

OPINION: POLICY SHIFTS FOR GREENER FUTURE P.25 | FEATURES: HOMESICK ARTIFACTS P.32

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CONTENTS

EDITOR'S DESK

02 A New Chapter

THIS WEEK

COVER STORY

12 The Dawn of Another Golden Decade

Seeking higher-quality and higher-level development

17 Belt and Road: Past and Future

How the BRI is making a difference

18 At a Crossroads

An evolving signature initiative

20 The BRI Boom

Growing economic exchange and trade

OPINION

24 Might Makes Right?

As Israel-Hamas war escalates, how to bring peace?

25 From Energy to Carbon Caps

Transitioning to a low-carbon economy requires policy shifts

26 Equal Partnership in Agriculture

More momentum through bilateral and multilateral channels between China and African countries

FEATURES

30 Changing Village Vibes

Zhejiang's small communities and their new outlook

32 Repatriating Relics

Trend: Cultural artifacts return home

34 Two Sides, One View

Taiwan compatriots embrace reunification

36 Cities Along the Silk Road

Book series highlights unique local histories

38 Streaming History

The tale of one canal's grandeur

40 Going With the Flow

An Australian expat on his career in water

CULTURE

44 Snug as a Bug

China's winter style lookbook features padded pizzazz

46 Plantastic Art

Yunnan creator presents his plant specimens

EXPAT'S EYE

48 Balancing Prosperity and Quality of Life

Change, the only constant in life—and Beijing

Cover Design: Wang Yajuan

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A New Chapter

Removing all restrictions on foreign investment in manufacturing. Building a new Eurasian logistics corridor. Providing 100,000 training opportunities for partner countries by 2030. These are among a series of steps President Xi Jinping said China will take to build stronger Belt and Road cooperation.

In his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) in Beijing on October 18, President Xi promised to usher the 10-year-old initiative into a new stage of higher-quality development.

During his visit to Kazakhstan in September 2013, President Xi put forward the initiative of jointly building the Silk Road Economic Belt, which, together with the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road he proposed the following month in Indonesia, constitutes the Belt and Road Initiative. The BRF's first two editions took place in Beijing in 2017 and 2019.

Over the past decade, China has signed more than 230 Belt and Road agreements with over 150 countries and more than 30 international organizations, yielding 3,000-plus joint projects and generating nearly \$1 trillion in investment.

The Third BRF was one of the most important diplomatic events hosted by

China this year. Representatives from more than 150 countries, including political leaders as well as people from the business sector, academia and nongovernmental organizations, attended the forum.

A total of 458 outcomes were achieved, far more than in the Second BRF. Belt and Road partners agreed to launch initiatives on issues such as green development and artificial intelligence governance, and to host international conferences on topics ranging from maritime transport to natural disaster response. In addition, \$97.2 billion worth of agreements were signed at the CEO Conference held on the sidelines of the forum.

China can do well only when the world does well. When China does well, the world will do better. In fact, through the Belt and Road Initiative, China is opening its doors even wider. The country has become a main trading partner for more than 140 countries and territories, and a primary source of investment for a growing number of countries.

China believes that those who take the lead in economic development should reach out to their partners who have yet to catch up. With this belief, hopes are high that the Belt and Road Initiative will continue to bring prosperity to all through mutual support. **BR**



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WELCOMING WAVES

Young dancers perform on stage at the swearing-in ceremony for volunteers of the upcoming Sixth China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai on October 17. The Sixth CIIE has recruited over 5,700 volunteers from 40 universities in the city.

More than 60 countries have confirmed their participation in the expo, scheduled to take place from November 5 to 10.



Green Guizhou

New energy vehicles recharge at a charging area in Gujiao Township of Qiannan Bouyei and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province in southwest China. Charging piles are now available in every Guizhou township thanks to efforts to meet public demand for eco-friendly transportation in the past few years.

