

FEATURES: EVOLVING E-COMMERCE P.36 | CULTURE: METAHUMANS, MEGAMARKETING P.44

BEIJING REVIEW

VOL.65 NO.47 NOVEMBER 24, 2022

WWW.BJREVIEW.COM



ROAD TO RECOVERY

China pledges coordinated action for global revitalization

RMB6.00
USD1.70
AUD3.00
GBP1.20
CAD2.60
CHF2.60
JPY188

ISSN 1000-9140



邮发代号2-922 · 国内统一连续出版物号: CN11-1576/G2

Follow
CICCG Americas

And get in on the conversation



BeijingReview



BeijingReview



@BeijingReview



China Hoy



China Hoje



CONTENTS

EDITOR'S DESK

2 Challenging Challenges

THIS WEEK

COVER STORY

12 Declaration of Interdependence

G20 committed to realizing coordinated recovery efforts

16 Looking to the Future

Xi-Biden meeting an important first step

18 Sails to Rails

China-Indonesia friendship remains right on track

Cover Photo: Chinese President Xi Jinping makes his way into the venue of the 17th Summit of the Group of 20 in Bali, Indonesia, on November 15 (XINHUA)

©2022 Beijing Review, all rights reserved.

OPINION

22 The COP27 and Beyond

Discussing opportunities to accelerate progress toward net zero

24 The Moral Alternative

A global development model that benefits all

26 'Seizing Power'

Photovoltaic products from Xinjiang pile up in U.S. ports

FEATURES

28 Unwise Controls

U.S. containment strategy hurts American business

30 Targeted Responses

Striking a balance on COVID-19 control

32 Internet Connection

Building a shared online future

36 In Transition

Trends in online retail

38 Moving Pictures

The growth of animation in China

40 Pouring Infusion

Blending business acumen with local ingredients

CULTURE

44 Virtual Reality or Insanity?

Today's influencers are made, not born

46 Room With a View

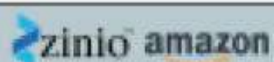
A look at the ancient Chinese intellectual's sanctuary: the study

FORUM

48 The Fine Line Between Inspiration and Infringement



www.bjreview.com



Follow us on



YouTube

BREAKING NEWS » SCAN ME » Using a QR code reader



Please recycle



北京周报

BEIJING REVIEW

A News Weekly Magazine
Published Since 1958

President: Li Yafang
Editor in Chief: Li Jianguo
Associate President: Yan Ying
Associate Editor in Chief: Liu Yunyun

Executive Editor: Yan Wei
Associate Executive Editor: Ding Ying
Production Director: Yao Bin
Editor: Wang Hairong
Researcher: Lan Xinzheng
Editorial Consultants: Elsbeth van Paridon, G.P. Wilson
Reporters: Ji Jing, Kang Caiqi, Li Qing, Li Wenhan, Li Xiaoyang, Liang Xiao, Lu Yan, Ma Miaomiao, Pan Xiaoqiao, Peng Jiawei, Tang Yuankai, Tao Xing, Tao Zihui, Wang Jun, Wang Ruohan, Yuan Yuan, Zhang Shasha
Visual Director: Pamela Tobey
Photo Editor: Wang Xiang
Photographer: Wei Yao
Art: Li Shigong
Design Director: Wang Yajuan
Chief Designer: Cui Xiaodong
Designer: Zhao Boyu
Proofreader: Ma Xin

Editorial Administrator: Zeng Wenhui
Planning Director: Xu Bei
Deputy Planning Director: Li Nan
World News Deputy Director: Li Fangfang
Director of Digital Media: Yu Shujun
Director of Strategic Research: Zan Jifang

Administration: Lu Ling
International Cooperation: Sun Xuan
Legal Counsel: Yue Cheng

North America Bureau (New York City)

Chief: Yu Shujun
Executive Assistant: Zhao Wei
Tel/Fax: 1-201-792-0334
E-mail: yushujun@cicgamericas.com

Latin America Bureau (Mexico City)

Chief: Lin Yeqing
Tel: 52-55-55127271
Fax: 52-55-55332027
E-mail: chinahoyomx@gmail.com

Peru Office (Lima)

Chief: Meng Kexin
Tel: 0051-959212702
E-mail: revistachinaperu@gmail.com

General Editorial Office

Tel: 86-10-68996252
Fax: 86-10-68326628

Editorial Desk

Tel: 86-10-68996250

Partnerships

Tel: 86-10-68995807

E-mail: yecong@cicgamericas.com

Distribution

Tel: 86-10-68310644

E-mail: circulation@cicgamericas.com

Published every Thursday by
CICG Center for Americas, 24 Baiwanzhuang Lu,
Beijing 100037, China

Overseas Distributor: China International Book Trading

Corporation (Guoji Shudian), P. O. BOX 399,
Beijing 100044, China

Tel: 86-10-68413849, 1-416-497-8096 (Canada)

Fax: 86-10-68412166

E-mail: fp@mail.cibtc.com.cn

Website: <http://www.cibtc.com>

General Distributor for Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan:

Peace Book Co. Ltd.

17/FI, Paramount Bldg, 12 Ka Yip St, Chai Wan, HK

Tel: 852-28046687 **Fax:** 852-28046409

Beijing Review (ISSN 1000-9140 USPS 2812) is distributed weekly in the United States for US\$64.00 per year by Cypress Books, 360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48, South San Francisco, CA 94080 News Postage Paid at South San Francisco, CA 94080 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Beijing Review*, Cypress Books, 360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48, South San Francisco, CA 94080

Challenging Challenges

Themed Recover Together, Recover Stronger, the 17th Group of 20 (G20) Summit—taking place in Bali, Indonesia, on November 15-16—intended to promote strong and inclusive economic recovery among members. Priority went to issues related to global health architecture, digital transformation and sustainable energy transition.

At the summit, President Xi Jinping elaborated on China's viewpoints and offered Chinese wisdom for the international community to tide over difficulties and create a better future together. He said all G20 members, as major international and regional players, should take their inherent responsibility and lead by example to promote the development of all nations. A China marching toward modernization will generate more opportunities for the world and make greater contributions to human progress.

In his speech, Xi once again expounded on the China-proposed Global Development Initiative (GDI) and Global Security Initiative (GSI). The GDI aims to meet the long-term objectives and immediate needs of the world's common development, fostering international consensus on how to promote development, cultivating new drivers for global growth,

and facilitating the progress of all countries.

The GSI defends the spirit of the UN Charter, acts on the principle of indivisible security, upholds the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, advocates the resolution of conflict through negotiation and settlement of disputes through consultation, and supports all efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of crises.

The meeting between the presidents of China and the U.S. on November 14, in the lead-up to the summit, was one of the highlights. This was the first in-person meeting between the two leaders since Joe Biden took office some 22 months ago. Their talks effectively covered the most important aspects of bilateral and international relations.

Under the current circumstances, China and the U.S. have more, not fewer, common interests, Xi said, adding it is in the two countries' mutual and fundamental interest to prevent conflict and confrontation and achieve peaceful coexistence.

Without a sense of synergy between the world's top two economies, global recovery from the pandemic-induced difficulties will be hard to achieve. Safeguarding a peaceful and healthy planet for future generations requires both sides to step up to the plate and exert joint efforts. **BR**



WRITE TO US

Send an e-mail: editorsoffice@cicgamericas.com

Please provide your name and address along with your submissions. Submissions may be edited.

CHINA.....RMB6.00 U.S.A.....USD1.70
AUSTRALIA.....AUD3.00 UK.....GBP1.20
CANADA.....CAD2.60 SWITZERLAND.....CHF2.60
JAPAN.....JPY188 EUROPE.....EUR1.90
TURKEY.....YTL5.00 HK.....HKD9.30 NEPAL.....RS40

主管单位: 中国外文出版发行事业局

主办单位: 中国外文局美洲传播中心(北京日报社)

地址: 北京市西城区百万庄大街24号 邮编: 100037

编委会: 李雅芳 李建国 闫颖 杨琪 刘云云 曾文卉

主任: 李雅芳

总编室电话: (010) 68996252 发行部电话: (010) 68310644

印刷: 北京华联印刷有限公司

北京周报 英文版2022年 第47期 ISSN 1000-9140

国内统一连续出版物号: CN11-1576/G2 邮发代号: 2-922

广告许可证0171号 北京市期刊登记证第733号

国内零售价: 人民币6.00元



STATELY SPLENDOR

The Deshou Palace Museum in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, will open to the public in late November.

The Deshou Palace, or the Palace of Morality and Longevity, was once home to Emperor Gaozong and his successor, Emperor Xiaozong, during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279). It was almost entirely destroyed over the centuries. In 2001, archaeologists began excavating the ruins. Construction of the museum started in December 2020. Modern technologies are now in place to present the palace in a dynamic way.



Hi-Tech Fair

A robot makes coffee at the 24th China Hi-Tech Fair in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, on November 15. The five-day fair, which opened that day, attracted more than 5,600 exhibitors from 41 countries and regions.

Emergency Rescue Team

Tibet Autonomous Region has established its first airborne rescue team for emergency response, equipped with two helicopters.

The 20-member team, co-established by the administration of emergency management in the city of Nyingchi and the city's forest fire brigade, will mainly be responsible for rescue and relief work after accidents and natural disasters in Nyingchi, according to the brigade, Xinhua News Agency reported on November 17.

Located in the southeast part of Tibet, Nyingchi has lush forests and difficult terrain, posing a great threat to firefighting work during forest fires.

The two helicopters give the team great mobility in emergency response and rescue work, Pu Tongmeng, captain of the team, said.

On November 12, the team

carried out an airborne drill to train in firefighting, delivery of rescuers, transfer of evacuees and aerial patrol.

Expanding Jurisdiction

The Supreme People's Court (SPC) has issued a new regulation to expand the jurisdiction of primary courts over the first instance of civil and commercial cases involving foreign entities, Xinhua reported on November 16.

Currently, only a limited number of primary and intermediate courts are authorized to hear such first-instance cases.

Under the new rule that will come into effect on January 1, 2023, primary people's courts shall have jurisdiction over the first instance of civil and commercial cases involving foreign entities.

Meanwhile, intermediate people's courts shall have jurisdiction over major first-instance cases

involving high-value objects in dispute, complicated details, or a substantial number of parties, according to the regulation.

The adjustment was made in response to changes in the number, type and distribution of such cases, to improve the quality and efficiency of foreign-related judicial services and to contribute to the country's high-standard opening up, an SPC official said.

Natural Gas Supply

China can generally guarantee the natural gas supply for winter heating demands this year despite a complex international market situation, an official with the country's top economic planner said on November 16.

Timely preparation and joint efforts have been made to ensure enough natural gas supply, Meng Wei, a spokesperson with the National Development and Reform Commission, told a press conference.

The commission will urge localities to stay true to related price policies to maintain relatively stable natural gas prices for households, Meng said.

Support will go to upstream firms to increase natural gas production and stocks to help tide over heating peaks during winter.

From January to October, the country produced 178.5 billion cubic meters of natural gas, up 6 percent year on year.

Meng added that tight supplies of natural gas might happen during some peak periods or in some regions amid lingering cold waves.

The country will make use of its daily natural gas supply management system to address pop-up shortages and keep residents warm in winter, Meng said.

Victorious Return

A Chinese naval fleet returned to the port city of Zhoushan in Zhejiang Province on November 15, after completing its mission escorting civilian vessels in the Gulf of Aden and the waters off Somalia.

The 41st fleet of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy, comprising the missile destroyer *Suzhou*, the missile frigate *Nantong* and the supply ship *Chaohu*, escorted 38 Chinese and foreign ships during the mission. The fleet set sail from Zhoushan on May 18.

The escort squad traveled nearly 90,000 nautical miles during its 182-day voyage without entering a port for rest.

China began dispatching naval ships to carry out vessel protection operations in the Gulf of Aden and the waters off Somalia in 2008.

Bolstering Employment

China is rolling out multiple measures to help the 11.58 million graduates that will leave college to enter the workforce or start their own businesses in 2023.

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security jointly hosted an online video conference on November 15 to further improve employment promotion policies and make arrangements to help graduates find jobs or start businesses next year.

China's average surveyed urban unemployment rate stood at 5.6 percent in the first 10 months of the year, official data showed.

College graduates are a key target of China's employment-first policy. A series of pro-employment campaigns will be launched to incentivize firms to hire graduates.

Efforts are also required to promote a nationwide online recruiting platform, starting up businesses, flexible employment and military recruitment of college students.

Guidance should be provided for graduates to choose their careers and positions based on the employment situation at the time, the meeting noted, and support should go to those with difficulties in securing employment.

The conference also requires relevant departments to streamline employment procedures, strengthen statistical monitoring of the employment of new graduates, and improve the awareness of graduates to safeguard their rights.

Largest All-Terrain Crane

The world's largest all-terrain crane completed its first lift at an onshore wind power project in Shandong Province on November 14, according to its developer—Chinese machinery giant Xuzhou Construction Machinery Group (XCMG).

Named XCA2600, the crane hoisted a weight of 171 tons to a height of 160 meters at the 50-MW wind power project site.

According to XCMG, the crane can lift a maximum weight of 173 tons to a maximum height of 160 meters. This capacity can greatly improve hoisting efficiency of super-large wind turbine installation projects.

XCMG, headquartered in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province, is a multinational heavy machinery manufacturing company which makes products that are exported to more than 191 countries and regions worldwide.

City of Olympic Champions

The Chinese Olympic Committee awarded the City of Olympic Champions title to Qitaihe in Heilongjiang Province on November 11.

Qitaihe has cultivated more



Chinese Writing Museum

Visitors inspect the characters of an ancient Chinese script inside an exhibition hall of the second phase of the National Museum of Chinese Writing in Anyang, Henan Province, on November 16, the day the second phase opened to the public.

than 10 Winter Olympic and world champions, including short track speed skaters Yang Yang, Wang Meng, Sun Linlin and Fan Kexin.

Athletes from the city have won seven gold medals in the Winter Olympics, 177 golds in world-level competitions, and 535 golds in national-level competitions.

At the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, Fan and her teammates stormed to a thrilling victory, claiming the first gold for China in this year's Games.

The city has been stepping up efforts to train winter sports athletes

in recent years by building schools that provide short track speed skating training, setting up a training base for the provincial sports team, as well as organizing ice and snow sports events.

The city currently has 20 short track speed skating teams, 16 coaches, and more than 600 athletes. Across six major sports, such as speed skating, ski jumping, and snowboarding, more than 300 athletes have been recruited by the national and provincial teams.

It is also the city with the most abundant reserve of talent for short track speed skating in the country.



Town-Turned-Park

Residents take a walk at a park in Hongqiao District, Tianjin on November 16. The park, transformed from a rundown area, has become an ideal venue for nearby residents to exercise.

Industrial Output

Value-added industrial output, an important economic indicator, went up 5 percent year on year in October, 0.2 percentage points higher than that of the third quarter, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics.

Despite multiple challenges, such as the complex international situation and domestic COVID-19 resurgences, the Chinese economy has sustained a steady trend of recovery in the month as the country stepped up efforts to implement pro-growth policies, the bureau said.

Output of the mining industry increased 4 percent, while that of the manufacturing sector rose 5.2 percent, the data showed.

In particular, the hi-tech manufacturing sector posted strong growth momentum, with its output jumping 10.6 percent, 1.3 percentage points higher than in September.

The output of auto manufacturing logged a sharp increase of

18.7 percent, while that of the electrical machinery and equipment manufacturing sector expanded 16.3 percent year on year.

