

OPINION: WHY CYBERSECURITY MATTERS P.34 | FEATURES: LIFE IN ZUOQUAN COUNTY P.38

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Joint Action for Better Prospects

The Global Development Initiative (GDI), proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly in September last year, is being well-received. One year on, the initiative is drawing China and many other nations together in pursuit of the goals laid out in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 2030 Agenda, adopted by all UN member states in 2015, proposed 17 goals that aim to end poverty, protect the planet's environment and improve the lives and prospects of its people. In line with these goals, the GDI calls for the continued prioritization of global development, taking a people-centered approach, ensuring all parties benefit, using innovation as a driver, realizing harmony between humans and nature, and taking results-oriented actions.

The initiative also calls on countries to steer global development toward a new stage of balanced, coordinated and inclusive growth. China is a powerhouse of world economic growth, and it has played a major role in ensuring stable global progress. Notably, China eradicated absolute poverty in 2020, achieving

the poverty reduction goal of the 2030 Agenda 10 years ahead of schedule. In addition, the Belt and Road Initiative it promotes has provided a leading platform for advancing regional and global cooperation. China's achievements in containing the spread of COVID-19 have contributed to stabilizing the global industry chain.

In June, while speaking at the High-Level Dialogue on Global Development, President Xi announced a host of new measures China will adopt under the banner of the GDI, including the establishment of the Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund, a global development promotion center and a global knowledge network for development. These initiatives are part of China's efforts to help coordinate and mobilize global resources.

No matter how the international landscape evolves, the aspiration of people around the world for a better life will not change. The international community should take the GDI as an opportunity to strengthen dialogue and exchanges, tighten the bond of cooperation and deepen the convergence of interests. **BR**



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SPACE WALK

A screen image captured at Beijing Aerospace Control Center on September 17 shows *Shenzhou-14* astronauts Cai Xuzhe (left) and Chen Dong conducting extravehicular activities (EVAs).

With the help of a small mechanical arm, the pair conducted a series of extravehicular tasks, including the installation of assistance handles and an extended pump set for the cooling circuits. They further verified extravehicular rescue capability.

This is the second time *Shenzhou-14* astronauts have conducted EVAs. They completed their first on September 2.



Bumper Harvest

Harvesters work in the highland barley fields of Rasog Township of Gyangze County, Xigaze, Tibet Autonomous Region, on September 19.

China-Eurasia Expo

The total value of deals signed at the seventh China-Eurasia Expo, held from September 19-22 in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, has already hit a record level, the event's organizer said on September 20.

Deals worth over 960 billion yuan (\$138.19 billion) had been signed by that time, more than three times the total value of deals signed at the last expo held in 2018.

The deals are mostly in energy and electricity, petroleum, chemicals, coal, infrastructure, clothes and textiles, culture, tourism, commerce, logistics and real estate.

Secondary industry, which in China includes mining, accounted for 83.61 percent of all deals, totaling 809.25 billion yuan (\$115.3 billion). The primary

and tertiary sectors respectively accounted for 2.53 percent and 13.86 percent of deals.

Held both online and offline, the expo focuses on projects with good market prospects, high technology and significant investment demand. It also organizes special investment and trade promotion activities, and is actively building a high-end business platform.

Covering an exhibition area of 40,000 square meters, the expo has established three zones featuring themes such as investment cooperation and commodity trade.

Mars Exploration

China's first Mars exploration mission has achieved rich scientific results, the China National Space Administration (CNSA) said on September 18.

As of September 15, the

Tianwen-1 orbiter had been operating for over 780 days, and the rover *Zhurong* had traveled 1,921 meters on the planet's surface. Both have now completed their targeted scientific exploration missions and have acquired 1,480 gigabytes of raw scientific data, the CNSA said.

The *Tianwen-1* probe consists of an orbiter, a lander and a rover. On May 15, 2021, it touched down at its pre-selected landing area in Utopia Planitia, a vast Martian plain. The landing was China's first on the Red Planet.

