

OPINION: UPCOMING PLENUM P.25 | FEATURES: SUPPLIERS PREPARE FOR PARIS OLYMPICS P.34

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Cover Photo: Members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee pose for photos in traditional attire before the opening of the top political advisory body's annual full session in Beijing on March 4 (XINHUA)

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Out of Many, One

Fifty-six ethnicities, one nation. This phrase captures the diversity and unity of China, a multiethnic nation of 1.4 billion people. Besides the Han, who make up some 91 percent of the population, 55 other ethnic groups, collectively known as ethnic minorities, call the country home.

Their population ranges from 19.6 million for the Zhuang, the largest, to 3,544 for the Tatar, the smallest, according to the 2020 national census. Most Zhuang people live in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, whereas the Tatar inhabit the north of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

The ethnic groups were identified based on field research after the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949. Their ancestors have coexisted on this land since antiquity. When the Qin Dynasty unified the country for the first time in 221 B.C., it brought today's Guangxi and Yunnan Province, where there are relatively large ethnic minority populations, under its jurisdiction.

In the long course of history, there were times when different ethnic groups interacted in peace and times when they fought for dominance. Several ethnic minority groups succeeded in seizing the throne to found dynasties, such as the Yuan (1279-1368) led by Mongolians and the Qing (1644-1911)

led by Manchu people.

All this is evidence that all ethnic groups are builders of the Chinese territory, writers of the Chinese history and creators of the Chinese culture. There is no reason whatsoever to equate the Chinese nation solely with the Han people and the Chinese culture solely with the Han culture. Despite varying in customs, the 56 ethnic groups identify themselves as part of the Chinese nation, making China a community based on shared culture and civilization rather than on race.

President Xi Jinping has reiterated the importance of creating a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. He has called for more exchanges and interactions among different ethnic groups to help them remain closely united and work jointly for common prosperity and development. During China's campaign to eliminate absolute poverty, which concluded in late 2020, the government saw to it that no ethnic group was left behind.

It is important to study China's ethnic groups in the broader context of the Chinese culture. Understanding the Chinese civilization requires taking into account all of these groups. Diversity and unity are two sides of the same coin. **BR**



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TAKE-OFF TIME!

Crew members of Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy hospital ship *Peace Ark* wave goodbye at a port in Zhoushan, Zhejiang Province, on June 16.

The vessel set sail for Mission Harmony-2024 that same day. It will visit 13 countries, including the Seychelles, Tanzania, Madagascar, Mozambique and Sri Lanka, and provide medical services to locals there. It will also make port calls to France and Greece.

This is the *Peace Ark*'s 10th Mission Harmony since its commissioning in 2008. The maritime hospital carries 100 personnel and features 17 clinical departments and five auxiliary diagnostic departments.

The vessel is China's first domestically designed and constructed standard ocean-going hospital ship. It has so far visited 45 countries and regions, providing medical services to over 290,000 people.



In the Loop

High-speed train G8388 crosses the Dashengguan Yangtze River Bridge in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, on June 15. On the same day, the Yangtze River Delta, an economically vibrant region in east China, launched its first railway loop line, connecting the metropolis of Shanghai with major cities in the regional cluster.

Book Fair

The 30th Beijing International Book Fair (BIBF) commenced in Beijing on June 19, drawing a wider participation of foreign exhibitors compared with last year.

With an expanded exhibition area of 55,000 square meters this year, the five-day event gathered around 1,600 exhibitors from 71 countries and regions, showcasing 220,000 Chinese and foreign publications to visitors, according to the organizers.

The fair saw an increase of 150 overseas participants compared to the previous year, featuring 1,050 exhibitors from abroad, accounting for 66 percent of the total participants.

Compared to 2023, this year's event welcomed 15 new participating countries, including Azerbaijan, Qatar, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Nigeria.

More than 20 countries, including France, Germany and Italy, hosted national booths. Saudi Arabia was this year's

Country of Honor.

The BIBF, established in 1986, is one of the world's largest book fairs and serves as a major platform for copyright exchange, facilitating the trading of publications from China and abroad, including print books and multimedia works.