In a breakdown by ownership, state-owned enterprises saw a 4.4-percent increase in output, while the private sector's output grew 3.1 percent.

Industrial output is used to measure the activity of large enterprises, each with an annual main business turnover of at least 20 million yuan (\$2.84 million).

In the first 10 months, China's industrial output rose 4 percent year on year, 0.1 percentage points higher than in the first three quarters, the data showed.

Auto Exports

China's automobile exports hit a record high in October, data from the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers showed.

The country exported 337,000 motor vehicles, surging 46 percent year on year. The figure also represented a 12.3-percent increase

over the number registered in September, the association said.

Some 279,000 passenger cars were sold overseas in the month, up 40.7 percent year on year and 11.6 percent month on month.

The rapid expansion of new-energy vehicles (NEVs) was a highlight of China's auto exports.

In October, 109,000 NEV units were exported, jumping 81.2 percent year on year. NEV exports almost doubled year on year in the first 10 months of this year to 499,000 units.

In the January-October period, China's auto exports neared 2.46 million units, rising 54.1 percent from the previous year, the data also showed.

Forex Settlement Surplus

China's banks saw a net foreign exchange (forex) settlement surplus of \$106.6 billion in the first 10 months of this year, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) said.

Forex purchases by banks stood at \$2.1759 trillion, while sales reached more than \$2.06 trillion, SAFE data showed.

In October, the country's cross-border capital flows remained within a reasonable range, with the net inflows under trade in goods up 19 percent year on year, Wang Chunying, deputy director and spokesperson of the administration, said.

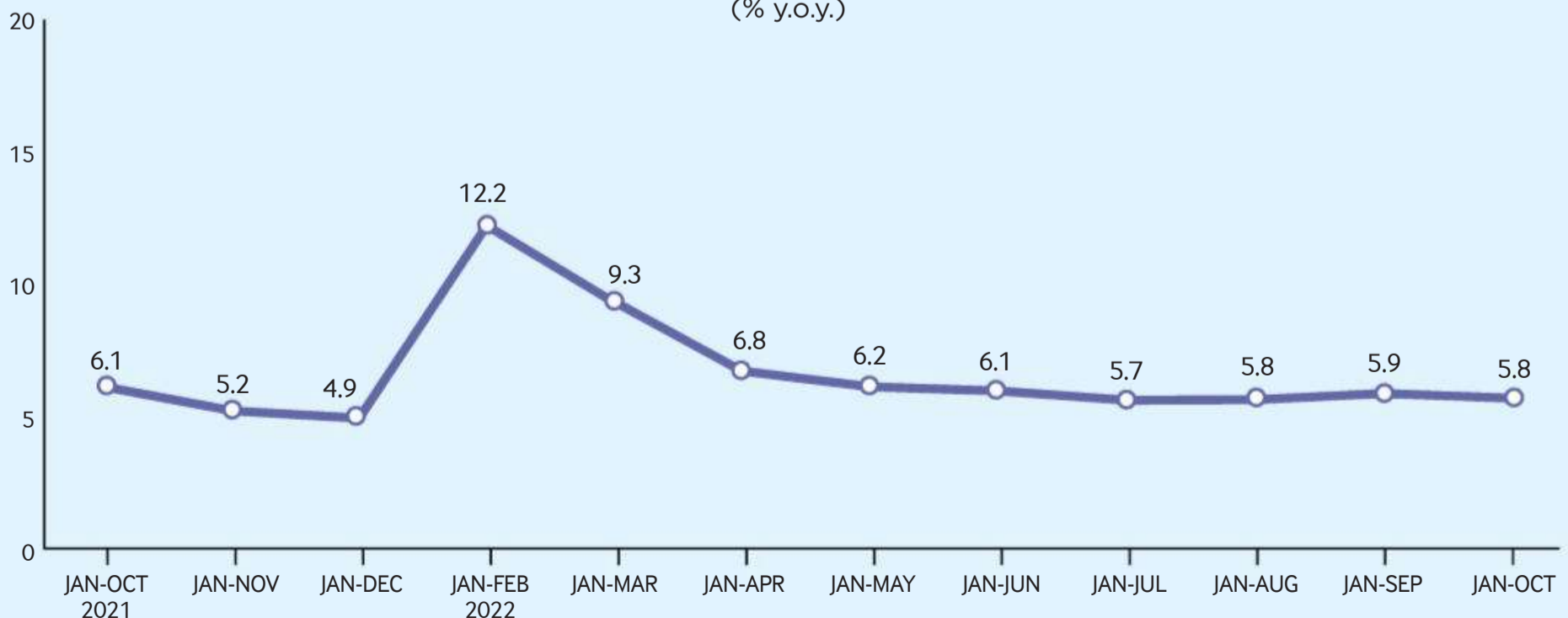
Capital for foreign direct investment saw a net inflow, and foreign investment in the domestic bond market continued to recover, indicating the willingness of foreign investors regarding long-term investment in China as well as their allocation to renminbi assets is generally stable, according to Wang.

China's cross-border capital flow and foreign exchange market are expected to develop steadily and orderly, Wang added, citing reasons such as a more resilient forex market and improved macro-prudential management tools.

NUMBERS

(\$1=7.06 yuan as of November 17)

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



Beijing Bourse

The Beijing Stock Exchange said it has been operating smoothly and improving its ability to serve the innovation development of small and medium-sized businesses in its first year of trading.

Launched on November 15 last year, the stock exchange now has 123 listed companies and has raised 26.8 billion yuan (\$3.79 billion).

Of these companies, small and medium-sized firms account for 77 percent, while private enterprises make up 86 percent.

Most listed firms, including 49 “little giant” companies (small enterprises specializing in niche markets with cutting-edge technologies and great potential), are in sectors of high-end equipment manufacturing, new energy, software and hardware technologies, and new materials.

These firms’ combined operating revenue and net profits totaled 73.21 billion yuan (\$10.36 billion) and 6.93 billion yuan

(\$981.58 million) from January to September, up 33.25 percent and 19.43 percent year on year, respectively.

Data from the bourse showed that over 5.2 million investors had opened accounts by November 14, including social security funds, insurance funds, and eligible overseas institutional investors.

The Beijing bourse’s first benchmark index, a broad-based index comprising 50 representative companies listed on the bourse, was launched on November 21. The index reflects overall market performance, the bourse said.

Instant Retail

The nationwide instant retail market has been growing rapidly in recent years, and is likely to exceed 1 trillion yuan (\$141.64 billion) in revenue by 2026, according to a report released by the China Chain-Store and Franchise Association.

The emerging retail business, which usually delivers goods within an hour of receiving orders, has seen its market scale expand by about 81 percent in the past five years, it said.

Many retail outlets such as convenience stores and supermarkets have rolled out store-to-doorstep online shopping and delivery services to cater to consumers living or working nearby.

E-commerce platforms have also jumped on the bandwagon by leveraging their big data-driven consumer insights and extensive delivery network.

Online food delivery giant Meituan began offering instant retail services on its platform in 2018, with sales value of the new services accounting for 12 percent of the platform’s total in 2021. The average daily order volume for its instant retail services reached 4.3 million in the second quarter of 2022.

The report said the instant retail market has a bright future,

as its combination of digitalization and fast delivery will help traditional retailers expand the scale of their consumer community.

Bad Loan Ratio

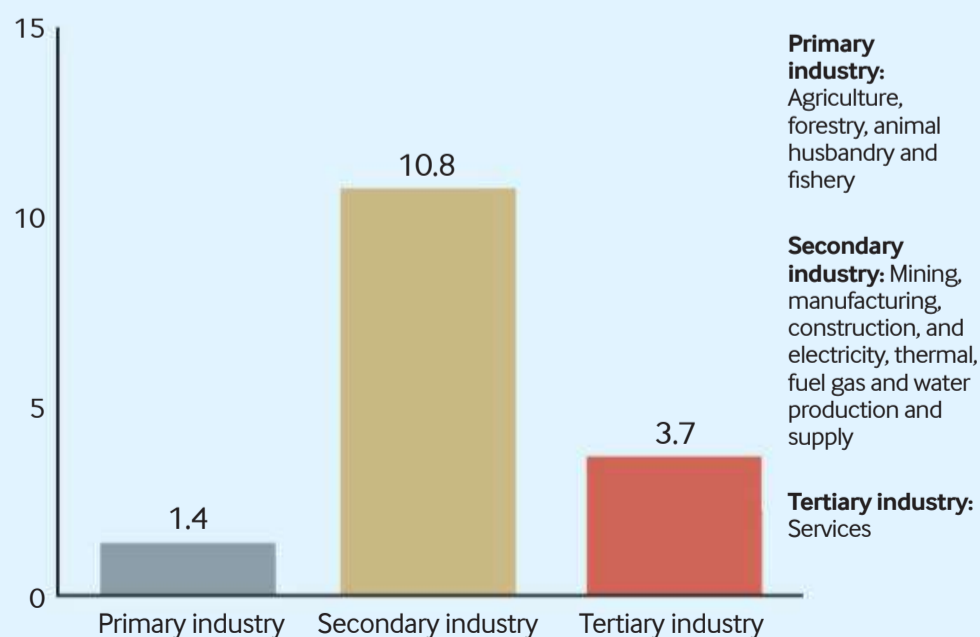
The non-performing loan ratio of China’s commercial banks fell to 1.66 percent by the end of the third quarter (Q3) with strengthened risk-resistance, the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission said.

The figure edged down 0.01 percentage points from the end of the second quarter.

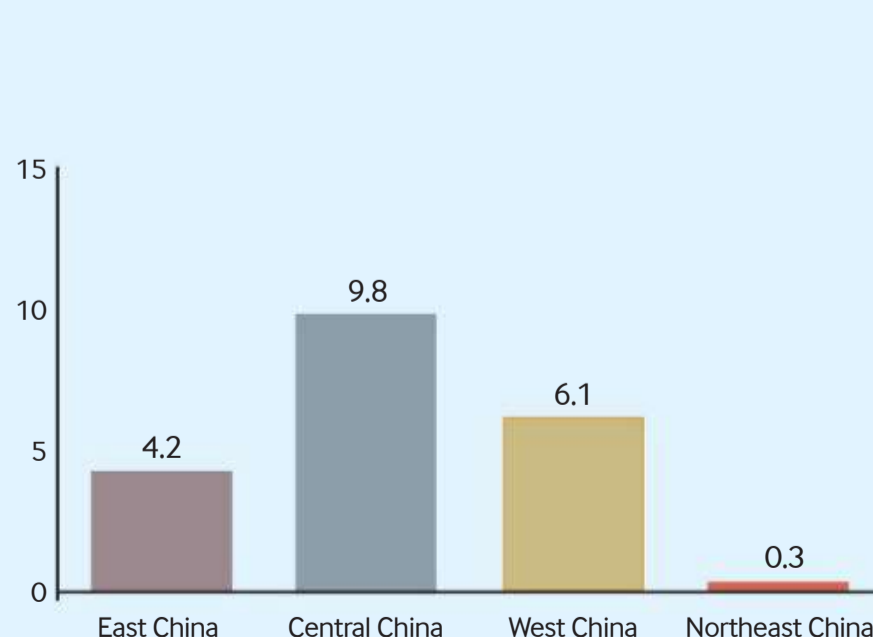
By the end of September, the banks’ outstanding bad loans amounted to 3 trillion yuan (\$424.5 billion).

Their provision coverage ratio, the percentage of funds a bank sets aside to cover losses due to bad debts, came in at 205.54 percent at the end of Q3, up 1.75 percentage points from the previous quarter, according to the commission.

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



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



THIS WEEK WORLD



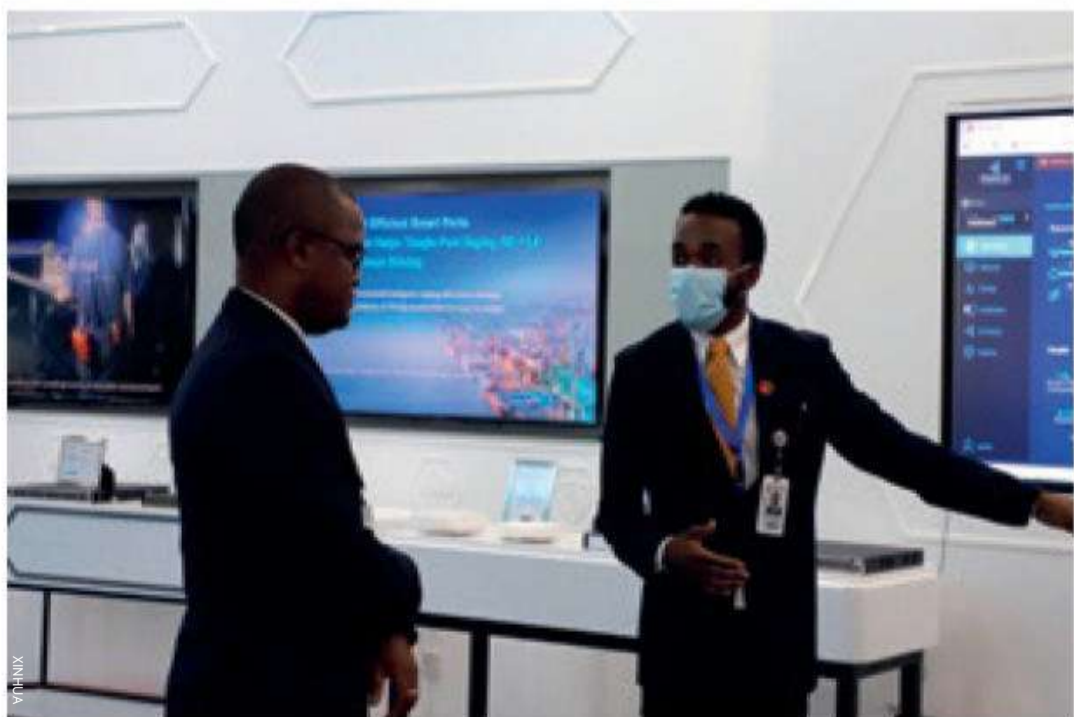
THAILAND

The APEC 2022 logo in Bangkok on November 16. The 29th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting took place in the city on November 18-19



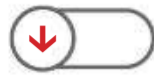
ANGOLA

A Huawei employee (right) presents products to a visitor at the inauguration ceremony of the Huawei Angola Tech Park in Luanda on November 14. The park is expected to help train more local talents in the information and communication technology sector and speed up digitalization in the southern African country



TÜRKIYE

People console each other on Istiklal Avenue near Taksim Square in Istanbul after a blast hit the city center on November 13. The explosion, confirmed to be a terror attack, had killed six people and injured 81 as of November 17



SLOVENIA

President-elect Natasa Pirc Musar addresses the media at the electoral headquarters in Ljubljana on November 13. The 54-year-old lawyer won the presidential race that day to become Slovenia's first female head of state



AUSTRALIA

Airplanes perform during the annual Wings Over Illawarra air show, which took place about 100 km south of Sydney on November 12



JAPAN

People crowd Tokyo Station in Tokyo on November 15, the day the UN announced the world population had reached 8 billion, a milestone in human development



↓ HEALTH EXPERT TURNS PARTY CHIEF

The Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee has appointed **Yin Li** as secretary of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee, according to reports on November 13.

Yin was born in Linyi, Shandong Province, in 1962. After obtaining a Ph.D in medicine, he began working in 1987. In 2003, he played an important role in containing the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic that emerged in China that year as he worked for the country's then Ministry of Health.



In 2004, Yin became a member of the World Health Organization Executive Board, and held different positions in both state and local governments.