Medical Insurance

Premiums paid to China's basic medical insurance fund increased 9.3 percent year on year to over 2.09 trillion yuan (\$285.8 billion) from January to August, data from the National Healthcare Security Administration showed.

Premiums paid to the basic medical insurance fund for urban workers totaled 1.47 trillion yuan (\$201 billion) during the period, an increase of 13 percent from last year. Those paid to the basic medical insurance fund for rural and non-working urban residents was 618.53 billion yuan (\$84.6 billion).

The data showed that basic medical insurance fund spending in the first eight months rose

18.3 percent from 2022 to 1.79 trillion yuan (\$244.8 billion).

Smart Transport

The 29th Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) World Congress kicked off on October 16 in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province in east China, showcasing the world's frontier intelligent transportation equipment, intelligent cars and vehicles, plus smart traffic management and control systems.

The congress is one of the world's most influential congresses in its field, and the largest platform dedicated to demonstrating leading intelligent transport technologies and products.

Themed Driving Towards Intelligent Society-Quality Life, the congress attracted over

8,000 participants from 38 countries and regions.

During the five-day event, the congress featured forums, exhibitions, round tables, technical and cultural exchanges and other related activities on intelligent transportation.

5G Network

Tibet Autonomous Region in southwest China has achieved 5G network coverage in all towns after a 5G base station started operation in Gogmo Township of Ngari Prefecture.

The regional communications administration said on October 16 that Tibet has invested 3.2 billion yuan (\$437.6 million) in the construction of 5G infrastructure. A total of 8,710

5G base stations have been established, providing 1.84 million users with 5G service. There are 23 5G base stations per 10,000 people in the region, reaching the national average level.

The constant improvement of 5G network services has injected strong momentum into the high-quality development of the region's economy and society, the administration said.

To date, the 5G technology has been applied to a wide range of fields across the region, including agriculture and husbandry, education, healthcare and tourism.

Travel Trade Fair

The China International Travel Mart 2023 trade fair, to take place in Yunnan Province in southwest China from November 17 to 19, has attracted more than 70 countries and regions to participate, according to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) on October 13.

Focusing on the changes taking place in the international tourism market, emerging consumption demands and new production trends, this year's fair will deepen international exchange and cooperation across the sector, the MCT said.

The event's exhibitions, covering about 90,000 square meters, will showcase global tourist destinations, progress in tourism development and new technology applications.

The event is co-sponsored by the MCT, the Civil Aviation Administration of China and the Yunnan provincial government.

Bird Protection

Forty captive crested ibises are to be released into the wild on the Loess Plateau in Shaanxi Province, northwest China, marking the first time for the rare birds to be reintroduced to their

historical habitat on the plateau, the provincial forestry bureau said on October 13.

Twenty of the rare birds hail from a crested ibis nature reserve in Hanzhong City, while the rest come from the Qinling panda breeding and research center in Xi'an. They have been sent to two separate artificial breeding and wild release sites in the cities of Yan'an and Yulin, once a favored habitat of the species on the Loess Plateau. They will be released into the wild after they have adapted to the local environment, the bureau said.

"We have taken these crested ibises up north to help the species adapt to life in cold areas, and to explore their reintroduction in northern areas, marking a new stage in China's work to rebuild the crested ibis population," said Liu Yinzen, an ornithologist with the Chinese Academy of Sciences who is esteemed for his rediscovery of the crested ibis more than 40 years ago.

After more than four decades of protection, the number of crested ibises in Shaanxi now exceeds 7,000; their global population has expanded to more than 9,000.

The crested ibis, with its iconic red crest and long black beak, had been thought to be extinct in

China until seven wild birds were spotted in Yangxian County, Shaanxi, in 1981.

Sci-Fi Convention

The 81st World Science Fiction Convention opened on October 18 in Chengdu, Sichuan Province in southwest China. This was the first time that the world's largest and most influential science fiction carnival, with a history of more than 80 years, was held in China. Chengdu was the second Asian city to host this convention, after Japan's Yokohama.