Cyber Abuse Regulation

China has taken further steps to foster a sound online environment and protect the public's interests with the release of a new set of rules targeting cyberspace violence, which will take effect on August 1.

The regulations, jointly issued by the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the National Radio and Television Administration, will provide strong support to tackling cyberbullying, as the issue has sparked nationwide concern, the CAC noted in a statement on June 14.

The document defines online violence as illegal or harmful content targeting individuals, including insults, rumors, defamation and discrimination.

It proposes establishing and improving mechanisms to address violent online information, clarifying that cyberinformation service providers shall take primary responsibility for managing online content.

The rules further underscore personal information protection, as well as the monitoring of and early warning against potential online abuse.

The new directions, building upon existing laws and regulations such as those on cybersecurity and personal information protection, will further strengthen China's cyberviolence governance system, the CAC said.

The regulation has 34 articles divided into seven chapters. The CAC in July 2023 published a draft version to solicit public opinion.

Fighting Drought

Chinese authorities have earmarked 443 million yuan (\$61.1 million) in disaster relief funds to assist drought control and agricultural production in a broad swath of the country.

The funds will be used to support drought prevention and control work in the provinces of Hebei, Shanxi, Jiangsu, Anhui, Shandong, Henan, and Shaanxi, according to a statement released on the Ministry of Finance's official website on June 18.

Sweltering heat has baked parts of China, resulting in soil moisture loss and negatively affecting seed sowing and crop growth in summer, according to the statement.

The ministry said the allocated funds will be used to support anti-drought measures in disaster-affected regions such as replenishing soil moisture, replanting new crops and applying fertilizer.

These efforts will facilitate crop planting in summer and lay the groundwork for a bumper harvest in autumn, the ministry added.

Water Resources Conservation

China has witnessed remarkable progress in water management over the past decade, recording great achievements in water resources conservation and intensive use, and improvements in flood and drought prevention, the Ministry of Water Resources said on June 18.

Total water use in China has been kept below 610 billion cubic meters per year over the past decade. Over the past decade, the water supply capacity of newly-added water conservancy projects has amounted to about 200 billion cubic meters, three times that of the previous decade, according to Chen Min, Vice Minister of Water

Resources.

Chen also noted that China's flood control and drought resistance capabilities have improved as a whole thanks to strengthened early-warning measures, and improved flood control projects.

Meanwhile, China has made strides in ensuring water security for rural residents over the past decade, increasing tap water accessibility in China's rural areas to 90 percent.

Social Worker Qualification

Nearly 1.89 million people signed up for this year's social worker vocational qualification exam, held from June 15 to 16, according to official data.

The number saw a year-on-year increase of 26 percent, hitting a new high, according to the social work department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

The professional qualifications of social workers are divided into three levels: assistant social worker, social worker and senior social worker.

Currently, 1.16 million people in China have obtained professional social work qualifications. They work in areas such as child welfare, senior care services and social assistance, becoming an important force in

grassroots governance.

Childcare Services

China will increase its supply and quality of childcare services through multiple channels, and establish a comprehensive interagency regulatory mechanism for the sector, according to the National Health Commission (NHC).

Kindergartens in China generally enroll children aged 3 to 6, and childcare services are designed to take in those under the age of 3. The country has nearly 30 million children below the age of 3.

A survey has found that over 30 percent of families with children under 3 are in urgent need of childcare services, NHC official Yang Wenzhuang said on June 15 at a ceremony in Changsha, Hunan Province, to kick off a month-long national childcare services publicity campaign.

Yang added that adequate child care services will help improve the national fertility rate, ensure employment among women, and benefit infant and toddler development.

During this year's publicity campaign, the NHC will organize a series of promotional events nationwide to increase awareness of childcare services



On the Floor!

Dancers perform at the second Guozhuang dance contest (final) in Lhasa, capital of Xizang Autonomous Region, on June 14. The Guozhuang, which means "singing and dancing in a circle," is a traditional Tibetan dance.

and encourage localities to establish such services based on local conditions.

Pet-Friendly Flight

China's Shanghai on June 14 welcomed a group of pet owners returning from an overseas trip aboard a special flight that allowed them to travel in the same cabin with their dogs.

The flight carried 60 passengers and 18 dogs from Bangkok, Thailand, to Shanghai's Pudong

International Airport.