Before his most recent appointment, Yin was secretary of the CPC Fujian Provincial Committee.

Adopt Responsibility

Gmw.cn

November 10

The Hongshan Forest Zoo in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, has offered up 30 of its in-house species, including Siberian tigers and golden snub-nosed monkeys, for virtual adoption. The adoption package comes with a certificate, regular updates, and exclusive live-streams of the adoptee's daily routine.

Its new setup allows the zoo, which has seen reduced traffic due to the impact of COVID-19, to stay afloat. However, when asked about the status quo of incoming and outgoing finances, zoo officials reportedly

refused to elaborate on the matter. If this program is purely commercial, the zoo has no legal obligation to keep the public informed. But these virtual adoptions exist in a gray area between market exchange and charity.

Without detailed regulations on the usage of publicly raised funds, the online community taking shape around the donation program may evolve into a battleground where doubts and accusations abound.

Moving forward, the zoo should adopt due responsibility and respect the public's right to be informed, which, in turn, will serve as a constant reminder not to derail from its original mission: animal protection.



A Vocation

Lifeweek

November 14

The age of 21, according to contemporary Chinese novelist Wang Xiaobo, should be a time of wild desires, romantic impulses, and voracious appetite. However, for many students in vocational colleges, 21 is a weighty number marking their graduation and subsequent entry into the real world.

In 2021, China had 1,400-plus higher vocational colleges, with over 15.9 million registered students. These colleges serve as a crucial juncture sending students from

“Chinese modernization provides new choices for humanity to achieve modernization, and China's new development brings new opportunities for global development.”

Wang Yi, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister, at the inauguration ceremony of the Global Development Promotion Center on November 12

“ASEAN centrality is the primary driving force for substantive dialogue and collaboration with our external partners through various ASEAN-led mechanisms.”

Samdech Techo Hun Sen, Cambodian Prime Minister, at the closing ceremony of the 40th and 41st ASEAN Summits and Related Summits on November 13

secondary vocational schools and regular high schools into their respective professions. However, their career choices are extremely limited as recruiters, for the convenience of application assessments, have partitioned the higher education system into different tiers, with elite universities at the top and vocational college graduates at the very bottom.

This low ranking is partly rooted in the public's limited knowledge about the vocational learning environment. These institutions actually present a perfect example of filling the gap between education and industry by offering a range of highly specialized majors, including degrees in modern funeral services, senior healthcare and jewelry design.

As many vocational institutions are located in close proximity to factories, teachers, most of them hired directly from neighboring facilities, are able to easily take students on field trips to these factories. This teaching mode, shuttling students between theory and practice, illustrates an ideal model for occupational training.

The boundaries separating vocational and higher learning institutions need to be broken. If one looks beyond the stereotype and prejudice attached to vocational college students, they will see not a vague title, but a myriad of different, open-minded, and passionate spirits that are sometimes a little lost but always aspiring.

Gender Studies

Rednet.cn

November 10

Paid study rooms equipped with adjustable lighting and dining areas have emerged as a new favorite spot among young Chinese preparing for civil service or college entrance exams. Nevertheless, one women-only study room in Langfang, Hebei Province, has stirred up controversy over the issue of gender discrimination.

A key characteristic setting these paid study rooms apart from libraries and classrooms is the exclusion of non-members.

But, the women-only study room in

Langfang also draws attention to the fact that it is a profit-making business catering to specific consumer demands. Some female students are more comfortable studying in an all-female environment. As long as this psychology exists, women-only study rooms cannot and will not be replaced.

Nevertheless, the women-only study room furnishes its customers with both a pleasant physical environment and the atmosphere they are looking for. The decision to focus on a specific group of customers here, be it men or women, is not based on sexist prejudice but on a desire to provide more personalized services.

↓ AND THE GOLDEN ROOSTER GOES TO...

The winners of the 35th Golden Rooster Awards were announced at the highly anticipated closing ceremony of the 2022 China Golden Rooster and Hundred Flowers Film Festival in Xiamen, Fujian Province, on November 12.

Zhu Yilong won Best Actor for his performance in *Lighting Up the Stars*, this year's family drama that tells the story of a funeral director who accidentally crosses paths with a girl who unexpectedly shifts his attitude toward life. **Xi Meijuan** won Best Actress for her performance in *Song of Spring*, a drama about an 85-year-old mother taking care of her 65-year-old daughter who suffers from Alzheimer's.

War epic *The Battle at Lake Changjin* snatched up two trophies—Best Feature and Best Director.



“We are optimistic about the Chinese market’s medium- and long-term prospects.”

Oliver Zipse, Chairperson of the BMW AG Board of Management, in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency

“Especially during these difficult times, when we also struggle with the congestion of several sea routes, the China-Europe freight train service still functions effectively.”

Axel Mattern, Chief Executive Officer of Port of Hamburg Marketing, in a recent interview with Xinhua



COVER STORY

DECLARATION OF INTERDEPENDENCE

G20 leaders respond to global concerns by reiterating cooperation commitments, but that's not enough By Liang Xiao



Chinese President Xi Jinping at the 17th Summit of the Group of 20 (G20) in Bali, Indonesia, on November 15

Against this backdrop, the G20 Bali Summit took place on November 15 and 16. It was the second in-person meeting of the leaders of the world's major economies since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, following the virtual 2020 and hybrid online-offline 2021 summits.

"This summit would probably be the most divided and most uncertain summit to date," Xu Feibiao, Deputy Director of the Center for BRICS and G20 Studies at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, told *Beijing Review* before the summit. Since late February, major events under the G20 framework, including ministerial meetings and working group meetings, have had difficulties coming to a common statement or declaration. Even less sensitive issues, such as tourism recovery, have resulted in opposing emotions. "This is very rare in history," Xu said, adding the international community at one point even worried the summit would encounter the same obstacles and not be able to issue a joint leaders' declaration.

But the outcomes far exceeded original expectations as the participating leaders reached concrete and pragmatic consensus on several issues. "...We [the G20 members] will take coordinated actions to advance an agenda for a strong, inclusive and resilient global recovery and sustainable development

that delivers jobs and growth," the G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration read.

"Global society can indeed be said to have come to an inflection point, a relatively successful G20 summit at this time can make history," Jia Wenshan, an academic member of the Institute for Global Cooperation and Understanding under Peking University and distinguished professor at Shandong University, explained to *Beijing Review*.

Common crises

Created in 1999, the G20 is an informal forum for international financial and economic cooperation. It comprises 19 countries plus the European Union. Its member countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States.

With the exception of Russia, Mexico and Brazil, 17 G20 leaders gathered in Bali to discuss potential solutions for a series of imminent crises facing the world today, a dizzying array of issues ranging from hunger to nuclear threats. Any of these calamities on their own would have constituted a big deal in the past decades, but when all these unfavorable factors are superimposed, no country is able to solve the problems single-handedly anymore. ►►

Indonesian people and global citizens hope the leaders refrain from using the precious moments during the summit simply as opportunities to criticize and attack one another." One week before the 17th Group of 20 (G20) Heads of State and Government Summit kicked off in Bali, Kornelius Purba, senior editor of Indonesia's English newspaper *The Jakarta Post*, published an article titled G20 Leaders, Please Don't Come to Bali Just to Quarrel, advising leaders unwilling to work together to address the world's economic and security conundrums to at least "lower their ego as not to worsen the suffering of many people across the globe."

Above all, global economic recovery is facing enormous challenges. On October 11, the International Monetary Fund released its latest World Economic Outlook report, once again downgrading its forecast for the global economy—with a sharp warning: “The worst is yet to come, and for many people 2023 will feel like a recession.” The agency also pointed out that it expects global growth to slump to 2.7 percent next year, with a 25-percent probability it could fall below 2 percent.

Along with this gloomy outlook, global economic governance is no longer working properly. Some developed economies have aggressively raised interest rates to solve their own inflation problems, and in doing so have destabilized the global financial market and put enormous pressure on emerging markets and developing countries.

Last but not least, the pandemic is a wake-up call for the world to create a more resilient medical

supply chain. Countries everywhere are emerging from the haze of COVID-19 and gradually returning to normal production modes and lifestyles. Nevertheless, the healthcare infrastructure in developing countries is still weak and unable to cope with new global infectious diseases that may emerge in the future. According to a recent World Health Organization survey, as of January 13, less than 40 percent of the population in 88 of its member countries had been vaccinated; in 36 of them, this number even stood below 10 percent.

A joint response to challenges is the original intention of the G20. After the outbreak of the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the Group of Seven industrialized countries, namely, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States, proved they were no longer able to dominate the global economic agenda. In 1999, the G20 was created as a meeting mechanism for the members’ finance ministers and central bank governors, and it was upgraded to an annual summit of leaders on the initiative of the U.S. following the financial tsunami triggered by the American subprime mortgage crisis sweeping through the world in 2008. Today, the G20 has evolved into a multilateral platform connecting the world’s major developed and emerging economies. Together, its members currently represent more than 80 percent of the global economy, 75

percent of international trade and 60 percent of the world population.

“We have no other option; collaboration is necessary to save the world,” Indonesian President Joko Widodo said at the summit’s opening ceremony. As G20 chair this year, Indonesia opted for the theme Recover Together, Recover Stronger, listing global healthcare architecture, digital transformation and energy transition as its three priority issues.

“All three topics are closely related to the economic and social recovery that is of concern to all countries in the pandemic’s aftermath,” Xu Liping, a researcher with the National Institute of International Strategy, said in an interview with *Global People*, a comprehensive political journal in China.

“The current situation of the world economy is similar to that in 2008; the risk of an economic and financial crisis exists,” Xu Feibiao said, elaborating it is necessary for all countries in the world to jointly rise to the occasion. “In the short term, it is imperative to work together to defuse financial risks and promote economic stability. In the long run, the international community needs to boost economic structural reform, enhance sustainable development, improve global economic and security governance, and build a fair and equitable international order.”

Global recovery depends on the shared understanding of the interdependence of actions, effectively steering the world’s economies, he pointed out.

Peace and change

More and more political analysts believe the G20 summit should be about economic and development issues instead of serving as a



The G20 2022 logo outside the summit’s main venue in Bali, Indonesia



A citizen receives a dose of a China-made COVID-19 vaccine in Bangkok, Thailand, on May 12

political forum. However, political stability is a prerequisite for economic development, and economic growth and cooperation in turn can promote geopolitical stability.

Wrangling over the Russia-Ukraine conflict dominated the Bali summit. “The conflict’s impact on the global economy is two-fold. On the one hand, Russia is a big oil and gas exporter; Europe is heavily dependent on Russia’s energy and the imposed Western sanctions on Russia directly led to the current world energy crisis. On the other hand, both Russia and Ukraine are important grain suppliers and their grain exports have been greatly affected by the continuing conflict,” Wang Xiaowei, a research fellow with the European Studies Center at the China University of Political Science and Law, told *Beijing Review*.

Wang said the importance of the G20 to Russia is on the rise. Compared with the BRICS or the

Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the G20 is one of the few platforms for Russia to have a direct dialogue with Western countries.

Although Russian President Vladimir Putin did not travel to Bali, Russia was not absent from the gathering. During the summit, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had brief talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron, and met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. Wang Yi stated China will continue to maintain an objective and fair position and play a constructive role in the promotion of peace talks on the Ukraine crisis. Lavrov responded Russia will remain open to discussion and negotiation.

China’s input

As the world’s second largest economy and its largest developing country, China is one of the strongest supporters of the G20 mechanism and plays an important role in addressing global challenges and improving global economic governance.

At the G20 Bali Summit, Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered a speech entitled Working Together to Meet the Challenges of Our Times and Build a Better Future, in which he called for collective action and close cooperation to make global development more inclusive, more resilient and ben-

eficial to all.

“China has always been a promoter of global economic development, a defender of world peace and stability, and a contributor to a fair and equitable international order,” Xu Feibiao said, adding that economically, China has dynamically promoted the policy of reform and opening up and industrial transformation and upgrading. In the past decade, the country has contributed an average 38.6 percent to world economic growth, more than the contribution of the G7 countries combined. Politically, as the world’s only global power rising through mutual benefit and peaceful development, China has never initiated a war, but is the second largest contributor to both the regular and peacekeeping budgets of the UN, and the largest troop contributor among the permanent members of the UN Security Council.

To promote world development and maintain world peace, Xi has put forward the vision of a community with a shared future for humanity. Via emerging international cooperation mechanisms such as the Belt and Road Initiative, a China-proposed initiative that aims to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes, it has taken concrete actions to achieve common prosperity with partner countries.

“China has become a key champion of world peace and development,” Xu Feibiao concluded. **BR**

Copyedited by Elsbeth van Paridon
Comments to liangxiao@cicgamericas.com

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Xi-Biden meeting sends positive signal but hard nuts will need to be cracked

By Ma Miaomiao

The current state of China-U.S. relations does not support the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples and is not what the international community expects, Chinese President Xi Jinping said while talking with his U.S. counterpart Joe Biden ahead of the Group of 20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia, on November 14.

During their face-to-face meeting, the two top leaders conducted a candid and in-depth exchange of opinions on a wide range of issues concerning bilateral ties and global priorities as the world watched.

With the conclusion of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the midterm elections in the U.S., the two countries have both completed their major domestic agendas for the year. Zhang Jiadong, a professor with the Center for American Studies at Shanghai-based Fudan University, said that the time spent together would help both understand each other's latest policy arrangements.

"As many people worry the tense Sino-American status quo may lead the world into a confrontation between two camps and turn globalization into fragmentation, the meeting has in fact sent a positive signal," Wang Yiwei, Director of the Institute of International Affairs at Renmin University of China, told *Beijing Review*.

A clear signal

"The positive thing is that the Xi-Biden

meeting took place. These men haven't met in person since Biden was vice president during Barack Obama's presidency (2009-17)," Josef Gregory Mahoney, a professor of politics and international relations at East China Normal University, wrote on his LinkedIn account. "There's just so much more that can be gained from meeting in person instead of online," he added.

"Under the current circumstances, China and the U.S. share more, not fewer, common interests, and it is in both sides' mutual and fundamental interest to prevent conflict and confrontation and achieve peaceful coexistence," Xi said, adding the two economies are deeply integrated and both face new tasks in development.

Take trade as an example, even under the mixed impact of COVID-19 and additional U.S. tariffs on Chinese exports, two-way trade topped \$750 billion in 2021 and two-way investment reached \$240 billion.

China and the U.S. need to have a sense of responsibility for history, for the world and for the people, explore the right way to get along with each other in the new era, put the relationship on the right course, and bring it back to the track of healthy and stable growth to the benefit of the two countries and the world as a whole, Xi said.

For his part, Biden said the U.S. side is committed to keeping the channels of communication open between the two presidents and at all levels of government, so as to allow candid conversations on issues where the two sides disagree and to strengthen necessary cooperation and play a key role in addressing climate change, food security and other important global challenges, which is vitally important to the two countries and peoples, and the world at large.

Democrats appeared to have staved off a Republican "red wave" as the dust settled from the U.S. midterm elections on November 8, but the results indicate that with Republicans in control of the House of Representatives, the Biden administration will encounter roadblocks in pursuing its domestic politi-

cal agenda. It may turn its attention abroad and do more to deal with China-U.S. relations, Jia Qingguo, a professor at Peking University's School of International Studies, said during a webinar discussing the U.S. midterm elections and the future of China-U.S. relations on November 11.

For the U.S., it is important to manage competition with China if it wishes to bring bilateral relations back to the track of sound and stable development, Zhang explained, adding that as both seek stability, this may have a positive impact on multiple sectors.

