

OPINION: A CURIOUS XINJIANG CRUSADE P.28 | FEATURES: NEW CHINA-LAOS CONNECTION P.34

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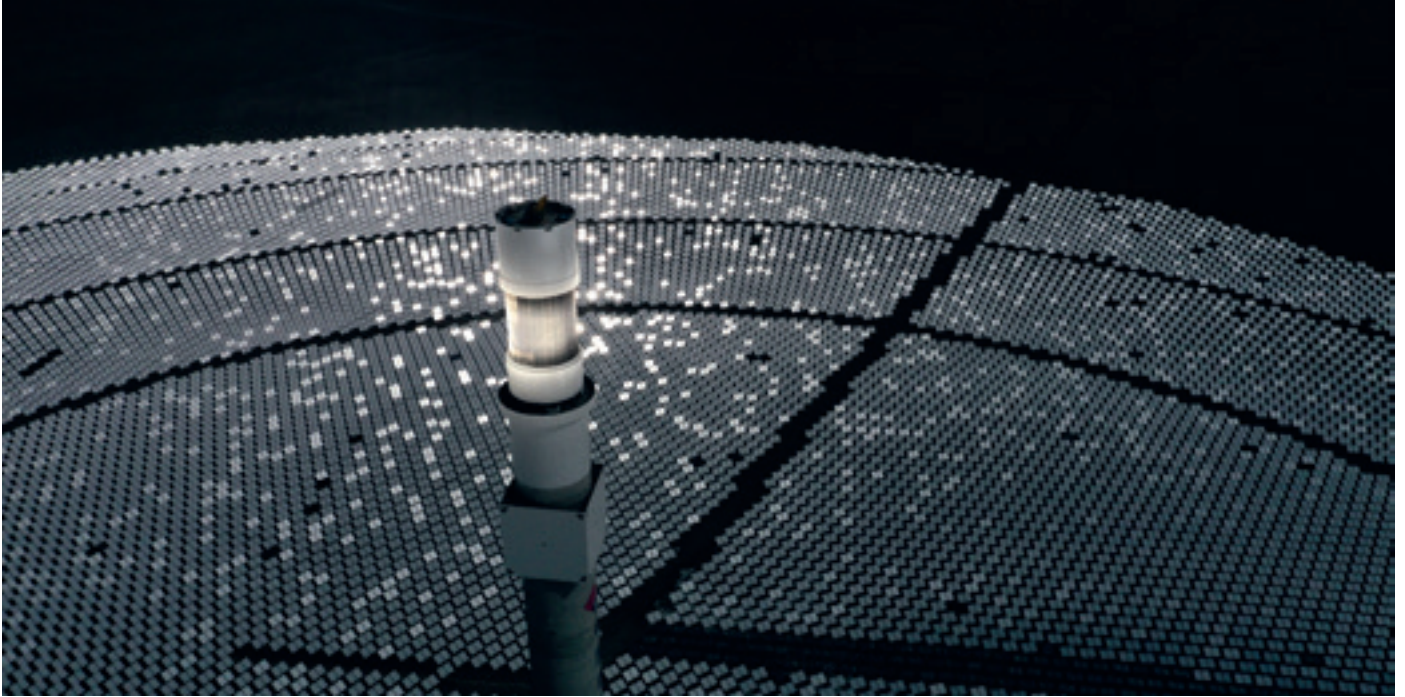
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CONTENTS

EDITOR'S DESK

02 Stability Powers Progress

THIS WEEK

COVER STORY

12 The Greater Calling

China will roll out new measures to boost the economy

18 Promise and Practice

Opening up is a fundamental driving force for development

20 Belt and Road Unites

China and Latin America

Pursuing growth exchanges in a relationship of equality

OPINION

22 A Shift in Democracy

The 21st century requires a bolder political mindset and paradigm

24 Beyond the Rails

New steel artery proves game changer in regional logistics

26 Washington's War Drums

Productive diplomacy must outrank destructive war policy

28 Does It All Make Zenz?

The "credentials" of a self-declared German expert on Xinjiang

30 Tough 'Love'

Going hard on China: the new American "politically correct"