It marked the conclusion of China's first chartered flights for an overseas group tour.

Customs officials at the airport said they had streamlined procedures for the arrival of the pets, including allowing them to skip quarantine periods if they passed on-site checks.

Officials said the flight would blaze a trail for future special international flights for pet owners, with demand for such services on the rise thanks to rising pet ownership levels in Chinese cities.



'Tis the Season

A host promotes wild mushrooms via livestream at a market in Kunming, Yunnan Province, on June 17. The peak harvest season for wild edible fungi, a popular seasonal delicacy in Yunnan, has arrived.

Charging Infrastructure

China has established a vehicle charging infrastructure network that boasts the world's largest number of installations, the most extensive services, and the most diverse range of options, according to the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the country's top economic planner.

As of the end of May, China had installed 9.92 million chargers throughout the country, marking a significant 56-percent year-on-year expansion, Li Chao, an official from the NDRC, told a press conference on June 18.

Among them, public charging facilities totaled 3.05 million units, surging 46 percent year on year, while the number of private charging facilities climbed 61 percent to about 6.87 million units, according to Li.

This impressive growth aligns with the flourishing new-energy vehicle (NEV) sector in China, which is the world's

largest market for NEVs. Both production and sales figures are experiencing rapid growth.

The term NEV is used to designate automobiles that are fully or predominantly powered by electric energy, which include plug-in vehicles, battery electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and fuel cell electric vehicles.

The country aims to add 3,000 charging piles and 5,000 charging parking spaces in highway service areas this year, Li added.

Anti-Dumping Probe

On June 17, China launched an anti-dumping investigation into certain pork and pig byproducts imported from the European Union (EU), according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The investigation has been launched in response to an application submitted by the China Animal Agriculture Association on behalf of the domestic

industry, the ministry said in a statement.

The application has met all the conditions for filing an anti-dumping probe, according to the ministry.

The probe will look into certain pork and pig byproducts originating from the EU from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

It will also investigate any damage done to related Chinese industries from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023.

The probe is expected to end before June 17, 2025, but may be extended for half a year under special circumstances.

Forex Settlement Deficit

China's commercial banks saw a net foreign exchange (forex) settlement deficit of 113.3 billion yuan (\$15.6 billion) in May, according to the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE).

In yuan terms, forex purchases by banks stood at 1.2505

trillion yuan (\$172.3 billion), while sales reached about 1.3638 trillion yuan (\$187.9 billion), SAFE data showed.

China's forex market was generally stable in May, sustaining a balanced flow of cross-border capital, said Wang Chunying, deputy head and spokesperson of the administration.

Wang added that market expectations remained stable that month, with rational and orderly forex transactions and a notably narrowed forex settlement deficit. This indicated that the supply and demand situation in the forex market further improved.

In May, the net inflow of funds under the goods trade category increased 76 percent month on month and 23 percent year on year, continuing to underpin cross-border capital flows, Wang said.

The net capital inflow into China's domestic bond market also remained at a high level, she said.

In May, the net purchase

NUMBERS



of domestic bonds by foreign investors stood at \$32 billion, an increase of 86 percent month on month.

China's forex market has the solid foundations to maintain stable operations, bolstered by the country's consolidated economic recovery and the market's growing resilience, Wang said.

Industrial Output

China's value-added industrial output, an important economic indicator, went up 5.6 percent year on year in May, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed.

The industrial output measures the activity of enterprises each with an annual main business turnover of at least 20 million yuan (\$2.8 million).

On a monthly basis, the entire industrial output edged up 0.3 percent in May from the previous month. During the January-May period, it rose 6.2 percent year on year.

Commenting on the data, NBS spokesperson Liu Aihua

told a press conference on June 17 that "90 percent of regions, 80 percent of industries and nearly 60 percent of products registered increases in output from a year ago."

As the major growth driver, the equipment manufacturing sector contributed 2.6 percentage points of the entire industrial output growth, Liu noted, adding that services also picked up pace with the production index reporting a faster 4.8-percent increase.

Retail Sales

China's retail sales of consumer goods, a major indicator of the country's consumption strength, climbed 4.1 percent year on year in the first five months of this year, according to NBS data.