Jia added that Biden, who possesses rich political expertise and is more pragmatic, may change some of the hardline policies introduced during Donald Trump's presidency and cooperate with China on climate change and a better management of bilateral ties, particularly trade issues.

Questions remain

The meeting kicked off a "bridge-building effort," former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said in his virtual remarks to the Bloomberg New Economy Forum in Singapore on November 15, before lamenting there is still a long way to go to avoid conflict between the world's largest economies.

"Can Biden do more than talk the talk? Does he want to turn the corner and seek common ground



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with U.S. President Joe Biden in Bali, Indonesia, on November 14

in lieu of advancing an already faltering containment strategy? The meeting was a positive step, but no indication of real change,” Mahoney told *Beijing Review*.

The two leaders reached agreement on issues such as climate change, food security and public health. However, these are important but not fundamental bilateral issues of economic cooperation and building a peaceful world, David Blair, a senior economist at the Center for China and Globalization, a Beijing-based think tank, told *Beijing Review*.

“The continuing conflict in these fundamental areas could do a lot of damage to the world, so I hope the two nations can build genuinely friendly relations,” Blair said, adding it’s unfortunate that influential elites in the U.S. have a vested interest in continuing animosities [with China].

One example is that after Republicans regain a majority in the House of Representatives and if Republican leader Kevin McCarthy, who has publicly said he would “love to” go to China’s Taiwan, becomes House Speaker, tensions over Taiwan may escalate again, Zhu Feng, Dean of the Institute

of International Relations under Nanjing University, cautioned.

The Taiwan question has become even more complicated as many analysts in the U.S. are linking it with the hi-tech competition between China and the U.S., Zhong Feiteng, a researcher with the National Institute of International Strategy under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said to *The Beijing News*.

Mahoney also shared further concerns as he believes no real breakthroughs were made during the top leaders’ meeting in Bali. The two sides made no announcement of a resumption of bilateral talks on climate change or military-to-military communication—two issues that are baselines for mitigating dangers associated with potentially existential threats. “Although no breakthrough on the [U.S.-initiated]

trade war was expected, many still listened for one and heard nothing,” he added.

“We hope commercial issues will be on the agenda when cabinet-level officials from both countries hold further discussions,” Craig Allen, President of the U.S.-China Business Council, which represents more than 280 U.S. companies doing business in and with China, told *China Daily*.

The U.S. State Department confirmed at a news conference on November 14 that U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will visit China in early 2023. U.S. media reported the trip aims to keep the lines of communication open and exchanges about important issues at senior levels in order to avoid conflict. **BR**

Copyedited by G.P. Wilson
Comments to mamm@cicgamericas.com

SAILS TO RAILS

Transportation is the tie that binds nations, including China and Indonesia

By Zhao Wei

The official website of the Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia, Wonderful Indonesia, lists the Cheng Ho (Zheng He) Cultural Festival in Semarang, Central Java Province, as a must-see. The site goes on to describe the festival as “reviving the memory of the historic voyages of Admiral Cheng Ho from China into [modern-day] Indonesian waters.”

As the most famous navigator in Chinese history, Zheng He of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) is also considered a great diplomat because his fleet’s seven voyages not only brought porcelain, tea and silk but also friendship to Southeast Asia, including the islands we today refer to as Indonesia.

Never could Zheng have imagined that more than 600 years after he first set sail would the bond of friendship between China and Indonesia be stronger than ever thanks to modern means of transportation: the high-speed railway (HSR).

Head-of-state diplomacy

Built with Chinese technology, the first HSR in Indonesia will connect the national capital of Jakarta with Bandung, capital of West Java Province and the fourth most populous city in Indonesia, with a design speed of 350 km per hour,

cutting the 142-km journey from three-plus hours to roughly 40 minutes.

Considered a landmark project to promote the synergy between the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, which aims to enhance international connectivity, and Indonesia’s Global Maritime Fulcrum, a strategy designed to strengthen the country’s maritime infrastructure and security apparatus to better propel its economic and political rise, the railway received the attention of both countries’ top leaders.

Chinese President Xi Jinping told Indonesian President Joko Widodo in Beijing on July 26 that “the two sides need to intensify high-quality Belt and Road cooperation for more fruitful outcomes and must strive to complete the Jakarta-Bandung HSR on schedule and to high standards.”

As the first foreign head of state to visit China since the conclusion of the Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics in February, Widodo’s trip, according to Xi, spoke volumes about the strong commitment to growing the bilateral relationship.

During his conversation with Xi, Widodo mentioned how the HSR is a symbol of Indonesia’s rapid development. He added the country is ready to work with China to ensure that the railway is completed and goes into operation on schedule, becoming yet another milestone in the bilateral friendship.

The friendship between the two heads of state stayed on track as President Xi attended the Group of 20 (G20) Summit in Bali, Indonesia, from November 15 to 16 at Widodo’s invitation.

“The G20 Bali Summit is the first multilateral summit President Xi has attended after the 20th Communist Party of China National Congress,” Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said at a regular press briefing.

Supporting the work of the Indonesian G20 presidency, China hopes all parties will focus on

the summit’s theme of Recover Together, Recover Stronger—promoting strong and inclusive economic recovery among G20 members, build consensus and boost cooperation in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Zhao added.

In October 2013, Xi chose Indonesia to be the first stop on his then tour of Southeast Asia and gave a speech to the Indonesian Parliament. He described his journey as one “carrying forward traditional friendship and mapping out future cooperation.” During that same visit, the leaders of both countries jointly announced the bilateral relationship would receive an upgrade to a comprehensive strategic partnership to further build on past achievements and generate all-round and in-depth growth.

Flow to grow

In his aforementioned address to parliament, President Xi also mentioned an Indonesian folk song called *Bengawan Solo*, which is very famous in China as well. Its lyrics go as follows: *Your water springs forth from Solo, caged by a thousand mountains. Water flows to reach far distances, eventually to the sea.* “Like the beautiful river Solo, China-Indonesia relations



Electric multiple units conduct hot testing on the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway trial section in Bandung, Indonesia, on November 9

have traversed an extraordinary journey, past the mountains and eventually to the sea,” Xi said.

Friendship flows as cooperation flourishes. In 2021, a collaborative initiative between China and Indonesia called Two Countries, Twin Parks got underway. The project intends to build business parks in the two countries, which will then share interconnected industries, interoperable facilities and reciprocal policies.

Chinese enterprises bring their capital, technology and management experience to Indonesia and also help upgrade local industries and train local technicians, a concerted combination empowering Indonesia’s industrialization and modernization process.

According to a survey conducted by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Indonesia, 91.4 percent of China-invested enterprises have trained local employees through “apprenticeships,” 50 percent of enterprises have sent Indonesian employees to China for training, and 37.1 percent of enterprises have carried out school-enterprise cooperation programs.

Chinese Ambassador to Indonesia Lu Kang shared a story of his visit to the Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park (IMIP) at the launch of the Corporation Social Responsibility Report on China-invested Enterprises in Indonesia on October 28.

“I happened to meet a young Indonesian woman called Fitriani who, though a bit shy, was already an

experienced engineer; like many young Indonesians, she was passionate and daring. Her department is responsible for the improvement of ferronickel product quality which requires high skills. Fresh out of college, she became the first Indonesian employee of the department. With the careful guidance and help from her Chinese colleagues, she mastered the skills in only four months and then took the initiative to translate all the operation instructions into Indonesian and implement the switch between Chinese and Indonesian of the operation interface, which facilitated the passing on of technology between Chinese and Indonesian employees. The following year, seven more Indonesian employees joined the department and Fitriani gave the freshmen her step-by-step instructions,” Lu said.

The IMIP is a modern industrial park with a focus on the nickel-based industry located in Indonesia’s Central Sulawesi Province. This is a key Belt and Road project in

Indonesia. According to the park’s director, every Chinese employee holding an important technical position is responsible for imparting their skills to five to 10 Indonesian employees.

China has also put its know-how to good use in the Jakarta-Bandung HSR. The project is the first high-speed rail project overseas to fully use Chinese technology, standards and equipment. The 11 sets of bullet passenger trains and one set of comprehensive inspection trains tailor-made for the railway were manufactured in China. One set of passenger trains and the inspection trains arrived in Indonesia’s Jakarta Port on September 1.

A group of young Indonesians produced and posted a video online to introduce how the Jakarta-Bandung HSR could change people’s lives. At the end of the video, the narration represents the local voice: “It’s not only fast but also sustainable for the environment, as it is powered by electricity. We hope that the cooperation between Indonesia and China doesn’t stop here and can continue to extend to other cities so everyone can commute faster and more efficiently.”

Hundreds of years after Zheng, the 15th-century Chinese navigator, first entered Indonesian waters, the story of China-Indonesia friendship remains one of smooth sailing. **BR**

Copyedited by Elsbeth van Paridon
Comments to zhaowei@cicgamericas.com

Mbook design MULTILINGUAL

多 语 种 图 书 装 帧 设 计

العربية · ALBANIAN · BENGALI · CHINESE · CAMBODIAN · CZECH · DUTCH · DANISH · ENGLISH · FARSI · FRENCH · GERMAN · বাংলা ভাষা · ગુજરાતી · GREEK · HAUSA · INDONESIAN · 日本語 · 한국어 · LAOTIAN · MALAY · MACEDONIAN · MALAYSIAN · MONGOLIAN · PORTUGUESE · РУССКИЙ ЯЗЫК · SERBIAN · SLOVAK · SPANISH · SWEDISH · SWAHILI · TURKISH · UKRAINIAN · URDU · VIETNAMESE

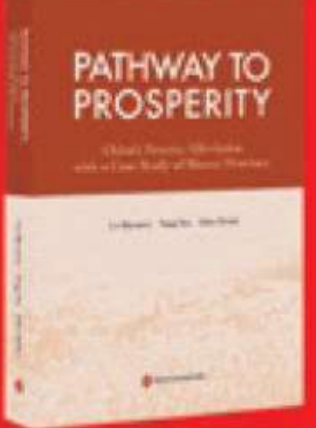
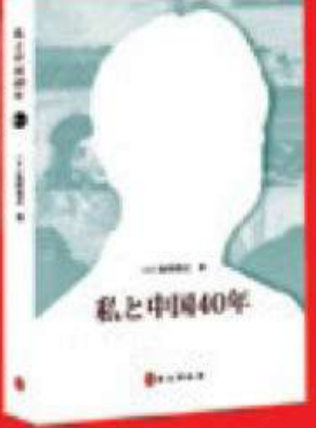
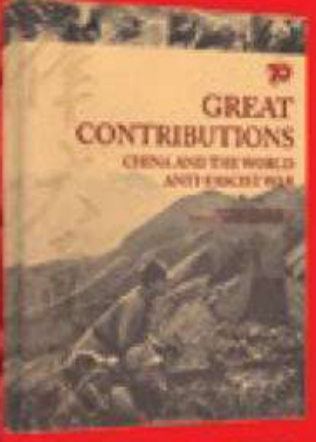
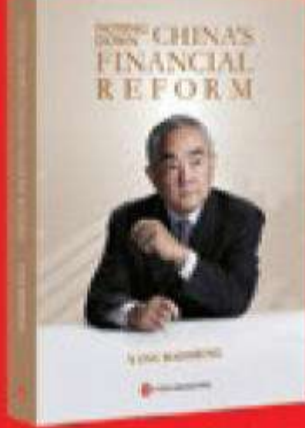
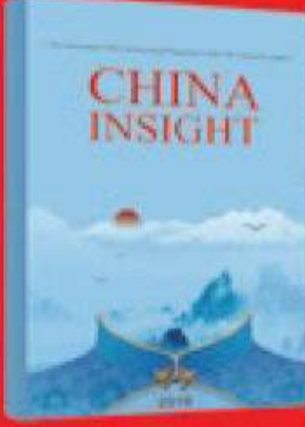
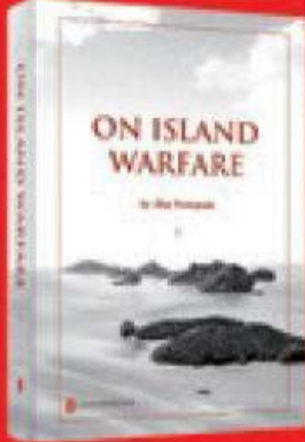
WE CAN DO BETTER

BEIJING REVIEW 北京周报 北京维诺传媒文化有限公司
BEIJING WEINUO MEDIA CULTURE CO. LTD.

BEIJING WEINUO MEDIA CULTURE CO. LTD. designs publications, multimedia and exhibitions and also undertakes exhibition installation and digital printing.

Clients: Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Department of the CPC Central Committee, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, National Radio and Television Administration, Chinese embassies and consulates abroad, General Office of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee, Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, Beijing Municipal Commission of Tourism Development, Beijing Performance and Arts Group, China Pictorial Publishing House, New World Press, Dolphin Books, New Star Press, Sinolingua, BMW, Wanda Group, etc.

Add: 24 Baiwanzhuang Road, Xicheng District, Beijing 100037, China
Tel: (8610) 68995980, 68996325



BRIDGING THE PACIFIC

你好

HELLO

**Pacific
Dialogue**
对话太平洋

Follow us on Twitter @Pacific_Dialog
& on Douyin @对话太平洋

The COP27 and Beyond

By Zhong Cheng

The 27th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP27) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) convened from November 6 to 18 in the Egyptian resort city of Sharm El-Sheikh.

This year's conference came at a time of growing concerns over the global environment, with accumulating political and security challenges consuming the world's attention and budget to manage climate change.

A changing world

Climate change may be the most severe and common challenge humanity faces, a fact clear from Pakistan's devastating floods, Europe's hottest summer in 500 years, Cuba's blackouts, hurricanes in the U.S., continuing carbon emissions, increasing torrential rains, heatwaves, wildfires, droughts, desertification, and the displacement of hundreds of millions of people. As UN

Secretary General António Guterres warned, "...we are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator."

The essence of combating climate change is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the main cause of rising temperatures. However, since the U.S. and the EU have imposed an embargo on Russian oil and gas, turning energy into a coercive tool following the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, many EU countries have returned to the environmentally destructive use of coal, the dirtier fossil fuel, and reevaluated previous commitments and pledges in the framework of international agreements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, explosions in the Nord Stream pipelines,

which link Russia and Germany through the Baltic Sea, have released a large amount of natural gas into the atmosphere, putting at risk global emission reduction achievements.

Tensions over the war in Ukraine and skyrocketing energy and food prices have hugely affected economic and political policies across the world, further complicating any breakthroughs in climate governance. Plus, developed countries could use the looming economic recession, soaring inflation and higher interest rates as excuses to renege on their climate change promises, especially the commitment to providing an annual \$100 billion in climate financing to developing countries.

Today's multiple crises of geopolitical conflicts, together with extreme weather disasters and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, challenge the world. Under the circumstances, the COP27 is even more important as it reflects the urgency, on a global scale, of cutting greenhouse



An event at the China Pavilion on the sidelines of the 27th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on November 6

gas emissions and boosting climate action, avoiding the spillover of other issues into the climate change governance, and not allowing any geopolitical differences to interfere with the efforts to prioritize climate action.

Core goals

The COP27 was themed Together for Implementation. The conference envisioned translating climate pledges into action and ensuring fulfilled commitments on financing climate action in developing countries.

Addressing the event's high-level segment, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi said the people of the world were expecting the leaders' meeting at the COP27 "to take real and concrete steps toward reducing emissions, enhancing adaptation to the consequences of climate change, and providing the necessary financing for developing countries that suffer the most from the current climate crisis."