31 A New Vision for Human Rights

People-centered democracy is a unique and tangible phenomenon

FEATURES

34 A Land-Linked Future

China and Laos lay down the tracks for regional connectivity

38 No Gravity, All Gravitas

A class from space sees students explore water buoyancy

40 Crossing the Straits

The mainland is the best investment destination for Taiwan enterprises

42 The Bodyguard

Zhang Meili, China's most striking female protection officer

CULTURE

46 Going With the Ancient Grain

Shangshan culture, the ancient architects behind global rice-farming

EXPAT'S EYE

48 A Tale of Tribes and Traditions

Designers dig deep into their ancestral heritage

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Stability Powers Progress

The essence of China's economic policy for 2022 is to "prioritize stability while pursuing steady progress," as signaled by the annual Central Economic Work Conference which took place from December 8 to 10. This shows that the Chinese Government has a clear understanding of the risks hidden within the country's current economic operations and has thus far paid these the proportional attention. The conference also studied the current situation at home and abroad before setting clear targets for economic development in 2022.

The session further outlined the 2022 economic tasks from seven aspects: continuing the implementation of a proactive fiscal policy and prudent monetary policies, the uninterrupted stimulation of market entity vitality via macroeconomic policies, a deepening of supply-side structural reform with a focus on smoothing out national economy circulation, the promotion and concrete application of sci-tech policies, growth vitalization through reform and opening-up strategies, the upgrade to a more balanced and coordinated regional development, as well as the guarantee that China's social policies protect the people's wellbeing.

Here, the emphasis lies on both the quantity and quality of economic growth

as these are the means to rapid and high-quality progress.

For the time being, China's economic growth faces unprecedented difficulties. The meeting pointed out that, whereas economic success should indeed be confirmed, downward pressures from shrinking demand, supply shocks and weakening expectations must not be ignored. This realization of current circumstances also implies that despite an upward trend, steady growth is not an easy feat amid unilateral practices on the part of certain countries and a devastating global pandemic. The Central Government presented corresponding policies to cope with the veiled perils, including tax and fee cuts in designated areas, sufficient fiscal expenditure, accelerating spending pace and investing in basic infrastructure reasonably in advance.

The key to steady economic growth wholly depends on China's own performance. In the coming year, the policies issued by the economic work conference will come into effect. To accurately identify challenges and adequately address them, executing aggressive reforms and adaptation when necessary, will help ensure a more effective, equitable and sustainable economic growth.



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УПРАВЛЕНИЕ

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ВСТРЕЧА ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ КНР СИ ЦЗИНЬПИНА И ПРЕЗИДЕНТА РФ В. В. ПУТИНА
В ФОРМАТЕ ВИДЕОКОНФЕРЕНЦИИ



VIDEO MEETING

President Xi Jinping holds talks with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Beijing on December 15 via video link. It was their second virtual meeting this year, which covered a wide range of topics including democracy, the joint pandemic response and bilateral trade. The two leaders agreed to have an in-person meeting in February 2022 when Putin will travel to China for the opening ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022.



Flashing Sights

A meteor strikes through the skies at Yulong Snow Mountain in Lijiang City, Yunnan Province, on December 14. The Geminids meteor shower of 2021 reached its peak that day.

National Memorial

China's national flag flew at half-mast in front of a darkly-dressed crowd as the country held its eighth national memorial ceremony for the victims of the Nanjing Massacre on December 13.

Despite the winter chill, thousands of people attended the ceremony in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, with white flowers on their lapels conveying their condolences.

The Nanjing Massacre took place when Japanese troops captured the city on December 13, 1937. Over six weeks, they killed more than 300,000 Chinese civilians and unarmed soldiers in one of the most barbaric episodes of World War II.

In 2014, China's top legislature designated December 13 as the national memorial day

for the victims of the Nanjing Massacre.

Fireworks Ban

Beijing municipal authorities will ban the use of fireworks throughout the city from January next year.

Under the ban, fireworks will not be available at retail outlets in the city during the Spring Festival holiday of 2022, the office of the Beijing Municipal Fireworks Safety Management Coordination Group announced on December 14. Any official firework displays during celebrations and holidays will be approved and announced by the Beijing Municipal Government.