Retail sales during the period topped 19.52 trillion yuan (\$2.7 trillion), according to data from the NBS.

Online retail sales jumped 12.4 percent year on year to nearly 5.77 trillion yuan (\$795.2 billion) in the January-May period, with online retail sales of

physical goods expanding 11.5 percent and accounting for 24.7 percent of the total retail sales of consumer goods.

In May alone, retail sales of consumer goods expanded 3.7 percent year on year to top 3.92 trillion yuan (\$540.3 billion), the data showed. Meanwhile, retail sales excluding automobiles went up 4.7 percent to over 3.53 trillion yuan (\$486.5 billion).

Retail sales in rural areas expanded 4.1 percent year on year to 510 billion yuan (\$70.3 billion) in May, while that in urban areas increased 3.7 percent to over 3.41 trillion yuan (\$470 billion).

In May, retail sales of goods rose 3.6 percent from a year ago to more than 3.49 trillion yuan (\$481 billion), while food and beverage industry revenue hit 427.4 billion yuan (\$58.9 billion), an increase of 5 percent year on year.

Private Businesses

The number of private business entities in China had reached

180.45 million by the end of May this year, accounting for 96.4 percent of the country's total business entities, according to the State Administration for Market Regulation.

This proportion was up from the 95.5 percent registered in 2019, the administration said, adding that China is now home to nearly 55.18 million private companies and over 125.27 million self-employed businesses.

China's private sector has played a key role in boosting the country's hi-tech and emerging industries.

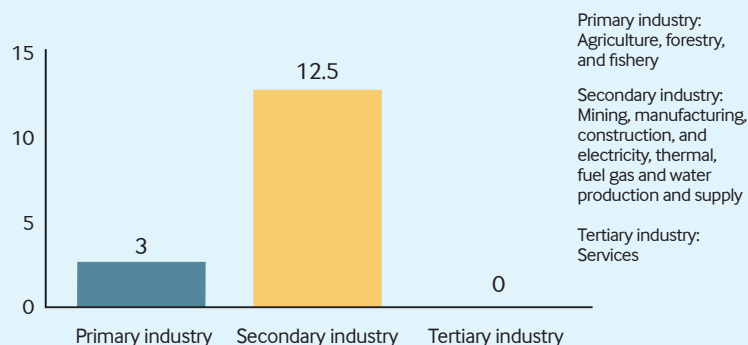
For example, private businesses currently account for 96.1 percent of the total manufacturing companies in China, up from 95.9 percent in 2019.

The share of private businesses in the scientific research and technical services sector has risen from 91.9 percent in 2019 to the current 94.4 percent.

Earlier this year, China announced that it had started drafting a law concerning the promotion of its private economy.

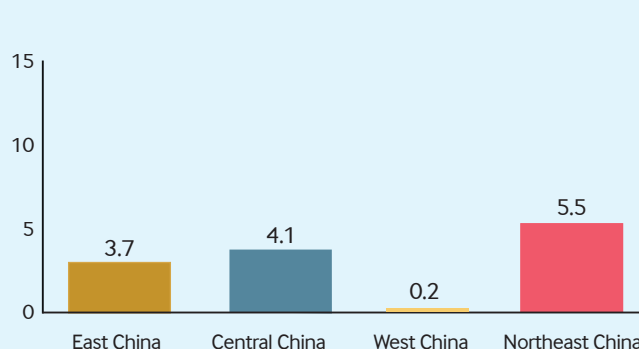
Fixed Assets Investment Growth by Sector

January-May (% y.o.y.)



Fixed Assets Investment Growth by Region

January-May (% y.o.y.)



