the concluding year of the 14th Five-Year Plan period. The current year is also crucial as it marks the first year of the 15th Five-Year Plan period.

Against this backdrop, Xinjiang's Two Sessions—the Fourth Session of the 14th People's Congress of Xinjiang

Uygur Autonomous Region and the Fourth Session of the 13th Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)—were held.

The government work report delivered summarized the region's achievements in the past five years, including steady economic growth, stronger ethnic unity and improved living standards. It also laid a strategic roadmap for the region's high-quality development, with a focus on fostering new quality productive forces and improving people's wellbeing.

Over the past five years, the regional government has anchored its efforts around the five strategic positions defined by the Central Government for the region, which are: a westward opening-up gateway, a strategic fulcrum for the new development pattern, a national energy and resource security base, a high-quality agricultural and livestock product supply base, and a national geopolitical security barrier. To ensure a good start to the 15th Five-Year Plan and align its development with national strategies, Xinjiang will continue to center around these five core roles.

Solid foundation

The region's solid work over the past five years, particularly its efforts to improve people's life, has laid a foundation for a good start into the next five years.

“By stabilizing employment, advancing education, strengthening medical and health care, and bolstering social security, we have laid a solid foundation for delivering tangible benefits to the people with substantial financial resources,” Wang Kuiran, spokesperson and Secretary General of the regional people's government, told a news briefing.

He added that following a people-centered philosophy, over 70 percent of the fiscal expenditure of the region in the past five years has been allocated to improving living standards.



The Fourth Session of the 14th Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional People's Congress concludes in the Xinjiang People's Hall in Urumqi on January 31 (CHEN JIAJUN)

Xiapaketi Wushouer, spokesperson and Deputy Secretary General of the People's Government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, said over the past five years, livelihoods have been remarkably improved.

In terms of public services, the region has created more than 470,000 new urban jobs annually during the period. It has boosted high-quality and balanced development of compulsory education, and expanded the scale of vocational education.

Medical security has been strengthened. The initiative to streamline government services has cut the average processing time for official procedures by 61.5 percent and reduced the average number of trips required for such procedures by 83 percent.

In terms of living conditions, the coal-

Over 70 percent of the fiscal expenditure of the region in the past five years has been allocated to improving living standards

to-electricity heating projects have brought warmth to thousands of households, and the cross-Xinjiang natural gas pipeline has benefited more than 6 million people. Over 7,300 km of urban underground pipelines have been renovated, and upgrades and renovations have been carried out on urban and rural power grids as well as old urban communities.

In terms of quality of life, maternal and child care services and home-community elderly care services have been upgraded. Ten supportive policies have been introduced, benefiting 2.5 million people. Over 45 million visits were made to museums and memorial halls at all levels across the region.

In terms of the ecological environment, an over 3,000-km ecological barrier around▶



Members of the Hetian (Hotan) Prefecture delegation to the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional People's Congress hold a discussion in Urumqi on January 27 (CHEN JIAJUN)

the Taklimakan Desert has been completed, and desertified and sandy land reduced. Over 13 billion cubic meters of water has been diverted to the Tarim River Basin. In 2025, the proportion of days with good air quality in the Tianshan North Slope Urban Agglomeration reached 91 percent, and the average PM2.5 concentration met the national Grade II standard for five consecutive years.

Targets set

According to the government work report, in 2026, regional GDP is projected to grow by 5.5-6 percent, taking into account both changes in the external development environment and Xinjiang's conditions, balancing realistic development needs with long-term growth potential.

Key priorities for 2026 include fostering new quality productive forces through the digital economy, renewable energy and other emerging sectors, expanding domestic demand via targeted consumer incentives, advancing rural revitalization, and upgrading modern agriculture and animal husbandry.

To advance economic and social development during the 15th Five-Year Plan period, the Two Sessions outlined key

priorities. Xinjiang's development must achieve effective quality improvement and reasonable quantity growth, promote all-round human development and common prosperity, and better balance high-level security with high-quality development.