Chinese researchers have conducted a comprehensive study of typical landforms at the landing area, including concave cones, impact craters and grooves, and revealed a significant link between the formation of ridges and water activity.

Through camera images and spectral data, researchers found water-bearing minerals in

plate-like hard crust rocks near the landing area, which indicates there had been a lot of liquid water in the landing area approximately 1 billion years ago.

Combining camera images with other information, the researchers also found that the soil in the landing area has massive bearing strength and low friction parameters.

These new results reveal the impact of wind and water activities on the geological evolution and environmental changes on Mars. It strongly supports the hypothesis that there was once an ocean on Mars' Utopia Planitia. It also enriches human scientific understanding of the geological evolution and environmental changes on Mars.

In addition, researchers also used the *Tianwen-1* exploration data to make several scientific achievements, including discovering more about the relationship between rock density on the planet's surface and degrees of surface erosion, the distribution of ions and neutral particles in the near-Mars space environment, and the gravity field of Mars.

Xiongan New Area

Investment in the construction of Xiongan New Area has reached 400 billion yuan (\$57.55 billion) since the establishment of the area in 2017, the National Development and Reform Commission announced on September 20.

Construction of Xiongan now provides approximately 100,000 jobs and up to 200,000 jobs during peak construction seasons, Cao Yuanmeng, an official from the commission, said at a press conference.

The new area spans the counties of Xiongxian, Rongcheng,

and Anxin in Hebei Province and is home to Baiyangdian, one of northern China's major wetlands.

Progress has been made on restoring the ecological environment. The water quality in Baiyangdian has improved from Grade V, the lowest level of China's five-tier water assessment system, to Grade III, Cao said.

Located approximately 100 km southwest of Beijing, the new area will help advance the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. It has been designed as a major site for the relocation of Beijing's organizations performing functions nonessential to its role as the capital and to explore a new development model for densely populated areas.

Yangtze River Protection

China has released an action plan to further advance the ecological and environmental protection and restoration of the Yangtze River basin, Xinhua News Agency reported on September 19.

By the end of 2025, the overall water quality of the basin should remain sound, and the water quality of the main stream should stay at Grade II in the country's five-tier water quality

system, according to the action plan jointly issued by 17 government authorities.

The action plan has also set the goal of continuously improving the safety of drinking water, effectively guaranteeing the ecological water use of important rivers and lakes, and significantly raising the quality of water ecology of the basin by the end of 2025.

Plateau Weather Observation

China's *Wing Loong-2* high-altitude large civil unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) has recently conducted its first plateau weather observation test, according to the Aviation Industry Corp. of China (AVIC), Xinhua reported on September 20.

Wing Loong-2 took off from the Hongyuan Airport in the Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province. It then carried out the high-altitude meteorological observation test on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, said the AVIC, the country's leading aircraft manufacturer.

This move is significant for the improvement of the accuracy of the weather forecasts in the nation's southwest region to support disaster prevention and



Happy Anniversary

A child poses for photos at the Universal Beijing Resort in Beijing on September 20. The theme park celebrated its one year anniversary on that day.

mitigation, the AVIC said.

It also provides vital scientific data for meteorological professionals to better understand the evolution of weather and climate systems of the plateau region, alongside other key weather information.

The test was jointly carried out by the China Meteorological Administration (CMA), the AVIC and other related units.

In the next step, the CMA will jointly conduct more flights

for follow-up testing, which will focus on the Sanjiangyuan region, according to Li Liangxu, Director of the Meteorological Observation Center under the CMA.

They will push forward the construction of a large UAV-based airborne meteorological observation system to provide more data for the ecological protection of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and for tackling climate change, Li said.



Preventing Fire

Firefighters participate in a fire drill at the Palace Museum, also known as the Forbidden City, in Beijing on September 19. The drill was held to test and enhance fire prevention and emergency response capabilities at the ancient complex.

PPP Projects

China saw 386 new public-private partnership (PPP) projects registered in the first eight months of the year, official data showed.