The COP27 sent the general message that the world urgently needs to restore collective, complementary and collaborative actions to adapt to the effects of climate change, mitigate its negative repercussions, provide climate finance, and make the necessary pivot from negotiations to implementation and get moving on the massive transformation that must take place throughout all layers of society to address the climate emergency.

On November 8, Egypt's presidency launched the Sharm El-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda outlining 30 outcomes, each of which offered solutions that could be adopted at the local level to adapt to climate change. These outcomes collectively represent the first global plan to bring together all parties concerned through international climate action, rallying both state and non-state players behind a shared set of adaptation actions mainly across five priority areas: food and agriculture, water and nature, coasts and oceans, human settlements, and infrastructure. The agenda includes global 2030 targets related to transitioning to climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture, protecting and restoring critical ecosystems, installing smart and early warning systems that could benefit around 4 billion people worldwide, investing to protect mangroves, and expanding people's access to clean cooking.

Its overall structure contains a focus on

implementation aimed at the mobilization of collective efforts for ambitious emission reductions from different sectors, an enhanced transformative adaptation agenda and the allowance for appropriate and timely finance flows.

This year's COP27 also put a welcome emphasis on Africa and launched the UN-backed Africa Carbon Markets Initiative (ACMI) to raise African carbon credits.

The ACMI is in line with the five COP27 priorities. African countries are keen to implement the initiative by establishing carbon markets that help with executing all aspects of climate action, including adaptation and mitigation measures that reflect the adoption of a holistic approach toward climate action. The establishment of carbon markets will have a positive impact on development across the African continent.

China in action

China lends climate change high priority in its national governance system and strives for further progress by integrating the goals of peaking carbon emissions and achieving carbon neutrality into the country's overall plans for promoting ecological advancement as well as economic and social development. It focuses on creating synergy between reducing pollution and controlling carbon emissions to promote a comprehensive transformation toward environment-friendly economic and social development.

In the past decade, China has accounted for 30-50 percent of global energy conservation, energy efficiency improvement, renewable energy development, and green transportation and construction. To implement the "dual carbon" goals, which are to peak carbon emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060, China has established a carbon

neutralization working mechanism that has clarified the top-level design of the "dual carbon" undertaking, formulated implementation plans in energy, industry, transportation and other key areas, and established a carbon neutrality policy system.

From 2012 to 2021, China supported an average annual economic growth rate of 6.6 percent with an annual energy consumption growth rate of 3 percent. Its carbon emissions per unit of GDP dropped some 34.4 percent, and its energy intensity fell by 26.4 percent. In July 2021, China formally launched the national carbon emission trading market, covering about 4.5 billion tons of carbon emissions per annum, making it the biggest of its kind in the world.

In addition to promoting domestic adaptation, China has been carrying out cooperation with other developing countries on adapting to climate change. By July 2022, China had allocated funds totaling over 1.2 billion yuan (\$169 million) to related projects and signed 43 related cooperation documents with 38 developing countries. It adopts an active approach to capacity-building training, helping train officials and technicians from many other developing countries in the field of climate change. It has also provided equipment, including micro-satellites, meteorological mobile stations and drones, to help them improve their natural disaster monitoring and early warning mechanisms as well as climate adaptation abilities.

China holds that the international community's response to climate change now faces severe challenges and developing countries have suffered the most from global warming. It urges developed countries to step up to their historical responsibilities and fulfill their due international obligations. They should deliver on their promise of mobilizing \$100 billion per year for climate action in developing countries as soon as possible, offer a roadmap for doubling adaptation finance, and take credible steps to help developing countries improve climate resilience, enhance mutual trust between North and South and form greater synergy in actions. **BR**

The author is an op-ed contributor to *Beijing Review* and an expert on international studies
 Copyedited by Elsbeth van Paridon
 Comments to yanwei@cicgamericas.com

The Moral Alternative

By Robert Walker

On February 25, 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced China had secured a complete victory in its fight against extreme poverty. Globally, though, 685 million—one in 12—people still suffer poverty that is even more severe.

The global financial system is, in the words of UN Secretary General António Guterres, “morally bankrupt. It favors the rich and punishes the poor.” Hopes were high the world’s people would come together to demand the eradication of extreme poverty through the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) announced in 2015 as part of the UN 2030 Agenda. However, as of yet, this hasn’t happened.

But an alternative vision does exist, one that envisages a community with a shared future for humanity and would involve “countries with different social systems, ideologies, histories, cultures and levels of development coming together for shared interests, shared rights and shared responsibilities in global affairs, and creating the greatest synergy for building a better world.” Scholars and politicians schooled in the neorealist tradition of international relations, on which states must compete for supremacy, might regard this vision as utopian. Yet it is the core of China’s foreign policy as presented by President Xi at a conference marking the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the People’s Republic of China’s lawful seat in the UN in October 2021. Before considering what this alternative vision might entail for global poverty reduction, it is important to understand the structures and forces that have till now prevented greater reductions in global poverty.

A biased system

The reigning neoliberal framework has long advocated small governments, strong private property rights, and free trade and markets, in turn leading to the “structural adjustment” policy as implemented by the World Bank and the

International Monetary Fund (IMF). This made financial assistance to developing countries conditional on the privatization of state-owned enterprises, deregulation of their economies, trade liberalization, “competitive” exchange rates and the elimination of barriers to foreign direct investment. Developing countries were therefore obliged to engage in globalization and to do so from a position of economic weakness.

Despite minor amendments, this system remains in place. It has arguably facilitated the globalization of world trade—credited with stimulating global economic growth and reducing poverty in the last 40 years. It provided the environment in which China, through reform and opening up starting in the late 1970s, grew to become the world’s second largest economy.

However, the neoliberal economic system continues to penalize developing countries. The World Trade Organization (WTO), the global body nominally intended to police fair trade, for example, fails to do so. Instead, it provides nominal legitimacy to trade practices that discriminate against developing economies, similarly supporting the imposition of high tariffs on processed goods exported by low-income countries. Moreover, its appellate body established to rule on trade disputes no longer functions because the U.S., having lost several appeals, refuses to approve new appointees. While supposedly committed to open markets and free competition, the U.S. has imposed

embargoes on Chinese trade and employed domestic legislation to prevent other nations from going into business with China.

The UN’s commitment to eradicate extreme poverty and to half other forms by 2030 under the SDGs was premised on a fundamental WTO reform—the so-called Doha Round which commenced in November 2001 with the objective to lower trade barriers around the world, thereby facilitating increased global trade. But the proposition proved a non-starter; wealthy countries were simply unprepared to change a system that massively favored them. This one fact alone already makes the SDGs unattainable.

A just substitute

In marked contrast to the prevailing geopolitical system that presents economic competition as a surrogate war to achieve global domination, President Xi delivered a report to the 20th Communist Party of China (CPC) National Congress on October 16 with a call to “let us all join forces to meet all types of global challenges.” He continued by reiterating China’s commitment to its “national policy of opening to the outside world” with a view to create “new opportunities for the world... and to contribute its share to building an open global economy that delivers greater benefits to all peoples.”

This is no new commitment. Xi has expressed similar aspirations in many previous addresses. Indeed, such benevolent developmentalism reflects the Confucian tradition of *wangdao*, or the “kingly way of governance,” basically meaning the strong care for the weak.

And action speaks louder than words. China responded to the 2008 global financial crisis not by austerity, but by mounting the world’s largest expansionary stimulus package that was sufficient not only to ensure its economic recovery, but to protect much of the developing world.

China has provided infrastructure investment for other developing countries under the Belt and Road Initiative, an initiative it proposed



China-donated COVID-19 vaccines arrive in Minsk, Belarus, on November 12

in 2013 to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes. True to its word, it has not constrained the fiscal space of recipient governments by insisting on ideologically driven policy changes.

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, China began shipping vaccines globally well before its own population was fully vaccinated and has, so far, directly delivered more than 2.2 billion doses to more than 120 countries and international organizations. It also donated vaccines to the COVAX facility, the global mechanism for pooled vaccine procurement and equitable distribution co-sponsored by the World Health Organization. Now, with developing countries hit by COVID-19, the Russia-Ukraine crisis generating rising food prices and a growing global debt crisis, China is providing the necessary liquidity financing.

Just as it did during the great recession that tormented the world between 2007 and 2009, China has once again been supporting major emerging economies with loans and currency swaps, helping their governments to manage the impact of these exogenous events. Many governments have also had to cope with international investors withdrawing their funds in a

bid to protect the value of their portfolios—irrespective of the impact on local poverty rates.

China eradicated extreme poverty—SDG Target 1.1—a decade ahead of schedule. Following the 20th CPC National Congress, domestic attention now shifts to achieving common prosperity, a concept that embraces SDG Target 1.2, namely, halving poverty in all its dimensions. But China’s vision of “building a community with a shared future for humanity” also encompasses, as Xi has often emphasized, “achieving common prosperity for all.” The Global Development Initiative (GDI), designed to speed up the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda, bears testimony to this worldwide commitment. Launched in September 2021, it focuses on poverty alleviation, food security, vaccination, and development, demonstrating China’s commitment to cooperating with international agencies.

The GDI also aims to improve the global governance system, increase the representation of emerging markets and developing countries, and build an open world economy. It therefore reflects President Xi’s vision for China to play an active part in the reform and development of the global governance system. China, in Xi’s words, “upholds true multilateralism, promotes greater democracy in international relations, and works to make global governance fairer and more equitable.”

Many experts believe global poverty can only be eradicated by shifting the balance of strategic power from the IMF, World Bank and WTO, controlled by the developed world, to the UN—the only body with universal representation.

Poverty results from the moral bankruptcy of the global financial system. The only way to address it is by pursuing China’s goal “to make global governance fairer and more equitable.” **BR**

This is an edited excerpt of an article first published on the China Focus website. The author is a professor at Beijing Normal University and a 2021 fellow at the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School
 Copiedited by Elsbeth van Paridon
 Comments to yanwei@cicgamericas.com

‘Seizing Power’

By Lan Xinzhen

From June 21 to October 25, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) seized 1,053 batches of photovoltaic (PV) power products produced in China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. As a result, said products, worth hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars, are piling up in several U.S. ports.

This practice has seriously violated market and international trading rules, complicating regular PV product trade between the two countries. The PV industry is a strategic emerging business with a big stake in global sustainable development. Promoting the development of renewable energy and energy transformation based on this industry has already become a consensus around the world, including in the U.S. and China. China is a major supplier of PV products, with half of the world’s PV product exports coming from Xinjiang.

American companies choose these products for a reason. If they turn to other countries to obtain the goods, something several U.S. politicians have suggested, these companies will see soaring costs that will eat into their corporate interests.

The ensuing negative impacts of the seizure will also weaken the Joe Biden administration’s undertaking to cope with climate change—which it considers a signature project. For example, solar and other forms of renewable energy have an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change. The Biden administration announced in September 2021 that by 2050, 45 percent of the country’s power generation will come from solar power. In 2021, it only counted for 3 percent. To hit the 2050 goal, the country needs to install a huge amount of PV equipment every year. However, the recent seizure of related PV products will temporarily trip up installation.

The CBP cited the so-called “Uygur



Forced Labor Prevention Act” (UFLPA) for the confiscation. Signed into law in December 2021, the UFLPA—born out of political motivation and violating all market rules—denies any “goods, wares, articles, and merchandise mined, produced, or manufactured wholly or in part in Xinjiang” entry to the U.S., unless clear and convincing evidence shows these items were not made with “forced labor.”

According to the Forced Labor Convention of 1930, approved by the International Labor Organization, the term forced labor “shall mean all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.”

This is not the case in Xinjiang’s PV factories. Workers of all ethnic groups go to these factories voluntarily, their legitimate rights fully protected by the country’s labor laws. These factories, supported by high-level automation and digitization, are mostly digitally operated, making any “forced labor” redundant.

Fact is, many Xinjiang residents find it difficult to secure employment in the PV industry because they lack the relevant knowledge. A job in these factories is highly sought-after because it generates much higher income, and is obviously far less physically demanding than farm work. Many employees from the remote areas in Xinjiang can afford to buy cars and apartments in nearby cities, after several years of working in these factories. Locals consider working in the PV industry a matter of “favored labor,” not “forced labor.”

Why then resort to the UFLPA? In sum, to contain China’s rise. In terms of the production of silicon-based materials, Xinjiang plays a dominant role in China, and the world at large even. This makes the region a thorn in the Western political side. By spinning tales of Xinjiang PV companies employing “forced labor,” the U.S. intends to disrupt production and even move production out of Xinjiang. Nevertheless, an industrial transfer triggered by political motivations will eventually wreak havoc on the global industrial, supply and value chains.

Seizure of PV products from Xinjiang will not cause substantive damage to the industry in the region itself, but will undermine China-U.S. economic and trade ties. When meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in the lead-up to the 17th Group of 20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia, on November 14, President Biden said the U.S. side has no intention to seek decoupling from China, halt China’s economic development, or contain China.

The time has now come for the U.S. to put its money where its mouth is and lift the embargo on PV products from Xinjiang. Seizing these products from China will only cease powerful sustainable growth in the U.S. **BR**

Copyedited by Elsbeth van Paridon
Comments to lanxinzhen@cicamericas.com



THROUGH THEIR EYES

People from around
the world take you
on a journey to
rediscover China



Unwise Controls

U.S. chip export restrictions against China likely to backfire By Li Wenhan

The United States' largest chipmaker Nvidia is back exporting to China's mainland. It is able to do so only after creating a chip that complies with new export rules imposed by the U.S. authorities. The rules aim to keep cutting-edge technology out of Chinese hands, but have the potential to cost U.S. chipmakers billions if they fail to follow Nvidia's lead.

Under the rules, issued on October 7, the U.S. has significantly expanded restrictions on the supply of chips and chipmaking equipment to China, while also pushing its allies to do the same.

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) established new categories of export controls, aiming, it said, to "restrict China's ability to obtain advanced computing chips, develop and maintain supercomputers and manufacture advanced semiconductors used in military applications."

The U.S. authorities added 31 new Chinese entities to the Unverified List, a list containing foreign entities whose bona fides the BIS has been unable to verify through end-use checks. U.S. companies must make applications to the U.S. Department of Commerce in order to export to these entities but, if the entities do not become verified within the first 60 days, U.S. companies must apply for a full license in order to supply them with products.

Prior to the addition of the 31, nine Chinese entities had been verified and removed from the list. In response to the move, a spokesperson from China's Ministry of Commerce said it showed the two countries are capable of finding solutions that benefit both sides, adding the new export controls will severely hurt regular trade between companies in the two countries and threaten the stability of global industrial and supply chains.

How we got here

Over the past four years, the U.S. Government has been tightening controls on the export of semiconductors to China, adding layers onto restrictions and expanding the scope of companies covered.

The measures began with the banning of direct sales of U.S. chips and other components to Chinese tech firms, firstly ZTE and then Huawei. These two tech firms were added to the U.S. Commerce Department's Entity List, which prohibits companies from buying controlled U.S. exports without a license, thus rendering them unable to access products containing more than 25 percent U.S. technology. The ban proved ineffective as Huawei had alternative sources in China's Taiwan and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

In May 2020, the BIS made Huawei subject to the Foreign Direct Product Rule (FDP Rule) to restrict the company from acquiring any controlled U.S. technology and software, meaning the 25-percent cap was reduced to zero. This effectively allowed the U.S. Government to force the rest of the world to comply with its own export controls on the Chinese tech giant. Many more Chinese companies were then put on the Entity List, though the BIS did not apply the FDP Rule to all of them.