In the next five years, progress will be made in nine key areas: improving the national security system and capacity, advancing high-quality development, deepening comprehensive reforms, enhancing social civilization, improving people's quality of life, building a beautiful Xinjiang, addressing prominent development issues in south Xinjiang, and giving full play to the special role of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC).

The overall goal is maintaining social stability and lasting peace and security; the central task is forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. The region will balance effective quality improvement and reasonable quantity growth, promote all-round development and common prosperity, and make decisive progress in realizing basic socialist modernization in step with the rest of the country.

As the first year of the 15th Five-Year Plan period, Xinjiang has launched 10 practical livelihood projects for

2026. They cover employment support, elderly care, fertility and child-rearing assistance, primary and secondary student care, targeted disability support, housing improvement, safe consumption, medical and health service upgrading, sci-tech, culture and sports benefits for the public, and rural water supply and road network upgrades.

Xu Hongyun, Director of the Policy Research Office of the regional people's government, elaborated on the measures for the 15th Five-Year Plan period: Xinjiang will leverage five key areas—industrial optimization, innovation-driven development, digital transformation, further opening up to the west, and green development—to harness new quality productive forces for high-quality development.

In 2026, Xinjiang will accelerate the transformation and upgrade of industrial clusters, increase investment in science and technology, and further develop emerging sectors such as the digital economy. Large new energy bases will be constructed in desert and barren areas, the AI+ initiative will be launched and the computing power of regions with abundant electricity supply will be strengthened.

Xinjiang will pursue green development, converting the abundant wind and solar resources in its vast desert areas into tangible development potential.

Consumption is key

Measures have been rolled out to boost consumption.

Li Xuan, Deputy Director of the regional Department of Commerce, said the past year's trade-in subsidy policy (a strategy to stimulate consumption by encouraging consumers to replace outdated products) was a success, with subsidies exceeding 3.4 billion yuan (\$489 million). They drove 26.16 billion yuan (\$3.7 billion) in consumption, benefiting nearly 1.2 million people.

The policy has been continued this year. As of January 27, subsidies for vehicle trade-ins and the purchase of new digital and smart products had spurred 270 million yuan (\$38.9 million) in consumption.

Xinjiang will expand the scope of subsidies and create integrated consumption scenarios combining business, tourism, culture, sports and health. At least 1,000 consumption promotion events will be held throughout the year.

Besides, vehicle and home appliance sales will be developed in rural areas as well as regional consumption hubs to make consumption more accessible and beneficial.

Gul Abulim, Director of the regional Department of Culture and Tourism, said in 2026, Xinjiang will take targeted measures in four key areas—brand events, distinctive business formats, promotional cooperation and service guarantees—to elevate the influence of the “Xinjiang is a Good Place” brand and advance high-quality development of the cultural and tourism industry.

Wen Hua, Deputy Director of the Xinjiang Development ▶

Xinjiang's Two Sessions at a Glance

The 2026 Two Sessions of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region comprised the Fourth Session of the 14th People's Congress of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, held from January 27 to 31, and the Fourth Session of the 13th Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), held from January 26 to 30. About 1,000 deputies and members attended the pivotal annual political sessions that shaped Xinjiang's development agenda for 2026 and beyond.

The deputies to the regional People's Congress voted to adopt the list of chairpersons of special committees and the regulation on scientific and technological innovation. They also passed resolutions on the regional government work report, the 2025-26 development plans and budgets, as well as the work reports of the Standing Committee of the regional

People's Congress, the regional Higher People's Court and the regional People's Procuratorate.

The session also endorsed the review report by the Financial and Economic Committee of the regional People's Congress and formally adopted the outline of the 15th Five-Year Plan for the region on January 31.

The regional CPPCC session adopted resignation resolutions, election measures and key work resolutions, and added three vice chairpersons and one standing committee member by secret ballot.

During the Two Sessions, four briefings were organized to inform the media and the public. The first two were on the work of the regional CPPCC and People's Congress, while the latter two concentrated on economic and social development, as well as elaborating the regional government work report.