So far, all districts except Fangshan and Mentougou have already placed bans on fireworks. These two suburban districts will start the complete

ban from January 1, 2022. The ban, however, will not apply to the Universal Beijing Resort, which will be permitted to stage firework displays approved by police authorities, the office said.

Tree-Planting Campaign

Volunteers in China have planted 78.1 billion trees since the launch of the country's voluntary tree-planting campaign 40 years ago, data from the National Greening Commission showed on December 13.

The resolution on launching a nationwide voluntary tree-planting campaign, adopted in December 1981, made afforestation a responsibility for all eligible Chinese citizens and has helped make the country greener.

China's forest coverage rate has almost doubled from

12 percent in the early 1980s to 23.04 percent currently, and its forest stock volume grew from 9.03 billion to 17.56 billion cubic meters. The green coverage in urban areas expanded to 41.11 percent during the same period.

Chinese citizens can participate in tree planting in more than 50 ways, including by adopting trees and making donations, which can also be done online.

Plateau Base Station

The first plateau 5G base station in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region began providing 5G services on December 9.

Standing at 3,700 meters above sea level, the 5G base station was built in Xeyidula Township in Hotan Prefecture, at the foot of the Karakorum Mountains, according to the Communications Administration of Xinjiang.

China's four major telecom firms, China Telecom, China Mobile, China Unicom and China Tower have cooperated on the building, use and maintenance of the 5G base station. The signal of the base station covers a 5-km radius.

With an average elevation of 4,600 meters, the border town Xeyidula is a very popular tourist destination, receiving about 2,000 tourists every day in summer and autumn.

More than 12,800 5G base stations have been built across Xinjiang this year, bringing the region's number of 5G base stations to over 19,000, with an investment of nearly 2 billion yuan (\$313.5 million), according to the Communications Administration of Xinjiang.

COVID-19 Study

Chinese scientists have revealed that COVID-19 infections significantly accelerate the aging of lung

tissue, especially in the elderly.

According to a report by *Science and Technology Daily*, the main cause underlying COVID-19 fatality was respiratory failure caused by severe lung injury.

To determine which parts of the lungs were damaged by the virus, a joint Chinese research team analyzed a variety of cells, including immune cells, in lung tissue from autopsy samples of elderly COVID-19 patients.

According to their research results, published in the highly selective peer-reviewed journal *Nature Cell Biology*, lung tissue taken from the patients showed high levels of inflammation as well as signs that normal cell division had ceased due to the infection.

The research also revealed a reduction in the active substances that support the normal functions of the cells lining the lung that facilitate exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between inhaled air and the bloodstream. Lungs aside, COVID-19 may also accelerate the aging of other organs after attacking them.

Panda Fossil

A giant panda fossil, dating back over 100,000 years, has been uncovered in Asia's longest cave

in Guizhou Province, researchers said on December 8.

Researchers from the Institute of Mountain Resources at the Guizhou Academy of Sciences found two fossils of the species in Shuanghe Cave, Zunyi City. With the help of tooth-enamel dating technologies, one of the fossils was identified as a wild giant panda living about 102,000 years ago. The other is believed to have existed on the planet around 49,000 years ago.

It is rare to discover such well-preserved giant panda fossils anywhere, said Wang Deyuan, a research assistant at the institute.

Shuanghe Cave was an attractive habitat for giant pandas at the time, due to its complex internal structure and many connected caverns. So far, nearly 30 giant panda fossils have been discovered inside the cave.

The cave is also rich in other mammalian fossils. Fossils of jackals, rhinoceroses, black bears, stegodons, large Indian civets, and other animals have been found in previous excavations.

Mausoleum Identified

A large-scale mausoleum in Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi Province, has been identified as belonging to Emperor Wendi of the Western



Sowing Hope

Villagers plant tea seedlings at a cultivation base in Cuoping Village in Ningde City, Fujian Province, on December 11.

Han Dynasty (202 B.C.-A.D. 25), local authorities said on December 14.