PPP projects with a total investment of 239.9 billion yuan (\$34.53 billion) were added to the transport sector during the period, the largest volume of new projects among all the sectors, according to the Ministry of Finance.

In August, 48 new PPP projects were added, 25 of which are related to low-carbon development and pollution prevention and control.

In recent years, Chinese authorities have been exploring the possibility of funding infrastructure and public works through PPP models, aiming to reduce local government debts and provide new opportunities for private capital.

From 2014 to the end of August this year, China had

10,306 PPP projects, with a total investment of 16.4 trillion yuan (\$2.3 trillion), according to the ministry.

FDI Inflow

Paid-in foreign direct investment (FDI) into the Chinese mainland expanded 16.4 percent year on year to 892.74 billion yuan (\$127.2 billion) in the first eight months of the year, the Ministry of Commerce said on September 19.

In U.S. dollar terms, the inflow went up 20.2 percent year on year.

The service industry saw FDI inflow jump by 8.7 percent year on year to 662.13 billion yuan (\$94.3 billion), while that of hi-tech industries surged by 33.6 percent, data from the ministry showed.

Specifically, FDI in hi-tech manufacturing rose 43.1 percent from the same period a year ago, while that in the hi-tech service sector surged 31 percent.

During the period, investment from the Republic of Korea, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom climbed 58.9 percent, 30.3 percent, 26.8 percent and 17.2 percent, respectively.

FDI flowing into the country's western region reported a year-on-year increase of 43 percent, followed by 27.6 percent in the central region and 14.3 percent in the eastern region.

Global Contribution

China's average contribution to global economic growth exceeded 30 percent during the 2013-21 period, ranking first in the world, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

In 2021 alone, the country accounted for 18.5 percent of the world's total economic aggregate after currency translation based on average annual exchange rates, the second largest in the world and up 7.2 percentage points from 2012, an NBS report showed.

China's GDP expanded at an average annual rate of 6.6 percent from 2013 to 2021, higher than the global pace of 2.6 percent and 3.7 percent for developing economies.

The country's per-capita GDP hit 80,976 yuan (\$11,684) last year, surging 69.7 percent from 2012 after deducting the price factor.

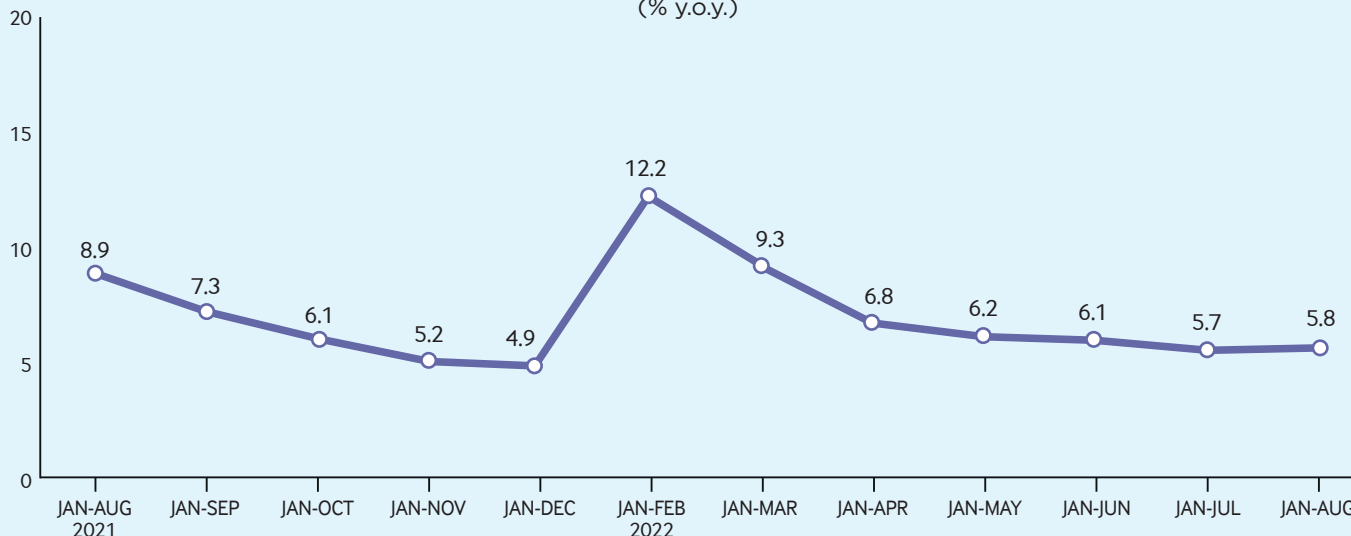
The report highlighted China's progress in promoting innovation-driven development in the past 10 years. The country rose to 12th on the Global Innovation Index 2021, up from 34th in 2012, according to the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Over the past decade, China has improved its economic structure and pursued more coordinated growth, as final consumption expenditure contributed 65.4 percent to the 2021 economic expansion, increasing 10 percentage points from 2012. The added value of the manufacturing sector jumped 74.3