Amina Wulazihali (right) and Wang Xihua, members of the CPPCC Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee, take part in a joint interview with journalists in Urumqi on January 26
(MA XIAOWEN)

and Reform Commission, said the development of a national strategic base for energy and resource security will be accelerated, providing more support for national energy security.

Guidelines have been issued for agriculture: Grain production will be stabilized, cotton cultivation optimized and the fruit industry strengthened. Animal husbandry will be boosted, and distinctive industries developed.

Xie Yingzhou, Deputy Director of the regional Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, specified that in 2026, Xinjiang will take five major initiatives to upgrade the quality and efficiency of modern agriculture and animal husbandry. They include deepening technological empowerment and accelerating the development of agricultural brands.

A fragrant legacy

He Jiaolong, a former deputy to the 15th and 16th Zhaosu County People's Congress and a deputy to the People's Congress of Yili (Ili) Kazak Autonomous Prefecture, died in a horse-riding accident in January.

She was remembered at the closing meeting of the regional People's Congress on January 31, with Zumret Obul, head of the Standing Committee of the regional People's Congress, calling her work "a model for all deputies to learn from."

She first gained widespread attention in 2020 with her viral "horseback ride in snow" videos, which promoted tourism

in Zhaosu, a border county in Yili known as the "Hometown of Heavenly Horses" for its rich grassland culture and pristine alpine ecological environment.

She was a pioneer in rural revitalization and e-commerce development. As director of the Xinjiang Agricultural Product Brand Building, Production and Sales Service Center, she led charity livestreaming sessions, helped market local specialty products, and boosted agricultural product sales.

She also assisted enterprises in their digital and e-commerce transformation, making remarkable contributions to increasing local incomes, promoting ethnic unity and revitalizing grassroots economies.

In a public vote to name a new rose variety, "Jiaolong" won an overwhelming majority of votes. On January 23, the rose was officially named Jiaolong as a mark of respect for her dedication to public service and frontline work.

A delegation from Zhaosu traveled to Yunnan Province in the south to receive the rose saplings and on February 4, the county officially planted them with a "welcome" ceremony. This special rose is now a bond connecting Xinjiang and Yunnan, symbolizing passion, perseverance and the spirit of selfless dedication. **XT**

IN FOCUS

GREATER OPENNESS, GREATER OPPORTUNITY

Xinjiang's Two Sessions become a platform for international exchange *By Ma Xiaowen*

P

People's congresses and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) committees at national and local levels make up a substantial—and distinctive—part of China's system of governance. At their annual full sessions, collectively known as the Two Sessions, deputies to people's congresses make legally binding decisions on major issues, while CPPCC committee members provide consultative input on policy and societal concerns.

The Fourth Session of the 14th Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous

Regional People's Congress and the Fourth Session of the 13th CPPCC Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee took place in Urumqi on January 26-30 and January 27-31, respectively, attracting a strong contingent of overseas journalists and international observers.

Since 2024, foreign diplomatic envoys, representatives from international organizations and foreign-funded enterprises, overseas Chinese and individuals from China's Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions have been invited to sit in on Xinjiang's Two Sessions. International media outlets have also been welcomed to cover the events from then on.

Reporting on Xinjiang

Kim Eun-jung, Beijing correspondent of Republic of Korea (ROK) newspaper *Korea Economic Daily*, shared her observations with *Xinjiang Today* after attending one of the press conferences held during the Two Sessions. She said she had requested to cover Xinjiang's Two Sessions with the aim of exploring the plans and measures the regional government is undertaking to accelerate the region's growth.

With over a decade of journalism experience, Kim's attendance at this year's Two Sessions was her first trip to Xinjiang. She said gaining a close-up view of the region's development blueprint, and seeing the progress that has already been made gave her a better understanding of the process of development in the region, its future direction and the strong drivers pushing it forward.

Kim was impressed by how Xinjiang is accelerating its transition from a traditional industrial structure to one centered on ▶



Overseas Chinese representatives who sat in on this year's session of the CPPCC Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee pose for a photo in Urumqi on January 30 (MA XIAOWEN)

hi-tech industries. The region is proactively attracting foreign enterprises and integrating cutting-edge technologies such as AI and drones into its existing industries to boost productivity and efficiency, she added.