The mausoleum, located in Jiangcun Village on the eastern outskirts of Xi'an, is surrounded by more than 100 ancient tombs and outer burial pits. Excavation has been carried out in the area since 2017, with numerous relics unearthed including dressed pottery figurines, crossbows, and official seals.

The mausoleum has no grave mound, and there are four ramps descending to the entrance of the burial chamber

placed 2 to 4.5 meters underground. The chamber, with its base 27 to 30 meters below the surface, is 74.5 meters long and 71.5 meters wide.

Emperor Wendi, with the personal name Liu Heng, was famous for his frugality and benevolence. Under his more than 20 years of rule, the dynasty's economy prospered and the population increased.

The mausoleum is among three major archaeological findings unveiled by the National Cultural Heritage Administration in Beijing on December 14.



Agricultural Park

Employees work at an agricultural industrial park in Shache, a county in Kashgar, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, on December 12. Located on the southwestern edge of the Taklimakan Desert, the county's economic development was restricted by the vast desert until the establishment of the agricultural industrial park this year. Greenhouses plus sheep and poultry breeding bases have been established in the park, helping approximately 3,000 villagers find jobs near their homes and increase their income.

THIS WEEK ECONOMY

Economic Data

China's economy continued its recovery momentum in November despite downward pressure, with major indicators staying within a reasonable range, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed on December 15.

Retail sales of consumer goods went up 3.9 percent year on year in the month, while value-added industrial output increased 3.8 percent year on year.

Fixed assets investment gained 5.2 percent year on year in the first 11 months of the year, with investment in hi-tech industries accelerating, the data showed.

The real sector of the economy registered solid expansion. The output of the hi-tech manufacturing sector jumped 15.1 percent in November, up 0.4 percentage point from October.

Specifically, the output of

new-energy vehicles logged an increase of 112 percent, while that of industrial robots and integrated circuits improved 27.9 percent and 11.9 percent, respectively.

Tariff Adjustment

The Customs Tariff Commission of the State Council announced on December 15 that provisional tariffs will be implemented on 954 imported commodities that are lower than the most-favored-nation rates.

The adjustment, involving commodities like cancer drugs, aquatic products and baby clothing, will take effect on January 1, 2022, according to a circular from the council. Ski gear, artworks, auto parts that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, high-voltage cables for high-speed trains and fuel-cell components are also on the list.

China, considering the

development of domestic industries and changes in supply-demand conditions, will raise import and export tariffs from January 1, 2022, on some commodities within the range of its accession commitments to the World Trade Organization, the circular said.

For instance, it will impose higher export tariffs on phosphorus and blister copper to push forward the upgrades and high-quality development of related industries.

In accordance with the free trade agreements and preferential trade arrangements with other countries or regions, China will impose conventional tariff rates on some products from 29 countries and regions amid efforts to open up at a higher level, according to the circular.

The country will also grant preferential tariff treatments next year to the least developed countries that have established diplomatic relations and

completed the exchange of letters with it.

Oil Recovery Base

Daqing Oilfield, located in Heilongjiang Province and operated by China National Petroleum Corp., has become the world's largest tertiary oil recovery production base.

The oilfield's annual crude oil output via tertiary recovery has exceeded 10 million tons for 20 consecutive years, bringing its cumulative total production to 286 million tons.

Tertiary recovery, also known as enhanced oil recovery, is the third stage of extraction from an oil reserve. The method involves the injection of chemicals to extract the oil that cannot be collected in the primary and secondary recovery stages.

It has increased the recovery rate of Daqing by 14 to 20 percentage points.