NUMBERS

(\$1=7.08 yuan as of September 22)

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



percent during the same period.

The report also showed that the total value of China's trade in goods and services reached \$6.9 trillion in 2021, continuing to rank top globally.

Mobile IoT Connection

By the end of August, the number of mobile Internet of things (IoT) connections in China had exceeded 1.69 billion, surpassing the number of mobile phone users for the first time, data from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology showed.

During the same period, the total number of narrowband IoT, 4G base stations and 5G base stations had reached 755,000, 5.9 million and 2.1 million, respectively.

A network infrastructure pattern featuring coordinated development of multiple networks, universal coverage of urban and rural areas, and deep coverage of key scenarios has taken shape, the ministry said.

SCO Trade

China's trade with other member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) witnessed rapid growth in the first eight months of the year, official data showed.

The trade volume jumped 26 percent year on year to 1.73 trillion yuan (\$250 billion) during the period, according to the General Administration of Customs of China. The growth rate was 15.9 percentage points higher than that of the country's total imports and exports.

Other SCO members accounted for 6.3 percent of China's total foreign trade in the January-August period, up 0.8 of a percentage point from a year ago.

In August alone, the trade volume hit a record high of 256.79 billion yuan (\$36.59 billion), up 28.9 percent year on year.

China imported 117 million tons of crude oil, coal and natural

gas from other SCO members in the eight months, with the combined value accounting for 56.9 percent of the total imports from these countries. Meanwhile, farm produce imports made up 7.5 percent of the total.

Mechanical and electrical goods, labor-intensive products and basic organic chemicals constituted 52.6 percent, 19.1 percent and 5.9 percent of China's exports to other SCO members, respectively.

Founded in 2001, the SCO now has eight full members, namely China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, India, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan, four observer countries and multiple dialogue partners.

Cross-Border Payments

Over 1.01 million transactions were handled through China's renminbi cross-border payment system in the second quarter of the year, surging 25.34 percent

year on year, according to the People's Bank of China.

The total value of these transactions was 22.85 trillion yuan (\$3.29 trillion), up 19.39 percent from the same period last year, the bank said in a report.

Some 16,300 transactions on average were processed daily in the period, with a daily transaction value of approximately 368.53 billion yuan (\$52.5 billion).

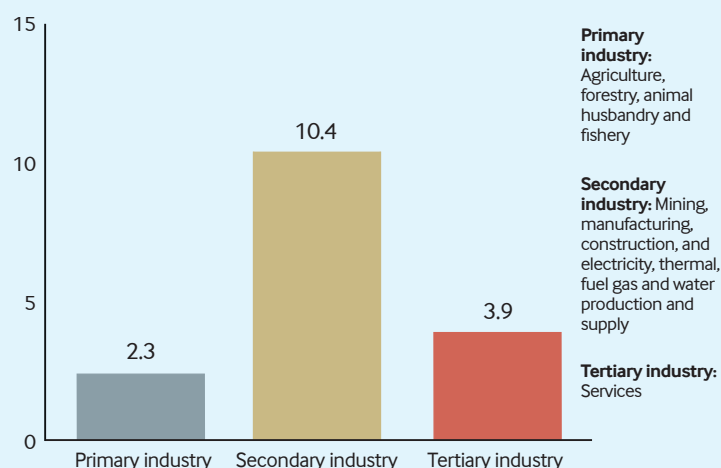
PC Sales

China's personal computer (PC) sales to individual consumers reached 2.69 million units in August, up 10.2 percent year on year, according to the report released by global market research firm International Data Corp.