She also noted Xinjiang's firm commitment to further strengthening its rail, road and logistics links with Central Asia and Europe. These efforts are designed to cut transportation costs and improve market accessibility, with neighboring countries also set to gain similar competitive edges from the enhanced connectivity.

Kim said she believes increased exchange and business cooperation between her country and Xinjiang will help ROK enterprises boost their export competitiveness and shorten transportation times. To achieve this goal, she suggested both sides work toward the establishment of multiple cooperation platforms that will provide institutional guarantees for participation by ROK enterprises while pursuing mutual benefit.

By building mutual trust and mitigating local operational risks, a range of cooperation measures can be formulated to provide benefit to both ROK enterprises and Xinjiang, she stressed.

Mauro Ramos Pintos, China correspondent of Brazilian newspaper *Brasil de Fato*, covered Xinjiang's Two Sessions for the first time, with a particular focus on the region's rural revital-

ization initiatives. His visit to a goji berry farm in Xinjiang last year gave him a direct understanding of the region's rural development.

He told Xinjiang's news portal Tianshan.net that he hoped to gather firsthand and authentic information at the Two Sessions and present the real Xinjiang to Brazilian audiences. He also looked forward to interviewing regional people's congress deputies in related fields to gain an in-depth understanding of Xinjiang's plans and practices in rural revitalization and ecological governance.

"It is a highly significant experience for me, especially as audiences in South America are increasingly interested in China's political system," he said. "Therefore, a key focus of our coverage in China is socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era, and it is crucial to understand the roles of CPPCC committees and people's congresses at different levels."

Exploring Xinjiang's opportunities

Jan-Jacob Alblas, General Manager of Dutch company Alblas International Transport b.v., which has a subsidiary in Xinjiang, told Tianshan.net that he has been making regular trips to Xinjiang to oversee his company's operations here since 2009.

"It's my first time attending this event, and it's fascinating

to learn more about China's political system and its institutional arrangements," he said. "Xinjiang occupies a strategic position as a bridge between the East and the West. I am particularly interested in the region's international development prospects and how our logistics company can better serve the market here in the future. Based in Europe, our company has a long history in international logistics. Xinjiang is a vital hub for Silk Road transportation links connecting China and Europe, and I have witnessed the region becoming increasingly open to international development and trade in recent years—this presents excellent future opportunities."

Altinay Yeszhanova, Manager of the Development Department at Kazakhstan's Maxim Co. Ltd., told Tianshan.net that during the Two Sessions, she participated in a meaningful high-level event focused on deepening China-Kazakhstan cooperation. She said she is inspired by China's remarkable development journey, and hopes Kazakhstan can continue to thrive and grow as China has.

On January 30, five overseas Chinese representatives shared their insights with media in Urumqi, after sitting in on the session of the CPPCC Xinjiang Autonomous Regional Committee. They spoke highly of Xinjiang's rapid economic development, expressing great hopes for greater cooperation with the region.

"The government work report emphasized that Xinjiang has firmly integrated itself into cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and enterprises have felt the tangible benefits of this integration deeply. The streamlined 'same-day entry and exit' customs clearance service at ports in Kashi (Kashgar), Tacheng and other places has significantly accelerated cargo turnover efficiency," said Manat Ibrayim, Deputy Director of the Kyrgyzstan Overseas Chinese Service Center and Chairman of MNT Investment Co. Ltd. The BRI, proposed by China in 2013, aims to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes.

As Xinjiang has become more open, Manat's company has achieved steady business growth and expanded trade in Kashi. He

"The streamlined 'same-day entry and exit' customs clearance service at ports in Kashi (Kashgar), Tacheng and other places has significantly accelerated cargo turnover efficiency."

—Manat Ibrayim, Deputy Director of the Kyrgyzstan Overseas Chinese Service Center

called for broader project cooperation between China and Kyrgyzstan. With the in-depth advancement of Belt and Road cooperation, more and more Chinese-funded enterprises are going global. He said he will play a greater role in providing consulting services and support for overseas Chinese-funded enterprises.