"The recently introduced export controls are different," Yang Shuiqing, a research fellow with the Institute of American Studies under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, told *Beijing Review*. "The BIS expanded the scope and substance of the restriction, applying the FDP Rule, formerly exclusively to Huawei, to 28 more Chinese entities and, by extension, to the advanced computing and supercomputer industries in the U.S. The country has implemented the extensive ban in an attempt to prevent China's indigenous semiconductor industry from progressing."

"The dense regulatory filing gave the strongest hint yet of U.S. intentions. The controls, more so than any earlier U.S. action, reveal a single-minded



focus on thwarting Chinese capabilities to indigenize the supply chain,” Jon Bateman, a senior fellow in the Technology and International Affairs Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said in an article published on *Foreign Policy* on October 12. “To justify this dramatic escalation, the BIS makes the same old national security arguments. Yet the agency never really deals with the fact that denying them to China is effectively a form of economic containment.”

Will the U.S. hold out?

The fact that the Joe Biden administration is stepping up efforts to stop America-made chips and chipmaking equipment from going to China is dampening demand for American products in the world’s biggest semiconductor market.

According to a 2020 study by Boston Consulting Group, it was estimated U.S. companies could lose up to 18 percentage points of global share and 37 percent of their revenue if the U.S. completely banned semiconductor companies from selling to Chinese customers.

This year, more than \$1.5 trillion has been wiped from the combined market value of U.S.-listed chip businesses, a piece in *The Economist* read in late October.

Micron Technology Inc. reported a 20-percent year-on-year fall in its fiscal 2022 quarterly results, released on September 29.

Nvidia warned in August that the new restrictions would cost the firm as much as \$400 million in sales, further stating that of its \$26.9-billion revenue in the last fiscal year, around a quarter came from China.

The new regulation placed on China-bound chips restricts their interconnectivity bandwidth, their capacity for exchanging information with other chips in a system, to below 600 gigabytes per second (GB/s). The company said its new chip for China, the A800, has the same internal performance as the A100 it replaces, but its interconnectivity bandwidth has been reduced to 400 GB/s.

U.S. allies may not be happy, either. Currently, the U.S., Japan, the ROK, and China’s Taiwan together account for 92 percent of the world’s semiconductor output by value and the U.S. expects the four to team up into what has become known as the Chip-4 alliance. The alliance aims to build a unified supply chain that cooperates on the design and manufacturing of advanced semiconductors and freezes out China’s mainland.

“The ROK has been reluctant to join the alliance. It sells 60 percent of its semiconductor products to China’s mainland. Despite its joining talks to discuss the formation of the alliance, the ROK may show disregard for U.S. calls,” Yang said.

“Joining the Chip-4 alliance is a significant risk for [the ROK] as any moves to restrict chip sales to and investment into China risks triggering a trade war—with China boycotting [the ROK’s] goods, regardless of sector,” Matthew Bey, a senior global analyst at RANE Risk Intelligence, a geopolitical business consultancy, said to *EurAsian Times*.

“I think there’s definitely a sense of disappointment [from the U.S.] that allies were not on board with this rule when it rolled out,” Jimmy Goodrich, Vice President of Global Policy for the Semiconductor Industry Association, said in an online discussion hosted by the Washington International Trade Association.

“That doesn’t help the U.S. Government achieve its objective. It harms U.S.

industry,” Goodrich added.

Talent, out

“Another thing about the new measures,” Yang said, “is they bar U.S. persons, including U.S. citizens and green card holders, from providing any support for the development or production of chips at semiconductor-manufacturing facilities in China without a license—regardless of whether this support includes the export of any products or technologies. It is the first time U.S. export controls against China have extended to people, rather than just organizations and companies.”

The restriction may force Chinese Americans working in China’s semiconductor firms to choose between their citizenship and their job. At least 43 senior executives are American citizens working at 16 publicly listed Chinese semiconductor companies, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

Increasing numbers of Chinese academics are choosing to leave the U.S., citing a more hostile working environment. Over 1,400 Chinese academics gave up their U.S. affiliation in 2021, representing a 22-percent jump from the year before, according to data compiled by Princeton University, Harvard University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

In 2018, the Donald Trump administration launched the China Initiative to investigate allegations that U.S.-based scientists were transferring advanced technologies to China. Academics criticized the initiative for chilling scientific cooperation and deterring Chinese academics from moving to or staying in the U.S.

Chen Gang, an MIT professor who had espionage charges against him under the China Initiative dismissed in January, said the program brought “unwarranted fear to the academic community” after the charges against him were dropped a year later.

“You work hard, you have good output, you build a reputation,” Chen said in a three-and-a-half-hour interview with *The New York Times* at his MIT office. “The government gets what they want, right? But in the end, you’re treated like a spy. That just breaks your heart. It breaks your confidence.” **BR**

Targeted Responses

Measures laid out to optimize COVID-19 control By Ji Jing

All passengers arriving from overseas will undergo five days of quarantine at designated sites plus three days of home quarantine, reduced from the previous seven-day quarantine at designated sites plus three-day health monitoring at home, according to a notice released by the State Council Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism Against COVID-19 on November 11, laying out 20 measures aimed at optimizing pandemic control.

The notice was released following a meeting held by the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on November 10, which produced the 20 measures after hearing a report on COVID-19 prevention and control. Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, presided over the meeting.

These measures would make COVID-19 prevention and control more scientific and targeted, so as to protect people's lives and health to the greatest extent, and minimize the impact of the pandemic on economic and social development, Fu Linghui, spokesperson of the National Bureau of Statistics, said on November 15 at a press conference on the country's recent economic performance.

Coordinating tasks

In addition to shortened quarantine periods for inbound travelers, the notice read quarantine periods for close contacts of confirmed cases (cases presenting symptoms) have been cut to five days of quarantine at designated sites plus three days of home quarantine, from the previous seven days of quarantine at designated sites plus three days of health monitoring at home.

Secondary close contacts of confirmed cases will no longer be identified. The categories of COVID-19 risk areas should be adjusted from high, medium and low, to high and low to minimize the number of personnel in quarantine or under health monitoring.

The notice scrapped the previous practice of suspending flight routes if inbound international flights on those routes carried a certain number of COVID-19 cases, and changed the negative COVID-19 test result requirement for inbound travelers from twice in the

48 hours before boarding to once. The notice said that inbound high-level business travelers and sports groups arriving in China from overseas should be exempted from quarantine and directly transferred to closed-loop bubbles via designated vehicles.

The meeting on November 10 underlined the need to continue to prioritize lives and health in addressing the pandemic. It emphasized the need to continue the strategy of preventing both inbound cases and domestic resurgences and adhering to the policy of dynamic zero-COVID-19. With the overarching goal of preventing inbound infections and domestic flare-ups, this policy means that when a new local outbreak occurs, measures will be taken to promptly stem the spread of the virus and clear new infections. It does not denote zero infection. The gist is to cut off the spread of new infections as soon as possible, instead of risking the virus spinning out of control.

The meeting noted that, at present, the coronavirus is still mutating, the global pandemic is still ongoing and there have been resurgences of the virus in China. China has a huge population and a large number of vulnerable groups and its development is unbalanced between its regions. The nation's healthcare resources would be insufficient to provide proper treatment to the many in need, should the virus take hold across China. New strains of the virus and its relatively higher prevalence in winter and spring when the weather is colder pose serious challenges to prevention and control efforts.

In November, the Chinese mainland saw a rise in the number of positive cases. The daily number of locally transmitted confirmed cases rose from 498 on October 31 to 1,133 on November 9, the day before the 20 measures were released, and to 1,568 on November 15, according to the National Health Commission (NHC). On November 15, 18,491 local asymptomatic carriers were newly identified.

The meeting also highlighted the importance of coordinating COVID-19 prevention efforts with economic and social development and minimizing the impacts of the pandemic on economic and social development.

Lei Haichao, deputy head of the NHC, said at a press conference on November 12 that the measures will help divert limited COVID-19 response resources to people and



Pharmacists prepare traditional Chinese medicinal herbs for COVID-19 patients at a hospital in Sanya, Hainan Province, on August 20



A staff member guides residents at a nucleic acid testing site in Changchun, Jilin Province, on October 2

areas at higher risks of virus transmission. By doing so, outbreaks can be contained as quickly as possible with minimum expenses.

Evidence-based adjustments

The 20 new measures are based on practical experience and assessment data, according to Lei.

Zhang Boli, a senior traditional Chinese medicine expert and a member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, told *Science and Technology Daily* on November 14 that the mutation of the virus has been an important basis for the adjustment of COVID-19 response measures.

Clinical experience shows that the rate of critical cases and deaths caused by the virus is very low at present and most of the current positive cases are asymptomatic. Vaccine-induced herd immunity has been formed in China as more than 90 percent of its total population have been fully vaccinated, including more than 85 percent of its senior population.

He added that according to what is known about virus mutation, the virus is likely becoming more stable and less virulent.

The shortening of the quarantine period is based on evidence, Chang Jile, deputy head of the Disease Prevention and Control Bureau under the NHC, said at the press conference. The incubation period of new strains is gradually reducing; as the longest period of incubation for the Omicron variants is around eight days, five days of centralized quarantine plus three days of home quarantine is adequate to control the risk of infection, Chang added.

The decision not to trace secondary contacts of confirmed cases is also based on science. Chang said secondary close contacts have an extremely low rate of infection—3.1 in 100,000—therefore they will no longer be traced. Medium risk areas also have had a low rate of positive cases—3 in 100,000—but designating such areas would cause a large number of people to be under quarantine and

result in a waste of human resources for pandemic control at the community level.

The notice requires more precise identification of high-risk areas. It said high-risk areas will cover residences of positive cases and places they have frequently visited, and should be limited to a certain building and should not be expanded recklessly. If no new cases are detected for five consecutive days, the high-risk label along with control measures should be lifted promptly.

The notice required more efforts in enhancing medical resources. Vaccination against COVID-19 should be advanced in an orderly manner, it said, adding booster vaccination coverage should be stepped up, especially for seniors.

The document also urged the stepping up of services to minimize interruptions to the life of those in quarantine. An Baojun, an official with the Ministry of Commerce, said at the press conference that the ministry will continue to strengthen market monitoring. He also said large supermarkets and agricultural product wholesale markets should identify potential temporary alternative locations in case of flare-ups. **BR**

Internet Connection

World builds consensus during Wuzhen conference By Lu Yan

About 3.7 billion people are not yet benefiting from access to the mobile Internet, John Hoffman, CEO of GSMA Ltd., an international association of mobile operators, said at the opening ceremony of the 2022 World Internet Conference (WIC) Wuzhen Summit in Wuzhen, Zhejiang Province, on November 9.

“So, as we work toward building a better future and a more inclusive and connected society, we must focus on closing these gaps to make sure everyone has the chance to benefit from the transformational power of Internet access,” Hoffman added.

Themed Toward a Shared Digital Future in a Connected World—Building a Community With a Shared Future in

Cyberspace, the three-day summit that concluded on November 11 saw the participation, both online and offline, of 2,100 guests from over 120 countries and regions, a record high.

Participant debates led to a consensus on enhancing win-win digital cooperation, innovative development of the digital economy and governance of the digital ecosystem, Ren Xianliang, WIC Secretary General, said, adding further efforts should render emerging technologies more accessible and affordable, improve people’s digital skills and build a

digital sharing system that benefits all.

China act

China ranks second in the world in terms of Internet development, according to the WIC bluebook released by the Chinese Academy of Cyberspace Studies during the summit. The bluebook consists of two separate reports—the World Internet Development Report 2022 and China Internet Development Report 2022. The reports have been released for six consecutive years since 2017 as an important part of the event.

The Global Internet Development Index ranking, detailed in the first report, was based on six parameters: infrastructure, innovation capacity, industrial development,



A robot dog draws the attention of visitors during the Light of Internet Expo, part of the 2022 World Internet Conference Wuzhen Summit, in Wuzhen, Zhejiang Province, on November 10

Internet application, cybersecurity and Internet governance. The top 10 economies leading Internet development this year are the U.S., China, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, the UK, Canada, Finland and Denmark.

China Internet Development Report 2022 features the achievements of the country's Internet sector in the past year. According to it, the value of China's digital economy reached 45.5 trillion yuan (\$6.3 trillion) in 2021, accounting for 39.8 percent of the country's GDP.

Data released by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology in May revealed that China had built nearly 1.6 million 5G base stations, constituting the world's largest 5G network.

A recent GSMA analysis showed that strong 5G demand on the Chinese mainland has made it the single largest 5G market in the world, with 5G connections accounting for over 75 percent of the global total at the end of 2021.

"We are now seeing 5G beginning to take off around the world with China as one of its global pioneers; with it, we are seeing even more transformation as 5G automates our factories, connects our cities, connects transport, provides innovative healthcare and remakes education," Hoffman said.

In China, a large number of farmlands now adopt intelligent management systems, thanks to the advancement of Internet science and technology like unmanned agricultural machinery, pest and meteorological monitoring and remote controlled irrigation. Zhu Yongtao, Senior Vice President of ZTE Corp., said that thanks to a project the company has participated in over recent years, the 5G signal now extends more than 100 km from the coast of Fujian Province, which not only makes it convenient and efficient for fishers to fish, but also enables them to quickly receive information and better understand the fishing situation when they go to sea. Take smart buoys, one of the most outstanding examples of connectivity applied to the sea. These provide ships with information on the location of schools of fish and allow them to know the approximate



A 5G technology exhibition in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, in August

number of fish, the species and other relevant data.

At the summit, 12 Outstanding Cases of Jointly Building a Community With a Shared Future in Cyberspace and 15 World Leading Internet Scientific and Technological Achievements were commended. The IPv6+ Standards Formulation, Device Development and Networking spearheaded by telecom service provider China Unicom was one of the laureates. The technology, based on the continuing evolution and innovation of Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6), the most recent version of the protocol, ensures higher-speed and safer online services.

For example, a smart data private network based on it was built during the Beijing Winter Olympics earlier this year, providing the shortest latency, the highest performance, and most reliable high-quality service to the Olympics and the Paralympics, Liang Baojun, Vice President of China Unicom, said.

Shared cyber future

The summit has been held for nine consecutive years and this year's event is the first WIC annual meeting following its inauguration as an international organization headquartered in Beijing earlier this year.

Using digital technology to promote social and economic development, bridge the development gap and achieve sustainable economic and social development in the post-COVID-19 era is crucial, Zhao Houlin, Secretary General of International Telecommunication Union, said during the summit. "Meeting these goals, however, requires considerable effort from the international community."

Echoing Zhao, Omar bin Sultan Al Olama, the United Arab Emirates Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications, called for joint efforts to advocate for the next generation of the Internet to be a collaborative mechanism, as well as an ecosystem that pushes for tolerance and the use of open, standard protocols. He said there are new opportunities in the metaverse, Web 3.0 and others, yet there are also certain risks of technological hegemony, new vulnerabilities, the use of these tools with malicious intent, political risks and the danger of cyber ►►



The ceremony announcing the world-leading Internet, scientific and technological achievements at the 2022 World Internet Conference on November 9

bullying or harassment.

“The more we work with each other and focus on building a global community that works as one uniform team to eradicate disease, poverty, climate change and inequality, the better life is going to be for all of us living in this global community,” the minister said.

Efforts have been made to address such challenges. There has been progress on data and privacy governance over the past three years, which includes the cyberspace standards endorsed at the United Nations in March 2021, the Data Governance Act of the European Union, and the Cybersecurity Law, the Data Security Law, and the Personal Information Protection Law of

China, as well as multilateral regimes, according to U.S.-China Business Council President Craig Allen.