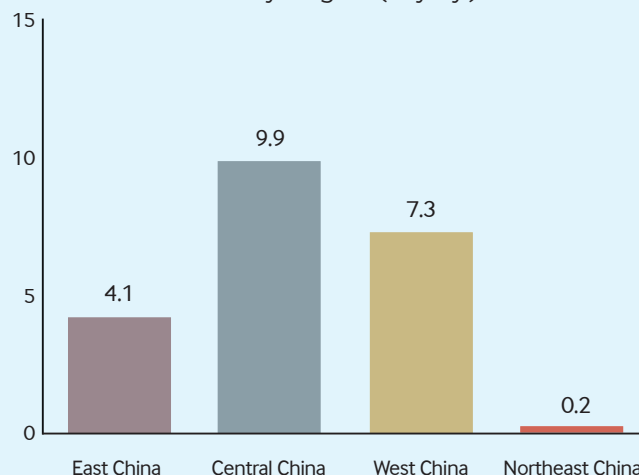
Laptop sales were especially robust in the back-to-school shopping season, jumping 18.4 percent from a year ago.

However, PC sales for commercial use went down 4.1 percent year on year to 4.97 million units.

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



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



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)



GERMANY

People board a train carriage on display at the four-day InnoTrans trade fair for rail transport technology in Berlin on September 20



UNITED STATES

U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell addresses the press in Washington, D.C. on September 21. The Fed delivered a third consecutive 75-basis-point hike this year, bringing the federal funds rate to a new range of 3 to 3.25 percent



MEXICO

People gather at Zocalo Square in Mexico City after a 7.1-magnitude earthquake hit the area on September 19



BRAZIL

Staff members seal electronic voting machines in preparation for the presidential election in Rio de Janeiro, on September 21. The first round of polling will take place on October 2



COSTA RICA

A child performs on the streets of Heredia on September 15 as part of celebrations marking the 201st anniversary of the country's independence



NEW ZEALAND

The East Meets West orchestral concert, one in a series of activities marking the 50th anniversary of China-New Zealand diplomatic ties, takes center stage at the Opera House in Wellington on September 19



THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

MISSING EARTHQUAKE HERO FOUND

Seventeen days after a 6.8-magnitude earthquake hit Luding County in Sichuan Province, **Gan Yu**, a hero who stayed at his hydropower station post together with his colleague Luo Yong and prevented downstream villages from being flooded, was found by a local villager on September 21.

When the earthquake struck Luding, Gan and Luo, employees at Wandong Hydropower Station, didn't run away and instead made their way up the dam to open two floodgates to release the rising water. Their actions saved the lives of hundreds of villagers.

Later on, the pair were separated and Luo was rescued. Gan managed to survive in the mountain forest by drinking spring water and eating wild fruits.

Local villagers volunteered to search for the hero for two days in the mountains after a rescue team failed to locate him. Despite skin trauma and fractures, Gan's vital signs were stable.



Betrothed, Not Bedazzled

Guangzhou Daily
September 21

Pilot reforms on wedding customs in 20 counties and districts of Henan Province are underway, with zero betrothal gifts being the final goal. A dowry, or a payment made by a man as a gift to the family of a woman he desires to be his wife, is an over 1,500-year-old practice in China. Nowadays, however, exorbitant dowries, often as high as 10 years of savings of the groom, are becoming an increasing barrier to marriage.