Tao Ling, Vice President of the Tajikistan Overseas Chinese Federation and General Manager of Dushanbe China Taste Co. Ltd., said, "This visit is full of pleasant surprises. From world-class ski resorts to visiting New Cicon Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. and TBEA Co. Ltd., I saw that Xinjiang's industries have fully aligned with international standards."

With long-term experience in trade in Tajikistan, Tao has a clear understanding of the local market's demand for high-quality enterprises and products from Xinjiang. He suggested establishing a special mechanism between Xinjiang and Tajikistan to provide targeted services for enterprises from both sides and support more Xinjiang enterprises in expanding their global footprint.

Feng Zhipeng is chairman of Jingu Agricultural Complex Co. Ltd. in Tajikistan. He said he will share his experiences and observations in Xinjiang with people from all walks of life in Tajikistan, promote industrial matching between the two sides and contribute to bilateral cooperation in new energy, modern agriculture, cultural tourism and other fields.

"I was the first to introduce Uygur medicine to the Uzbekistan market," said Usman Nigmat, Director of the Uzbekistan NDC-Medic Clinic and the Uzbekistan-China Trade Association. "Today, Uygur medicinal products such as *zokamu* granules (an analgesic) are available in 650 pharmacies across 12 regions of the country and have been widely recognized by local residents."

As a director of the Uzbekistan-China Trade Association, Usman has promoted cooperation between Tashkent in Uzbekistan and a seedling base in Hutubi County, Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture in Xinjiang. He said he will continue to act as a bridge between the two sides, inviting more Xinjiang enterprises, particularly pharmaceutical companies, to invest in Uzbekistan.

Isharid Jumadil, General Manager of Kazakhstan's JLY DALA Service Co. Ltd., praised Xinjiang's achievements in smart agriculture and energy technology. She said she will introduce Xinjiang's mature agricultural and energy technologies and management experience to Kazakhstan and translate them into concrete cooperation projects. This will not only boost local development in Kazakhstan but also build a broader platform for Xinjiang enterprises to expand their international presence, she added. **XI**

IN FOCUS

MEET XINJIANG'S DELEGATES

Every year, usually in March, the Great Hall of the People in Beijing hosts meetings of the National People's Congress and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, China's top legislative and governmental advisory bodies, respectively. Collectively known as the Two Sessions, these meetings make and amend laws, set targets for the coming year, and collect and review government work reports, data and feedback on governance from around the country. Ahead of these national meetings, local Two Sessions meetings are held at township, county, city, regional and provincial levels, reviewing local economic and social development work, setting new targets, and passing reports and feedback upward.

This year's meeting of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional People's Congress, held in Urumqi from January 27 to 31, gathered some 500 representatives, known as deputies, from around the region. The self-introductory speeches chosen below offer insights into life in Xinjiang, the diversity of experiences among deputies to local people's congresses, and also their common desire to improve the communities they represent.



Miriban Kadiri, a lawyer at Xinjiang Zhuancai Law Firm

As a lawyer with 15 years of practice, I have witnessed the remarkable evolution of the rule of law in this region. To put it simply, I see it as a meaningful transition—from governance to good governance.

The law ensures equality, regardless of ethnicity, language, or belief. The use of the spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities in judicial activities also demonstrates commitment to the protection of rights and interests. (Xinjiang is one of the provincial-level administrative regions with the most ethnic groups in China—*Ed.*)

Courts in Xinjiang provide interpretation services, and legal documents are delivered in languages understood by the parties involved, ensuring that every individual, regardless of the language they speak, can fully comprehend and participate in judicial proceedings. This, in itself, embodies the rule of law and



Deputies speak to the media following the opening of this year's session of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional People's Congress in Urumqi on January 27 (CHEN JIAJUN)

ethnic equality.