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)

THIS WEEK **WORLD**



GERMANY

Abdülkerim Bardakcı (center) of Türkiye vies for the ball with Khvicha Kvaratskhelia (second, right) of Georgia during the UEFA Euro 2024 Group F match between the two countries in Dortmund on June 18



UNITED STATES

Firefighters work to control a wildfire in Gorman, 100 km north of Los Angeles, California, on June 16. The wildfire has since burned about 6,500 hectares, forcing at least 1,200 people to evacuate



SINGAPORE

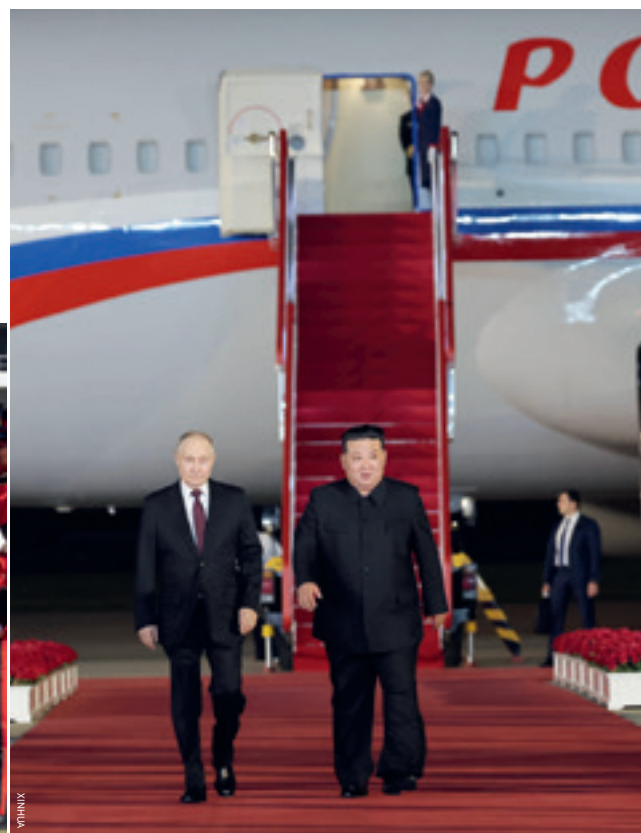
Workers clean up an oil spill on Tanjong beach on Sentosa Island on June 16. A Netherlands-flagged dredger collided with a Singapore-flagged bunker vessel at the Pasir Panjang Terminal near Sentosa and led to a spill on June 14





MALAWI

Members of the defense force carry the casket of the late Vice President Saulos Chilima, who died in an air crash, during his funeral in Lilongwe on June 16



DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Russian President Vladimir Putin is welcomed by top leader Kim Jong Un upon his arrival at an airport in Pyongyang on June 19



KUWAIT

A power outage in Hawalli Governorate on June 19. Multiple areas faced power cuts as scorching temperatures pushed the electricity grid past its limits during peak hours



↓ REELECTED CHAIRMAN OF CHINA UNICOM

Chen Zhongyue has been reelected as chairman of the eighth board of directors of China United Network Communications Group (China Unicom), one of the country's big three telecommunications providers.

Chen has extensive experience in management and the telecommunications industry. He joined Beijing-based China Unicom in January 2021 as an executive director. Before that, he served in several posts at China Telecommunications Corp. Ltd., another leading Chinese telecommunications company, including as its executive vice president.



Born in 1971, Chen began his professional career in 1990 after graduating from Shanghai Post and Telecommunications School with a major in international mail and telecommunications services. Chen attained a master's degree in economics at Zhejiang University in 1998 and another in business administration for senior executives at Xiamen University in 2011.

Setting Boundaries for AI

People's Daily Overseas Edition
June 17

As the variety of applications for artificial intelligence (AI) increases, so do the opportunities for this technology to be misused. In the field of education, AI is now being misused to complete homework, with students not only asking AI to answer questions, but to complete entire essays and other lengthy tasks.

Using AI as a ghostwriter deprives students of the experience of the learning process, in which they are supposed to

read critically, review, consolidate and express themselves in writing. Encountering difficulties in learning is inevitable and the ultimate goal of the process is to overcome these difficulties and make acquiring knowledge part of one's own life experience.

For this reason, AI must be kept within certain boundaries. It can assist teachers in efficiently finishing repetitive tasks such as homework grading and students in quickly retrieving and compressing background information, but not to do all homework for students.



Han Dynasty Time Capsule

Lifeweek
June 3

This year is the 50th anniversary of the excavation of the Mawangdui Tomb, which dates back to the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220). The excavation of the tomb, located on the eastern outskirts of Changsha, Hunan Province, lasted from 1972 to 1974. Usually, tombs dating back to the Han Dynasty are favorites of grave robbers, but Tomb 1 of Mawangdui was discovered

"Air pollution has enormous implications for health. We know that improving air quality and global public health is practical and achievable."