However, given these disparate approaches, companies today face diverse regulatory regimes with different priorities and sensitivities, Allen said during the summit.

He added China and the U.S. should harmonize data movement across borders, and the connectivity between the two economies should not be disrupted unnecessarily. “Creation of innovative, pragmatic and well-reasoned policies is essential to unlocking the limitless potential of the digital revolution while balancing the need for security, safety and privacy,” he said.

On November 7, China’s State Council Information Office released a white paper titled *Jointly Build a Community With a Shared Future in Cyberspace*.

“To build a community with a shared future in cyberspace, we should hold to a vision of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits

in global governance and promote a multilateral, democratic and transparent international Internet governance system. We strive to realize the goals of innovation-driven development, security, order, equality, respect, openness and shared interests in cyberspace, so that cyberspace will be a community that benefits all of humanity,” the white paper said.

In doing so, basic principles, including respecting cybersovereignty, safeguarding peace and security, promoting openness and cooperation, and maintaining good order, should be adhered to, the white paper noted. **BR**

Copyedited by G.P. Wilson
Comments to luyan@cicgamerica.com

CHINA MOSAIC

Weekly video commentary direct from Beijing

中国3分钟



In Transition

The evolution of China's online shopping habits By Li Xiaoyang

Initiated by China's e-commerce giant Alibaba in 2009 and taking place from late October until November 11 this year, the annual online shopping bonanza Double 11, roughly China's answer to Black Friday and Cyber Monday, has been a great opportunity for many domestic and overseas consumers to make their purchases in order to obtain the greatest possible markdown.

Over recent years, the boom of e-commerce platforms, improved logistics services and new forms of promotion like live-streaming have boosted spending. Nevertheless, despite predictions of sharply declining sales due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the economic downturn this year, the results are likely to be better than expected.

Leading online retail platforms like Tmall, owned by Alibaba, and JD.com did not release their total Double 11 turnover figures for this year. Tmall said its gross merchandise volume (GMV) was roughly the same as the 2021 volume valued at 540.3 billion yuan (\$76.53 billion). JD.com's GMV growth was faster than the industrial average and its number of shoppers also saw significant growth, according to the company.

"Consumers as a whole were less fanatical this year compared with previous years. While some groups cut expenditure, demands for necessities remained and new demands further rose," Cui Lili, Director of the Institute of E-Commerce at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, told *Beijing Review*.

Still busy and buzzy

Cosmetics brand Florasis, which uses traditional Chinese elements in its packaging, saw its total sales on Tmall exceed 100 million yuan (\$14.1 million) within the first hour after Double 11 presales started at 8 p.m. on October 24. Tmall said the turnover of 102 brands, among which more than half were homegrown, topped the

100-million-yuan mark during the period. The hourly order volume of some brands was even bigger than their daily total for November 11 last year.

Moreover, according to the State Post Bureau, express delivery firms nationwide handled 4.27 billion parcels, mostly sent by e-commerce vendors to shoppers, from November 1 to 11. On November 11 alone, parcel volume hit 552 million, 1.8 times the daily average.

An increasing variety of imported goods also reached Chinese consumers through e-commerce platforms. According to JD.com, the overall transaction value of country-specific stores on the platform, popularly known as "national pavilions," increased by more than 12 times year on year within 10 minutes after pre-sales kicked off on October 24.

While Chinese consumers embraced global products, more Chinese products also entered the overseas market. On October 27, AliExpress, a global online retail marketplace operated by Alibaba, said its sales of China-made projectors had risen 250 percent year on year in Brazil in the previous 30 days.

New players also joined the game, like short video platforms Douyin, China's version of TikTok, and Kuaishou. According to Douyin, its average daily sales rose by 156 percent year on year during the event this year. Kuaishou said the value of e-commerce orders generated by its short videos rose by 515 percent year on year in the period.

As all participants vied to engage

live-streamers to attract potential shoppers, many online celebrities and influencers with large followings appeared in promotional activities to endorse products. Some even worked exhausting schedules as anchors.

However, it still takes time to improve newcomer recognition among consumers. Tao Hui, a Beijing-based Douyin user, often makes purchases while watching live-streams. However, she requires refunds on several products she purchased during the shopping festival. "The products I received were not the same as those shown in the live-streams, and after-sales services were slow. They need to offer a good customer experience," Tao told *Beijing Review*.

Changing consumers

Before the online retail boom, Polish-British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman already predicted how today's consumers would be living in his book *Work, Consumerism and the New Poor*, published in 1998. Bauman criticized how consumerism drove people to consume only to keep up with trends. His critique is gaining traction among Chinese consumers, who are becoming increasingly aware of the pitfalls of unrestrained consumerism.

"I only bought some snacks and baby products during the shopping festival this year, costing less than 200 yuan (\$28.47). This was largely because of my changing lifestyle," Pei Qi told *Beijing Review*.

According to the 30-something employee of a financial company in Hubei Province, she used to purchase piles of cosmetics, clothing and items for daily life worth over 2,000 yuan (\$284.7) during Double 11 in previous years. "But I found the complicated rules for discounts actually did not help cut costs all that much. And I have turned to the 'less is more' lifestyle and stopped stocking up on things at home."

Many people, like Pei, have redefined their priorities when making purchasing decisions. As



Parcels on an automated conveyor belt of logistics service provider SF Express in Tianjin on November 10

the ad campaign rolls out, people are only buying what they really need instead of making impulsive and excessive purchases. Low prices and huge discounts are no longer appealing for many consumers seeking high-quality and durable products.

In line with the new consumption concept, many young Chinese adults are living thriftier lives. Every social media platform gives people tips on how to save money, like how to avoid wasting that last bit of facial cleanser. But they are not becoming totally stingy. They are still willing to pay for items in which they have special interest, such as gaming devices and associated equipment, cultural products and distinctive clothing such as *hanfu*, the traditional dress of the Han ethnic group.

Huang Min, a 20-something illustrator based in Guangdong Province, purchased a virtual reality headset for around 2,000 yuan during this year's shopping festival. "There are indeed some discounts and freebies; I'm still willing to pay

for what I like," Huang told *Beijing Review*.

More people are participating in green consumption trends, and will trade or exchange idled items like electronic devices on platforms for secondhand products. According to data from online retailer Suning, volume of its trade-in transactions rose 122 percent month on month, and sales of energy-efficient home appliances on its platform jumped 141 percent year on year during this year's Double 11.

Various niche and personalized demands continued to expand. "This year, demands for jewelry, sports and pet products continued to grow," Cui said. Camping, indoor and outdoor exercise products were also popular. Data from Tmall showed sales volume of camping

equipment registered a 115-percent year-on-year surge, while that of the ski equipment and accessories grew 61.9 percent year on year within the first hour of this year's Double 11.

New forces

According to Cui, domestic economic downward pressure and external uncertainties have affected consumer expectations on income. But her observations are not all negative. Some small cities and towns have seen consumption upgrading, as the relocation of industries from coastal areas has boosted local growth and improved incomes.

"As e-commerce prevails, consumers in these places who have deeper pockets have greater access to the latest trends, which makes them strong driving forces in consumption," Cui said. **BR**

Copyedited by G.P. Wilson
Comments to lixiaoyang@cicgamerica.com

Moving Pictures

After 100 years of evolution, Chinese animation still harbors big dreams **By Yuan Yuan**

For three years, fans have been anticipating the release of the *Three-Body Problem* animated series, an adaptation of Liu Cixin's Hugo Award-winning sci-fi trilogy *Remembrance of Earth's Past*. The series will officially stream on Bilibili, a leading Chinese video-sharing platform mainly targeting young people, from December 3.

The debut date was announced on October 29 at an event called Anime Made by Bilibili 2022-2023, an annual event hosted by the platform since 2018 to showcase its new initiatives in the Chinese animation sector. As principal producer and financier of the animated series, Bilibili announced in 2019 it had secured the rights to adapt the novel into an animated series.

The series trailer has attracted 40 million views and 3 million followers over the past three years since the announcement was made, Li Ni, Vice President of Bilibili, revealed.

A bold decision

It is the highest-valued intellectual property movie Bilibili has ever produced since entering the animation industry in 2014. Animation studio YHKT Entertainment, which co-produced the series, said depicting scenes in the novel through animation was a “nightmare,” but that they had spared no efforts in its production.

“It was an adventurous decision to get involved in the animation industry back in 2014,” Li said. “In those days, China’s animation industry was struggling with various difficulties, including a severe lack of investment and an outflow of talent due to low salaries and gloomy career prospects.”

The decision to produce an animation based on the work of a Chinese author becomes even more unusual in light of the founding intention

of Bilibili. In 2009, wanting to share the latest episodes of a popular Japanese animated series, a few fans of anime, comics and games in China created the Bilibili website. The website then unexpectedly turned into a leading video community in China.

“The childhood television memories of people born in the 1980s and 90s may be dominated by animation, but these mainly came from Japan and the United States,” Zhu Chengming, a Bilibili executive, said on November 10 at the International Communication Forum on Chinese Culture in Beijing. “Chinese animation did shine, but also faded into obscurity during those decades.”

An early start

Animation in China began in 1922, when four brothers from one family, surnamed Wan, issued a short advertisement for typewriters. This was roughly 14 years after the release of the world’s first fully animated cartoon—1908’s *Fantasmagorie*.

Using equipment from a bankrupt American entrepreneur, the Wan brothers created several early animation works in a tiny Shanghai studio. With an early interest in art, the brothers had mastered puppetry and incorporated it into their animated works along with other skills and elements of traditional Chinese arts.

In 1940, inspired by the Disney animated feature film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the Wan brothers completed China’s first feature-length animation *Princess Iron Fan*, based on a chapter from China’s classic novel *Journey to the West*.

A smash hit, the film, whose copy was then looted by the invading Japanese forces, was shown in Japan during the War of Chinese People’s Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45). It was this film that inspired Osamu



Animation aficionados at the opening of an animation-themed bookstore in Beijing on November 11



Tezuka to create Japanese manga series *Astro Boy* in the 1960s.

The foundation of the Shanghai Animation Film Studio in 1957 lent impetus to China's animation industry. *Havoc in Heaven*, another adaption of several chapters from *Journey to the West*, was produced in the 1960s by Wan Laiming, one of the brothers, who became known as the "Walt Disney of China," and the other directors.

The film was a huge international success. In 1978, it won the outstanding film award at the London International Film Festival and went on to be broadcast by the BBC in the 1980s. It was also broadcast on Swedish, Danish and Russian television.

The rise

Chinese folk stories and art forms are rich sources of creative inspiration within China's animation industry. However, during the low ebbs of the industry, Chinese creators have struggled to dig into its goldmine.

<http://www.bjreview.com>

China's first International Cartoon & Animation Festival took place in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, in 2005 and has since become an annual event in the city, known to be at the digital forefront. The festival has become one of the largest gatherings for creators and fans of animation in China.

In 2015, *Monkey King: Hero Is Back* by Tian Xiaopeng became a blockbuster in China's film market, raking in box office sales of almost 1 billion yuan (\$143 million) and being regarded as a new milestone in the rise of Chinese animation. In the following years, several other animated films, including *Big Fish and Begonia*, have seen remarkable success.

In 2019, the animated fantasy film *Ne Zha*, an adaptation depicting a famous Chinese mythological character from the epic novel *Investiture of the Gods*, was a big hit, with record-high box office sales of over 5 billion yuan (\$715 million).

At Bilibili's anime event this year, many of the 49 anime series lineups announced were based on Chinese ancient legendary stories, such as the new season of *Fog Hill of Five Elements*, which incorporates cultural elements taken from *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*.

Liu Rui, a college student in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, who has been an animation fan for more than 10 years, regards the rich reserve of Chinese traditional stories as both a wonderful advantage for Chinese creators and a limit.

"Most Chinese animation is based on Chinese myths and legends, which has made it somewhat monotonous," she said. "I think our creators could go outside the box and create something more distinctive," she told *Beijing Review*.

The animated adaptation of *The Three-Body Problem* is regarded as an attempt in this direction. "I am looking forward to being thrilled by the animation of the upcoming series on December 3," author Liu said. **BR**

Copyedited by G.P. Wilson
Comments to yuan yuan@qicgamericas.com

Pouring Infusion

A Colombian entrepreneur cheers China's evolving spirits By Magdalena Rojas

With a handful of beverage brands registered in China, Colombian David Muñoz's business is on the rise as he conquers new areas of the Chinese consumer market.

Muñoz has been living in Shanghai for almost 15 years, first as a representative of the family business and then in charge of his own company. With a characteristic Medellín accent adding to his already abundant charisma, Muñoz is like a people magnet. His family once owned an import company acquiring food and beverages from China, Malaysia and Viet Nam. He arrived in Shanghai in 2008, just as the Beijing Summer Olympics got underway, marking China's "before and after" in the eyes of the world.

During the first four years, Muñoz was in charge of supervising company cargo traveling to Colombia, but with the rise of the U.S. dollar in 2012, this business ceased to be lucrative. "I had one year to refocus my energies and reinvent myself in Asia," Muñoz said of that time. After taking a break, he decided to channel his energy into shaping his own company in 2013 and 2014, at which time Vitaespirits was born, introducing liquors, drinks and food from Latin America to the Chinese market.

Muñoz added how the early onset was a period of great sacrifice, but also one of learning. And even with this company up and running, the Colombian wanted to go one step further, which is why he established a second business in the summer of 2017, namely, Crimson Spirits. "The imports were very successful and we developed a large commercial channel featuring distributors, bars, restaurants and hotels; but we were always working with our suppliers' brands," he recalled.

A new blend

For a long time, Muñoz had wanted to create his own brand, but he didn't know how. Until one day, Helena Kidacka, his partner and now wife,



David Muñoz (left) at the Crimson Pangolin distillery with master distiller Mark Lloyd in Changsha, Hunan Province

suggested: Why not try gin?

The alcoholic beverage is obtained by distillation from a base of grain (wheat or barley). In a further procedure, botanicals along with water are added until the desired flavors are met.

To be called a gin, the spirit must have a predominant flavor of juniper berries. Modern-day London dry gin can trace its beginnings back to the 12th century and over time became one of England's flagship spirits. Muñoz and his partner took all these traditional elements as a base, but at the same time tried to provide distinctive characteristics from the Chinese palate. Their dedication resulted in Crimson Pangolin Gin, the star product of Crimson Spirits which has six editions to date. Its raw materials hail exclusively from China, such as juniper berries from Shandong Province, lemons from Hainan Province, and coriander seeds, spices, and chili peppers from Hunan and Sichuan provinces.

Being made in China is one factor that has helped the brand better position itself against the competition. "As a local product, we have the advantage of faster production—at a more competitive cost," Muñoz explained.

Imported products, in contrast, are more expensive due to the chain of logistics, the payment of tariffs and, lately, several trade barriers stemming from a challenging geopolitical landscape.

Since 2017, the company has seen exponential expansion courtesy of a series of new products in its beverage portfolio. All of them respond to a certain niche and have been designed with a clear objective; from Sipstainable, an ecological alternative that comes in 100-percent recyclable five-liter packaging, to Gincha Hard Tea Seltzer, a ready-to-drink cocktail designed for women between 20 and 30. Meanwhile, Nine Wild Tales, another one of Crimson Spirits' distinctive liquors, is the first of its kind as it is based on one of the most popular ingredients in Chinese cooking: the Sichuan chili pepper. "We traveled to the most remote towns in China in search of the best chili peppers to make a spectacular product," Muñoz stated in an interview with *China Hoy*, a Spanish monthly published by CICG Americas.