China is implementing a nationwide initiative to improve public legal services, further strengthening the work of grassroots legal advisors and implementing the “one village (or one urban community), one legal advisor” system, which aims to provide professional, high-quality, and accessible legal services for grassroots organizations and residents in handling legal matters. Currently, over 600,000 villages (and urban communities) across the country have established legal advisor systems, with approximately 200,000 lawyers and primary-level legal service providers par-

The coverage of the grassroots-level legal service network in Xinjiang has continued to expand

ticipating in this effort.

The coverage of the grassroots-level legal service network in Xinjiang has continued to expand. My firm visits villages and communities regularly to provide free consultations and participate in mediation. In a pastoral village I serve, transportation remains a problem. We take advantage of gatherings among herders to hold lectures in yurts, explaining legal risks related to pastureland contracts, livestock transactions and private lending in language they understand.

I have also organized campaigns to raise awareness of the law with colleagues at my ▶

law firm. Through providing legal consultations, answering questions, and drafting legal documents, we have addressed the concerns of villagers and enhanced their awareness of protecting their rights.

In resolving civil disputes, lawyers play a prominent role in mediation. Many family conflicts, disputes in neighborhoods, and small-scale debt issues are resolved through neutral and professional mediation, avoiding court proceedings. This not only conserves judicial resources but also maintains harmony within grassroots-level communities.

Li Wenying, Deputy Director of Qiuci Academy of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region



I started my career as an archaeological team member and then became a team leader. Over the years, I have participated in or led archaeological surveys and excavations at key sites such as the Kizil Caves, the Jiaohe Ruins, and the Loulan Ancient City Ruins in Xinjiang. A total of 12 of these projects have been listed among China's annual top 10 archaeological discoveries.

Archaeological findings reveal the origin and development trajectory of Chinese civilization, its splendid achievements, and its significant contributions to world civilization. This important discourse provides clear direction for my work as a deputy, particularly in the in-depth implementation of major projects under the "Archaeological China" initiative in Xinjiang. My team has collaborated with more than 10 institutions, including Peking University and the National Center for Archaeology, and conducted nearly 80 excavations at 24 key sites in the region.

Recent discoveries in Xinjiang are offering a clearer picture of Tang Dynasty (618-907) frontier life. Over 800 wooden slips inscribed with Chinese characters were found in Yuli County, helping to recreate the daily lives of garrison soldiers. Meanwhile, in Kuche (Kuqa), Aksu, the tomb of a deputy commander of the Grand Anxi Frontier Command has been unearthed, providing significant new data for research into the Tang military establishment and its activities along the western frontier.

Our work extends beyond research to actively reviving cultural heritage. For instance, we have established the Silk Road and Great Wall Culture Museum in Yuli (2023) and the Qiuci Wei-Jin Period Ancient Tomb Site Museum in Kuche (2024), bringing millennia of regional history directly to local communities.

To enrich these institutions, we have systematically transferred over 10,000 unearthed artifacts to museums for public display. This initiative has resonated widely, with museums across the region now attracting over 20 million annual visitors. Ultimately, these efforts have breathed new life into the relics themselves, the broader heritage of the region, and the historical narratives preserved in ancient texts.

Ma Xinyan, Chairman of Xinjiang Jinpailier Food Co.



As a representative from the private sector, I have worked in the food industry for 33 years. Over that time, I have turned a small shop into a large-scale food production company. Our business now encompasses processing plants, bakery chains, cold chain logistics enterprises, and restaurants serving Western dishes, with products sold across stores in Urumqi

and nearly 100 cities nationwide.

I have witnessed the rising demand for quality products and quality of life in Xinjiang, and seen the leap in the living standards of people of all ethnic groups here—from having enough to eat to eating well.

The history of Xinjiang’s food and beverage industry is a story of progress driven by the whole country’s reform and opening-up policy introduced in the 1970s. Before the 1970s, food supply relied on allocated quotas, resulting in limited variety of products on people’s dining tables. After the launch of the reform and opening-up policy, individual food and beverage businesses mushroomed, and supply chains gradually improved.

Today, the central kitchen model and food supply chains are reshaping industrial landscape, enabling Xinjiang’s specialty foods to reach people across the country through standardized production.