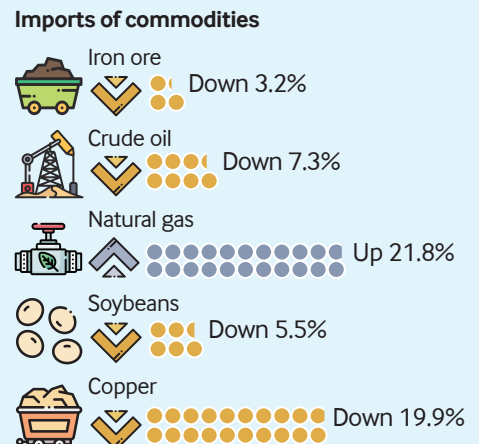
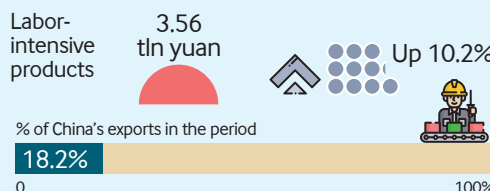
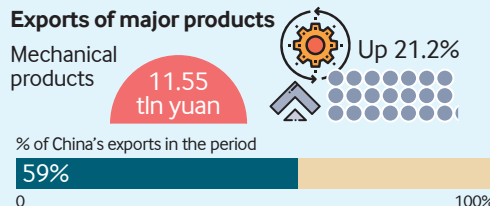
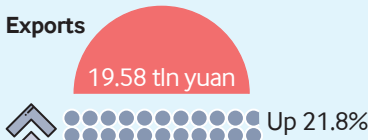
At present, Daqing not only

NUMBERS

(\$1=6.38 yuan)

China's Foreign Trade in January-November

(All changes are y.o.y.)



applies tertiary recovery technology in domestic oilfields, but also provides technical support for counterparts in Russia and Kazakhstan.

Support for HK

Governor Yi Gang said on December 9 that the People's Bank of China (PBC) will continue to support the development of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) as an international financial center.

The PBC will make efforts to optimize financial market connectivity mechanisms linking the Chinese mainland and the SAR, and develop more yuan-denominated products, Yi said at a symposium.

The central bank will also seek closer cooperation with Hong Kong in digital currency and regulatory technologies, and support the development of green finance in the region, according to Yi.

He said mainland firms now account for more than half of the listed companies in Hong Kong, and their stock value accounts for over 80 percent of the total.

Yi expects Hong Kong to play a bigger role in channeling capital into Belt and Road cooperation, and attract more overseas investors to this undertaking.

Trading Platform

On December 9, a coffee trading platform was launched in Shanghai, a city at the forefront of China's boom in coffee consumption and related business.

The platform is expected to become an integrated service provider for the development of the country's coffee industry, with a wide variety of products, multiple transaction patterns and third-party supporting services.

It is expected to achieve a transaction volume of 3.5 billion yuan (\$549 million) in 2022, and

to have 8,000 domestic and foreign dealers and a transaction volume above 15 billion yuan (\$2.35 billion) by 2025.

Government institutions abroad, international traders, coffee exporters and coffee growers from countries including Singapore, Ethiopia, Ghana, Brazil, Colombia and Indonesia have expressed their willingness to join the platform.

According to Tao Jian, head of the platform, Shanghai hosts the largest number of coffee brands in China. It also features the most complete coffee industrial chain and the largest trading volume of coffee in the country, so it is imperative that an international coffee trading platform be built in the city, Tao concluded.

Upping the Stakes

Chinese carmaker BAIC Group announced on December 13 that it has increased its stake in

Daimler AG to 9.98 percent in order to strengthen the long-term strategic partnership between the two companies.

According to an agreement between the two companies, Beijing-headquartered BAIC has no further plans to increase its shareholding in the German luxury-car manufacturer.

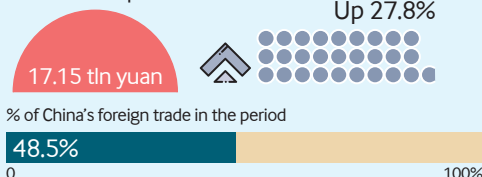
BAIC said in a statement that the increase in holdings is a strong signal of trust in the great potential of Daimler's future transformation.

Meanwhile, Daimler owns a 9.55-percent stake in BAIC's Hong Kong-listed unit BAIC Motor as well as a stake of 2.46 percent in the Shanghai-listed BAIC BluePark. Cross-shareholdings will support both parties to achieve high-quality development and long-term success in the Chinese market, said the statement.

Daimler has been one of the most important strategic partners of BAIC over the past 20 years.