Elena Craft, President of the Health Effects Institute, as the institute jointly released a report with the UN Children's Fund on June 19, revealing air pollution accounted for 8.1 million deaths globally in 2021.

"Young innovative chefs worldwide, like young farmers, are underestimated and not visible to the public enough. It is important to support them in making contributions to sustainable development."

Glindys Virginia Luciano, an expert from the European organization EIT Food, as the World Food Forum on June 19 announced a week of activities in restaurants worldwide, calling for less food waste and more support for young chefs.

intact. More importantly, the tomb chamber was sealed by special white paste mud, leaving the artifacts inside almost complete, unscathed by time. The discovery of the well-preserved female corpse shocked the world at the time, and the identity of the corpse was confirmed: Xin Zhui. With global attention focused on Changsha, Tombs 2 and 3 of Mawangdui were excavated one by one. Tomb 2 was the tomb of her husband Li Cang, Marquis of Dai in the Changsha State in the early Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 8). The corpse in Tomb 3 is thought to be her son.

Among the many unearthed burial articles are exquisite textiles and lacquerware, utensils containing various delicacies and silk books covering astronomy, geography, philosophy, medicine, and other topics. No Han tombs had ever been preserved so well before this excavation. Mawangdui reflects all aspects of life over 2,000 years ago, like a life manual for that time, unfolding in front of people in the 20th century.

Today, researchers are still unraveling the mysteries of this treasure house. All of the cultural relics unearthed from the tombs are kept in the Hunan Museum. In late 2017, the museum recreated the pit of Tomb 1 in the same size as the original one, attracting swarms of visitors to the museum.

Call for 'Climbing Companions'

News.chengdu.cn
June 11

Recently, a mother paid 518 yuan (\$71) to hire a college student majoring in sports to carry her 3-year-old daughter to the top of Mount Tai in Shandong Province, sparking debate online.

The student did not feel particularly exhausted when reaching the summit. During their climb, he left the toddler's mother and her group far behind and even stopped several times to wait for them. According to the

mother, the student and her daughter climbed to the top within two hours and waited for her there for half an hour. Reading her account, netizens could not help worrying about the safety of the ascent, particularly with the young child being entrusted to a total stranger. They suggested the mother, or other parents who are interested in following her lead, supervise the process.

The college student has since been contacted by dozens of people who need a "climbing companion." If there is really a demand for the business, services must be regulated and standardized to ensure safety and the rights of both tourists and the climbing companion by signing agreements.

↓ RENOWNED DIRECTOR TO ADAPT *THE THREE-BODY PROBLEM*

Zhang Yimou, one of China's most prominent and prolific directors, is set to try his hand at sci-fi, as the director of a film adaptation of *The Three-Body Problem*.

A key figure of China's fifth generation of filmmakers, Zhang is beloved by film buffs at home and abroad for his films such as *Raise the Red Lantern*, *Hero* and *Full River Red*. He also masterminded the pageantry of the opening and closing ceremonies at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Summer Games and the 2022 Beijing Olympic Winter Games.

The Three-Body Problem, Hugo Award winner Liu Cixin's masterpiece, has been translated into more than 30 languages. It was previously adapted into animation, radio dramas and television series, including this year's big-budget take by Netflix, which has become a global hit.



"It will hurt our cooperation with China. It will hurt ourselves. So it's a tragedy for the German car industry."

Ferdinand Dudenhofer, Director of the Center for Automotive Research in Bochum, Germany, in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency, warning the EU will damage their business by imposing additional tariffs on electric vehicles made in China

"When a country is small, it can grow fast, but as it becomes larger, it is impossible to maintain the same speed. China has recognized this and has transitioned from high-speed growth to high-quality development."

Pablo Machado, Business Management President of paper pulp giant Suzano Asia, in a recent interview with Xinhua



COVER STORY

INCLUSIVENESS NURTURES DIVERSITY

Exchange of ethnic culture brings stability and prosperity in a multiethnic country

By Lu Yan