Both my parents and grandparents are skilled at making Xinjiang-style pastries. To preserve the flavors of the pastries, I opened my first 80-square-meter cake shop in 1992 in Urumqi. I often worked from 6 a.m. to midnight, earning the trust of my first customers with freshly baked bread and pastries.

To promote Xinjiang’s distinctive cuisine, I invested in a two-hectare piece of land to build a factory spanning over 10,000 square meters. Equipped with automated production lines, the facility now achieves a daily output more than 10 times that of previous years. Today, the products are distributed nationwide via cold chain logistics, allowing more consumers to savor the unique flavor of Xinjiang-style rye bread.

As a deputy to the National People’s Congress, I have taken the initiative in exploring new paths for foreign trade based on my practical experience in this industry. We have formulated a specialized quality standard for export products, promoted the establishment of Xinjiang bakery food export alliance and bolstered the confidence of small and medium-sized businesses to jointly go global.

Today, the products are distributed nationwide via cold chain logistics, allowing more consumers to savor the unique flavor of Xinjiang-style rye bread

In recent years, we have not only established production process standards for our rye bread, enabling traditional techniques to achieve scalable industrial production, but also remained committed to preserving cultural heritage. In 2018, our nut rye bread making technique was listed as an intangible cultural heritage at the county level. While retaining the essence of traditional yeast fermentation techniques, we innovatively incorporated ingredients such as chickpeas, walnuts, and raisins—all sourced from Xinjiang—to develop 12 new flavors.

Liu Zhuangzhuang, a welding technician with Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC)



Born and raised in Xinjiang, I am a third-generation member of the XPCC. (Since its establishment in 1954, the XPCC has made contributions to the development of Xinjiang by supporting agricultural and industrial development, maintaining social stability, and strengthening national border defense—*Ed.*) When I first entered the factory, I was a trainee who couldn’t even hold a welding torch steadily. It was the skilled mentors who taught me step by step.

Today, I have grown to become a welding expert. Our company even established an innovation studio named after me to honor my contributions as a model worker. I have trained over 100 intermediate and senior welders, providing solid support for the company’s future technical workforce. **XT**

IN FOCUS

THE AMPLIFIERS

Political advisors ensure grassroots voices are heard and reflected in policies *By Zhang Xinyang*

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The Xinjiang Two Sessions—the Fourth Session of the 14th Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional People’s Congress and the Fourth Session of the 13th Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)—which were held in Urumqi last month, were windows into the whole-process people’s democracy.

A concept introduced in 2019, the whole-process people’s democracy ensures public participation throughout the entire process of governance, covering all sectors of society and all aspects of the democratic process.

From herders to entrepreneurs, farmers to artists, the concerns of people across

Xinjiang’s diverse ethnic tapestry have been heard, addressed through formal procedures, and translated into policy blueprints for sustaining social stability and enduring peace.

When politics meets the soil

Gulibaiheremu Maimaiti, a senior agronomist at the Shache County Agricultural Technology Promotion Center in Kashi (Kashgar) Prefecture, shoulders dual responsibility. As a member of the Xinjiang CPPCC committee, she carries villagers’ hopes alongside her agricultural toolkit.

“I always bear in mind the responsibility of this dual identity: to use my professional skills to safeguard crop growth, and to fulfill my duty as a political advisor to voice the concerns and suggestions of people at the grassroots,” she said. “Every time I go to a greenhouse or a wheat field, people open their hearts, talking to me about the harvest, their ideas and hopes. I take note of all these simple, heartfelt words, incorporate them into my suggestions, and bring them to the annual sessions.”

CPPCC members are nominated across professions, ethnicities and faiths to ensure no perspective goes unheard.

Political advisors use their positions and professional strengths to play exemplary roles in Xinjiang. Members of the CPPCC regional committee who are also entrepreneurs have



created jobs for local residents through investment and businesses. Those from technical fields impart skills, train local talent and enhance people's capacity for self-development. Those who are educators are committed to improving local teaching quality and nurturing more outstanding students. Medical professionals work to elevate primary-level healthcare and safeguard public health. Those who are village leaders work at the forefront of rural revitalization, leading communities in developing production and improving livelihoods. The members have become a

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significant force in advancing Xinjiang's development.