Imports and exports

Private enterprises



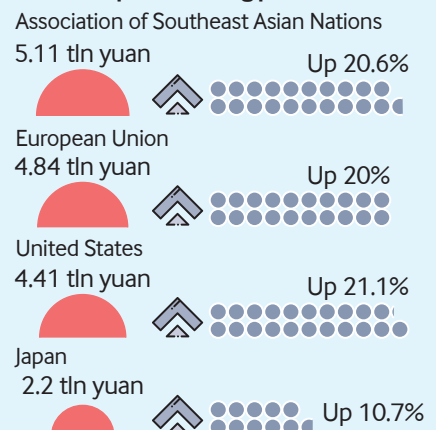
State-owned enterprises



Foreign-funded enterprises



China's top four trading partners



(Source: General Administration of Customs of China)



UNITED STATES

A man checks a damaged house in Mayfield, Kentucky, on December 15. Restoration is underway in the city, one of the areas worst hit by tornadoes passing through several central and southern states



UNITED KINGDOM

A supporter of Julian Assange is seen outside the Royal Courts of Justice in London on December 10. WikiLeaks founder Assange can be extradited to the U.S. on espionage charges, according to the UK's High Court



TANZANIA

Military men run past the reviewing stand during a celebration marking 60 years of mainland independence in Dar es Salaam on December 9





AFGHANISTAN

People visit the national museum in Kabul on December 9. The museum was closed due to persisting violence and finally reopened its doors to the public on November 27



AUSTRALIA

People hug at Sydney Airport on December 15. Australia reopened its borders to vaccinated foreign students and skilled workers that day following a nearly 600-day-long lockdown



ROMANIA

Artists stage a performance in Bucharest on December 12, at a festival to pray for a safe and beautiful New Year



THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

↓ MASTER OF GUNPOWDER GIFTS 10.5 MLN

Wang Zeshan, a dynamite specialist and academician with the Chinese Academy of Engineering, recently made an individual donation of 10.5 million yuan (\$1.65 million) to the Nanjing University of Science and Technology in support of talent cultivation and research efforts.

The 86-year-old explosives expert born in Jilin Province is the winner of the 2017 State Preeminent Science and Technology Award, the nation's highest scientific award, and is known as "the king of explosives" for his contributions to the study of energetic materials with a series of theories and applications.

Over 60 years of research in the field, Wang designed several new propellant charging theories and technologies, improving the launch range of China's artillery by more than 20 percent and lifting the nation's ballistic performance of similar artillery above international levels.

Wang was selected as an academician at the Chinese Academy of Engineering in 1999.



Parcel Delivery

Beijing Youth Daily
December 9

China's package delivery sector has set a new record by handling more than 100 billion parcels this year as of December 9, ranking top in the world for the eighth consecutive year, compared with 83.3 billion for all of last year, according to the industry's regulator.

Thanks to e-commerce, China's parcel delivery business has boomed in the past decade. The country has established a delivery network extending to rural and urban areas across the country and connecting with the world, serving

nearly 700 million users a day.

Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement. To attract more customers by offering lower prices, some companies have cut couriers' salaries to reduce costs, dealing a blow to both delivery people's rights and the development of the industry by large.

In the future, e-commerce enterprises will have to safeguard a sustainable market order, not get caught in the sector's rat race and better protect couriers' legal rights. Delivery companies should establish a more complete evaluation system and provide incentives based on employee career development and professional growth.



Young Mental Health

China Newsweek
December 13

According to the State of the World's Children 2021 report released by UNICEF, suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among 15- to 19-year-olds. Every year, almost 46,000 children between the ages of 10 and 19 end their own lives—about one every 11 minutes. China shares similar challenges among its youngsters.

"By cooking up lies and causing problems on certain issues, some U.S. politicians are seeking to contain China and hold back China's development through political manipulation and economic bullying in the name of human rights."

Zhao Lijian, spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry, at a news briefing on December 15

"Self-centered people listening to sham evidence delivered by rogue leaders undermines American democracy. The self-righteousness exhibited by many will certainly lead to more coronavirus cases and deaths."

Anthony Moretti, an associate professor at Robert Morris University, in an article published by CGTN on December 15