The entrepreneur has managed to combine keen business acumen with many years of experience in the field. In that sense, he has also become an accomplished mixologist, making his brands known through a range of inventive cocktails served up in bars and restaurants across different cities. "I'm very social and I love being around people," he said. "We really care about our customers' opinions and intend to learn from the consumer experience."



COURTESY PHOTO

Colombian entrepreneur David Muñoz is also an experienced mixologist

<http://www.bjreview.com>

Shaking things up

One of the most valuable lessons China has taught Muñoz over the years is about the power of adaptation, starting from the fact that the country is an ancient civilization. "The Chinese do not adapt to you and your products, you adapt to them," he said.

Muñoz has had to master new strategies to carve out his space in the market. Unlike Latin America and other parts of the world, where supermarkets and stores are often the first point of purchase for groceries and beverages, the situation in China is very different. Thanks to the country's tech wave over the past decade, the Chinese have also changed their consumption habits, moving toward a more convenient and faster format through online shopping. "Most consumption here occurs through e-commerce," he added. "Tmall, JD.com and Taobao account for 90 percent of business-to-customer alcohol sales."

Muñoz elaborated that although the spirits sector is growing by leaps and bounds, this industry is still in its infancy, so huge potential lies ahead. As traditional Chinese spirits and *baijiu* (Chinese liquor usually distilled from fermented sorghum) target a more traditional, older demographic while the younger generations no longer consume them, Muñoz spotted an in. This progression, coupled with the greater purchasing power of a continually expanding middle-income group in China, lends Crimson Spirits products a wide market. "We try to create more 'educational' campaigns, and the Chinese love that; they love to learn how to make a cocktail or how a certain drink is produced."

This year has been one of the toughest years for China's food and beverage industry due to COVID-19 flare-ups. But Muñoz remains upbeat and hopeful about the future. He believes related restrictions will soon be lifted, allowing the Crimson Spirits storyline to further unfold. "We want to be the most popular gin in all of Asia as we strongly believe the region will be the future of the global economy," he concluded with visible conviction. Cheers to that. **BR**

This is an edited version of an article first published in *China Hoy*
 Copyedited by Elsbeth van Paridon
 Comments to yanwei@cicgamericas.com



BEIJING REVIEW IS NOW AVAILABLE IN FACTIVA

Beijing Review is now available as a source in Factiva, a leading, global collection of licensed news, Web content, and company data. Factiva has 32,000 sources from nearly every country worldwide, in 28 languages, and is owned by Dow Jones.



中国儿童少年基金会
CHINA CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS' FUND



WECHAT QR CODE

SPRING BUD PROJECT

TOGETHER LET'S HELP LITTLE FLOWERS BLOSSOM

Virtual Reality or Insanity?

More brands want a piece of the metahuman marketing pixels

By Elsbeth van Paridon

November 15, newsflash: “FBI ‘extremely concerned’ about China’s influence through TikTok on U.S. users,” CNBC reported, citing Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Christopher Wray as telling lawmakers he was “extremely concerned” about the popular short video app’s operations in the U.S.

Wray’s remarks built on those from other government officials and members of U.S. Congress who have expressed deep skepticism about the ability of the Chinese-owned platform (its parent company is Beijing-based Bytedance) to protect U.S. user information from what they consider an adversarial government.

Being a resident of China’s capital who may not be on TikTok but certainly is on its Chinese peer, or should we say “parent,” Douyin, Wray’s remarks caused the mind of this fashion and urban culture-obsessed author to wander and wonder... Who in China’s social media scene really does wield the biggest influence of them all? The answer was staring her in the face: the virtual idol.

A double act

China’s virtual idols, also referred to as virtual key opinion leaders (KOLs) or influencers, promote an extensive range of products. And it’s increasingly difficult to tell them apart from actual humans. Whether or not that’s a good thing remains open to debate, but with digital products, think digital collectibles (China’s version of NFTs), and other innovations on the rise, their staying power seems to be real.

During China’s annual Double 11 online shopping extravaganza, which kicked off presales in late October and reached its

zenith on November 11, it was all systems go for top retail players to show off their marketing chops. Over the past year, that’s meant utilizing the technological and digital advancements surging through the country’s e-commerce landscape, as well as tapping into local consumers’ changing palates—particularly catering to Gen Z’s spending power.

China’s e-commerce giant and Double 11 initiator Alibaba also utilized its most popular virtual idol, and employee, AYAYI during the retail fest. This first metahuman, or hyper-realistic digital human, is the brainchild of leading technology supplier RM Inc. and made her debut on Chinese shopping platform Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book), mainly targeting young female customers living in the nation’s top-tier cities, on May 20 last year. AYAYI rapidly gained 40,000 followers thanks to her incredible realism and the fact many immediately idolized her flawless skin and perfect makeup. Alibaba’s virtual male idol Noah, first unveiled in May, took center stage to promote electronics giant Haier during Double 11.

As part of Alibaba’s Metaverse Art Exhibitions, broadcast on both its Taobao and Tmall shopping platforms on the first day of presales, the dynamic metahuman duo presented a series of products and experiences to consumers via virtual reality.

This new generation of idols, models and influencers is well on its way to becoming the latest revolutionary tactic in advertising. But what’s their appeal?

Flaunting the flaws

“Your skin appears to be a bit dry,” a netizen commented on a short video posted by

Angie, a popular influencer who made her first social media appearance in the fall of 2020. “You should put on a [moisturizing] mask.” Here’s the thing: Just like AYAYI, Angie isn’t even a real person; she’s a virtual idol.

But unlike flawless AYAYI, Angie flaunts her flaws; plus, she doesn’t pose in designer clothing, walk the runway or promote skincare routines. She’s a sweet 18-year-old with flushed cheeks and short dark hair casually tucked behind her ears. This idol even cries and enjoys feeling the wind graze her face and eating ice cream. She plays the guitar and the piano, performs for small crowds wearing a baggy jumpsuit and loves doing regular “stuff.” And that’s why she has connected with a significant fanbase. Between Weibo, China’s Twitter, and Douyin, Angie already has roughly 350,000 followers who identify with her simple “lifestyle.”

Oh, and she likes to yawn.

China’s virtual influencers are swiftly becoming a force to be reckoned with. Their mostly Gen Z and millennial audience has now reached almost 390 million people. According to Statista.com, China’s virtual idol market was worth \$960 million in 2021 and brought an added value of \$15.8 billion to related sectors. Projections indicate the latter figure will increase by about 70 percent each year and is set to reach \$49.3 billion by 2023.

Chinese social media platforms offer this new generation of influencers, and the companies behind them, a massive variety of commercial opportunities to expand their audiences. “Virtual KOLs are taking them by embodying all kinds of different characters: from the average girl next door

to the next top model, from hyper-realistic rendered images to synthetic comic representations, from selling products in live-streams to telling short stories in social media story formats. The possibilities for engagement are endless and Chinese virtual KOLs are exploring every angle,” according to Beijing-based China market research firm Daxue Consulting.

The success of these idols comes from their ability to connect with fans through a broad, complex social media web. They use platforms like Weibo, Douyin and video sharing platform Bilibili, as well as retail platforms like Little Red Book and Taobao. These platforms, not available to Western shoppers, provide virtual KOLs with assorted possibilities to grow their online followings and cash in on their connections with fans.

Being virtual is all the hype right now, and many brands want a piece of the pixels.

Pixelated lines?

As the social media crawl continues, this whole virtual idol scene at first glance, or even after scratching the surface, appears very catchy indeed. But it does cause yours truly to ponder that ever-present question... What’s the catch?

There are many unique advantages to using virtual idols. They don’t have to deal with restrictions of time, space or physical conditions. For both fans and businesses, virtual influencers do not have dark sides, so their public profile will always remain unblemished. Furthermore, they do not age, but they can continually evolve with technology and they can continue to grow



Vocaloid (or virtual singer) Luo Tianyi is one of China’s most popular virtual idols. She even performed the official theme song for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, titled *Time to Shine*, at the opening ceremony of the Meet in Beijing Olympic Culture & International Arts Festival on January 6. Luo has 5 million followers on Weibo, China’s Twitter

with their fans. Hence, their reputation will stay intact, their content production will be efficient, and their potential will only become greater.

In the long run, the boundary between virtual reality and actual reality will only grow increasingly blurred, or pixelated—if you will, and the user experience will become more immersive. According to experts in the digital field, the

metaverse, where immersion and participation reach their peaks, will become the ultimate form of the Internet. Whether or not that’s a good thing and whether increased immersion in virtual reality will eventually lead to some type of “insanity,” only time will tell.

But China isn’t one to wait and see.

The Chinese Government in January issued a state-sanctioned report warning Internet companies to tread carefully when looking to deploy virtual KOLs or idols in the metaverse. This research report on public opinion risk management in the virtual idol industry also warned of “public opinion bubbles hyping metaverse interest beyond reality,” basically cautioning people not to idolize the new sphere.

China increasing its involvement in the sector doesn’t come as too big of a surprise. The state already

cracked down on the country’s “chaotic” fan culture in the summer of 2021 and virtual influencers do not belong to a “land beyond the law” either, it seems, with the report vaguely noting some virtual idols are “used to engage in illegal activities” that “may affect and impact social cohesion and values” and pose a risk through promoting the same intense fan culture previously inspired only by their human counterparts.

“The problem of virtual idols in cyberspace may lead to a crisis of trust in real-life society,” the report concluded.

But speaking of “real-life”... Just who are the real humans wielding their influence over these virtual ones? **BR**

Copyedited by G.P. Wilson
Comments to elsbeth@cicgamericas.com

Room With a View

Generations of ancient Chinese literati already knew all too well that a study could, or rather should, be a place to get far away from the mad-ding crowd and unleash the power of deep thought.

The Palace Museum on August 30 unveiled an exhibition on the Chinese study, which will conclude on November 30. More than 100 cultural items give visitors a glimpse of what a day in the life of an intellectual must have looked like 1,000 years ago. The museum also offers people the opportunity to embrace their inner tranquility and be alone with their thoughts surrounded by the authentic-looking decor.

A study was not only a place for reading, writing and collecting books, but also the epitome of cultural inheritance and prosperity. This exhibition explores and explains the

cultural core of the Chinese study and lends this traditional facility contemporary meaning, revealing the close relationship between the intellectuals and the items they kept in their studies.

The Four Treasures of the Study, also known as the Four Jewels of the Study or the Four Friends of the Study, are different expressions of the four essential implements in Chinese calligraphy: writing brush, paper, ink and inkstone, all highlights of the exhibition. Exquisitely manufactured stationery and several items once owned by royalty reflect how devoted the literati were to their work and how the ancient Chinese created so many masterpieces through their expert use of those four tools. **BR**

(Text and photos by Wei Yao)

Copyedited by Elsbeth van Paridon
Comments to dingying@bicgamerica.com





1. Visitors study an ancient Chinese astrological chart inside Beijing's Palace Museum on November 8. Chinese astrology itself dates back more than 5,000 years

2. A travel set of the Four Treasures of the Study—writing brush, paper, ink, inkstone—owned by Emperor Qianlong (1711-99) of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Qianlong was known as a cultural emperor and was himself a poet and an art collector

3. People check out a display dedicated to the Four Treasures of the Study on November 8. The actual term was first created by literati during the period of the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420-589)

4. A visitor takes in a mirrored art installation created by Zhang Yonghe, a contemporary Chinese artist, on November 8

5. The exhibition reproduces one of Emperor Qianlong's study rooms



The Fine Line Between Inspiration and Infringement

Popular Chinese costume drama *Empresses in the Palace* (2011), which tells the story of a girl's survival amid jealous intrigue and betrayal within the imperial palace walls, was recently thrust back into the spotlight after a 15-minute remake of the TV series starring 16 retirees with an average age of 62 went viral on social media. It drew mixed reactions with some, including the original drama's producer, accusing the video of copyright infringement, while others interpreted it as an invitation for younger generations, as well as the entertainment industry, to reflect on how to better address older people's needs for spiritual enrichment.

Liu Tingting (Gmw.cn): These retirees and the producers of the remake only see the sunny side—the fun and the social media likes, while overlooking the dark underbelly where possible copyright infringement has occurred.

For many, copyright infringement is a phrase reserved for all-out piracy. However, copyright does not equal the right to copy. The Copyright Law of the People's Republic of China states 17 derivative work-related rights, including the rights of adaptation, revision, performance, cinematography, and communication through information networks. Without authorization from the rightful copyright owner of *Empresses in the Palace*, the remake's performance, production, and online promotion all breach the law.

Exceptions do exist. According to the law, a work may be used without permission for purposes of teaching or scientific research, the user's own personal study, research or appreciation, and nonprofit live performance. The remake clearly does not fit these exceptions, as the production company charged the participants a fee, and they in turn have garnered online fame and possibly revenue.

A sharp line must be drawn between entertainment and copyright infringement

so that the newly emerging business of film and television remakes can thrive within the set parameters of the law.

Shen Jiequn (Youth.cn): The copyright issue is undeniably important, yet the popularity of the remake also reflects an increasing awareness among younger generations of their parents' need for a rich and fulfilling retirement.

With advanced technologies and all other material conditions of happiness in place, older people now have many entertainment options to choose from, for example, online shopping and TV dramas. However, these choices do not alter the fact that life for many seniors is rather lonely.

According to media reports, the remake was first proposed by the son of a participant, who wanted to spice up his mother's dull retired life by shooting a short film. The project turned out to be a dream come true for the senior cast, who got to enjoy the whole package that comes with acting—being trained in traditional etiquette, getting into character,

having an opening ceremony and a wrap party. Their joy, which they shared on social media, has inspired many younger people to anticipate a full and exciting life in retirement.

Xiao Gudong (Tmtpost.com): With China's population aging at a breakneck pace, recent years have seen a proliferation of TV series and variety shows that closely examine senior citizens. Frequently explored topics include love in old age, generation gaps and life in a nursing home. However, the majority of viewers are still the younger generations.

To precisely target the senior audience's preferences, the entertainment industry has enlisted two strikers. The first is traditional television, where older generations can find content and services catering to their interests. The second, surprisingly so, are emerging sectors in the entertainment industry. With the rise of online influencers, some retirees have found their voice on short video platforms, where users are drawn to content like retired state banquet master chefs performing their culinary art, or a troupe of retirees remaking famous TV dramas.

In fact, this remake of *Empresses in the Palace* can be understood as a senior version of *jubensha*, a Chinese murder mystery game that involves live action roleplaying. The phenomenon suggests the increasingly active participation of older people in recreational activities once exclusive to Gen Zs.

Therefore, the remake is not a bad phenomenon that can be easily negated on purely legal grounds, but part of the huge market for senior-targeted entertainment. The task at hand is to walk the fine line between maximizing economic value and protecting copyrights. **BR**





BEIJING REVIEW VOL.64 NO.51

Kindle Edition

by Beijing Review (Author) | Format: Kindle Edition

[See all formats and editions](#)

Kindle
\$1.00

[Read with Our Free App](#)

Beijing Review is China's only national English newsweekly published by China International Communications Group Center for the Americas.

Product details

ASIN : B09NBQR8JD

Publication date : December 8, 2021

Language : English

File size : 1845 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

X-Ray : Not Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 91 pages

Lending : Not Enabled

**Now available
on
amazon**

In addition to *Beijing Review*, CICG Americas publishes *China Hoy*, a monthly publication launched in 1960, aiming to bridge the gap between China and the Spanish-speaking world—particularly Latin-American countries.

Website: www.chinahoy.com.cn