"I will continue to walk between fields and sit among the people. As a political advisor from the agriculture sector, I will try to contribute to rural revitalization with both technology and my advisory role," Gulibaiheremu said.

The road to progress

Projects like the Urumqi-Yuli Expressway enhance Xinjiang's interconnectedness. Open to traffic in late 2025, the expressway through ▶



Gulibaiheremu Maimaiti (third right), a member of the CPPCC Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee, visits a farmer's home in Shache County, Kashi (Kashgar) Prefecture. Gulibaiheremu is a senior agronomist at the Shache County Agricultural Technology Promotion Center (COURTESY PHOTO)

the Tianshan Mountains that bisect Xinjiang into northern and southern parts, brings the two parts closer.

For Wuerna, a member of the regional CPPCC committee and head of the vocal music team at the Song and Dance Troupe of Bayingolin Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture, the highway is a lifeline.

In the early 1980s, she traveled from Kuerle in southeastern Xinjiang to Urumqi for a competition. “The roads were gravel then. We had to go around the Tianshan Mountains, navigating nearly 100 km of rugged mountain roads. Kuerle had only one proper road back then. We traveled on horses to perform in villages, often spending half a day on the journey to perform for the other half,” she recalled.

“Now it’s three hours from Kuerle to Urumqi. Driving through the Tianshan Shengli Tunnel, I saw with my own eyes that crossing the Tianshan Mountains in just 20 minutes was not a dream,” she said.

Thanks to the increasingly convenient transportation, the number of visitors to the scenic areas in Bayingolin is steadily rising. Freshly picked local red dates can reach their markets on the same day, making them more valuable. Recently, a critically ill child from Kuerle was transported swiftly to Urumqi in under three hours to receive emergency treatment. These changes make industries thrive and people more prosperous, Wuerna added.

A fruitful year

The past year was a fruitful one for the regional committee of the CPPCC, in which it held nearly three dozen consultation activities, conducted over 50 inspection tours and research projects, and produced 47 key consultation outcomes.

It also received and responded to 1,120 suggestions, and formally accepted and addressed 514. Various special committees organized members to investigate real-world conditions and come up with suggestions for improvement.

The committee also supported vari-



Wuerna, a member of the CPPCC Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee and head of the vocal music team at the Song and Dance Troupe of Bayingolin Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture, fields questions from the media during the Fourth Session of the 13th CPPCC Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee in Urumqi on January 26 (COURTESY PHOTO)

ous political parties, organizations and prominent individuals without party affiliation to express their opinions and play their roles within it. These groups submitted more than 300 suggestions, provided 810 reports on social conditions and public opinion, and gave over 130 speeches at the conference. Their work helped address pressing public concerns, promoting the dissemination of policies, safeguarding public interests and fostering social harmony.

Behind these numbers are advisors like Yue Feng, who focus on shaping the future. Yue is Vice President of the Xinjiang Internet Society. As a veteran Internet industry professional, he focuses on healthy development in emerging



Yue Feng, a member of the CPPCC regional committee and Vice President of the Xinjiang Internet Society, at the opening ceremony of the Fourth Session of the 13th CPPCC Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee in Urumqi on January 26 (COURTESY PHOTO)

sectors and promotes democratic supervision.

He calls the Internet a crucial front for cultivating morality and passing on culture. One event stands out from his tenure. In 2018, he called for establishing a Xinjiang new media industry association based on the regional Internet landscape at the time. This proposal led to the establishment of the Xinjiang Internet Society in 2021, which fosters sustainable development of the local Internet industry.

Last year, he suggested setting up a Xinjiang Internet Development Foundation to mobilize social funds for the industry's sustained growth. This year, he came up with implementation details: fostering a favorable environment for AI use in

Xinjiang, promoting further AI application and using AI for cultural enrichment.

"I hope that through my efforts I can leverage the Internet to share the stories of Xinjiang well, contributing my part to Xinjiang's development in the new era," Yue said. **XI**