To be able to afford these payments, some families take out large loans, resulting in heavy financial pressures. Families are forced to compete with one another in the betrothal gift arena. Worse still, if an engagement is canceled, a substantial dowry tends to trigger substantial conflict.

Since 2018, the Central Government has been pushing for reforms on betrothal gifts. However, as this is a longstanding custom, it's uneasy to eliminate it altogether, more particularly in the vast rural areas. As times are changing, old or outdated customs, too, should evolve. Accelerating the reform will help safeguard the happiness of new couples and their families.



Historic Achievement

Outlook Weekly
September 19

China has made history by eliminating absolute poverty. By the end of 2020, the final 98.99 million impoverished people had been lifted out of poverty and 832 poverty-stricken counties had rid themselves of this label.

“Our market will remain open and we will continue to share the huge opportunities with American farmers, ventures, institutions and companies who want to collaborate with China.”

Qin Gang, Chinese Ambassador to the U.S., at the U.S.-China Sustainability and Climate Smart Agriculture Roundtable Discussion on September 16

“Food security is ground zero for the networked, inclusive multilateralism we need in the 21st century.”

António Guterres, UN Secretary General, at a multilateralism and food security roundtable on September 20

Targeted poverty reduction has proved key to claiming victory in the war on destitution.

Under the east-west pairing-up assistance program, nine developed provinces and 14 urbanized prefectures in east China offered help to 14 provinces in the nation's central and western regions. Of the once gravely affected families, 72 percent are now connected to innovative agricultural operating entities, and more than 70 percent have received guidance on production and technical training. Counties shaking off the poverty label enjoy a five-year transitional period, throughout which major support continues—and even intensifies.

The Chinese Government focus on the basic needs of those living in poverty, and financial input in poverty-reduction programs take priority when conflicts with other projects occur. From 2012 to 2020, funding dedicated to poverty alleviation amounted to 1.6 trillion yuan (\$225.7 billion). Infrastructure and social causes in these areas have also made great headway.

Casting a Wider Network

Nanfang Daily
September 21

In China's rural areas, villages and townships are scattered across the vast lands, so passenger flows are distributed unevenly in terms of time and space.

Villages with stable passenger flows may generate steady revenues for transportation companies, but the remote areas cannot guarantee any revenue. So far, more than 31,000 townships nationwide with basic conditions for transport have

obtained passenger transport services.

In recent years, in provinces including Jiangsu and Sichuan, rural passenger buses also take on the role of postal cars, helping deliver mail and parcels. This practice not only helps expand the network of cargo and parcel delivery in the rural areas, but also brings more profits to transport operators, making remote transport routes more sustainable.

Thanks to this modernization, in Lezhi County of Sichuan, a bus driver taking on a rural route can earn an additional annual income of 3,000 yuan (\$423). Time for the country roads to get up and running.



LIFE SENTENCE FOR FORMER SHANGHAI POLICE CHIEF

Gong Daoan, 58, former deputy mayor and police chief of Shanghai Municipality, was sentenced to life in prison for taking bribes, the Intermediate People's Court of Tangshan in Hebei Province announced on September 21.

All of Gong's personal property was confiscated, and his illegal gains from bribery, as well as the interests generated, were recovered and turned over to the state treasury.



The court found Gong had taken advantage of the multiple positions he'd formerly held in Hubei Province and Shanghai to assist others in matters including business operation, construction project contracting and job promotion. In return, Gong received money and valuables worth about 73.43 million yuan (\$10.56 million).

Given Gong had confessed to his crimes during the investigation, showed repentance and cooperated in returning all his illegal gains, a lenient sentence was granted, according to the statement.

"We in Europe still consider the [COVID-19] pandemic as ongoing."

Steffen Thirstrup, Chief Medical Officer of the European Medicines Agency, at a press conference on September 20

"The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade deal is an important instrument to boost post-pandemic economic recovery in the region."

Penn Sovicheat, Cambodian Ministry of Commerce's Undersecretary of State and spokesperson, after the inaugural RCEP Ministers' Meeting on September 17