During the five-day event, science fiction enthusiasts from five continents discussed their vision of the future, exchanged views on new tech trends and focused on the direction of humanity and even the Earth's fate in the universe.

Modern science fiction was born in the United Kingdom in 1818 and is considered a product of the industrial revolution and the sci-tech revolution. This young genre of literature and art was introduced to China in the early 20th century.

Chengdu is home to *Science Fiction World*, a magazine with the largest circulation of all science fiction publications globally, and is an important base of China's scientific innovation.

Population and Health Services



9.56 million

Total number of new births last year, down from 10.62 million in 2021. This was the first time the number had dipped below 10 million since the late 1940s



39 percent

Percentage of babies born as the second child in new births last year, compared with 41.1 percent in 2021



15 percent

Percentage of babies born as the third child in new births last year, a year-on-year increase of 0.5 percentage points



3.62 million

Total number of places offered by child-care institutions for children under the age of 3 last year, 2.57 per 1,000 people



9.75 million

Total number of beds in hospitals last year, 6.92 per 1,000 people

(Source: *The National Health Commission*)



Caution: Fragile!

An exhibitor promotes ceramic products via livestream at the 2023 China Jingdezhen International Ceramic Expo in Jingdezhen City, Jiangxi Province in east China, on October 18. The expo lasted from October 18-22. Nearly 1,000 enterprises, including more than 360 from overseas, attended.

Economic Growth

The Chinese economy grew 5.2 percent year on year in the first three quarters of this year, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed.

China's GDP reached over 91.3 trillion yuan (\$12.7 trillion) during that period, the NBS data revealed.

GDP represents the total market value of the final goods and services produced in a country during a given period of time, usually a year or a quarter. In this sense, it's a measure of domestic production and can be an indicator of a country's economic health.

In the third quarter alone, the country's GDP expanded 4.9 percent year on year, according to the NBS.

Market demand kept expanding, production and supply increased steadily, and economic performance continued to improve, the NBS said.

Retail sales of consumer

goods went up 6.8 percent year on year in the first three quarters to more than 34.2 trillion yuan (\$4.7 trillion).

Value-added industrial output, another important economic indicator, rose 4 percent year on year during that period.

Fixed assets investment expanded 3.1 percent year on year in the first three quarters to 37.5 trillion yuan (\$5.2 trillion), while value-added service output increased 6 percent year on year.

The economic growth in the first three quarters has laid a solid foundation for China to fulfill its full-year growth target, the NBS said. The full-year growth target for 2023 is set around 5 percent.

Rising Loans

China's yuan-denominated loans rose by 19.75 trillion yuan (\$2.7 trillion) in the first nine months of this year, data from the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, showed.

In September alone, yuan-denominated loans rose by 2.31 trillion yuan (\$316.2 billion), according to the bank.

The M2, a broad measure of money supply that covers cash in circulation and all deposits, had climbed 10.3 percent year on year to 289.67 trillion yuan (\$39.7 trillion) as of late September.

The growth rate went down 0.3 percentage points from late August this year and 1.8 percentage points from late September last year.

E-Commerce Logistics

The e-commerce logistics index, an indicator of logistics operations in the e-commerce sector, stood at 112.3 points in September, up 1.2 points from a month earlier, according to the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing.

The sub-index tracking total business volume stood at 123.9 points that month, marking

an increase of 2.5 points from August, the organization said.

The satisfaction rate sub-index stood at 101.5 points in September, up 0.2 points from August, continuing an upward trend for the fourth consecutive month, the data showed.

Overall, the demand for e-commerce logistics has improved significantly, and the supply capacity and efficiency of logistics enterprises have steadily increased, it added.

The e-commerce logistics index is compiled based on data from JD.com, a major online retailer in China, with the base index set at 100 points.

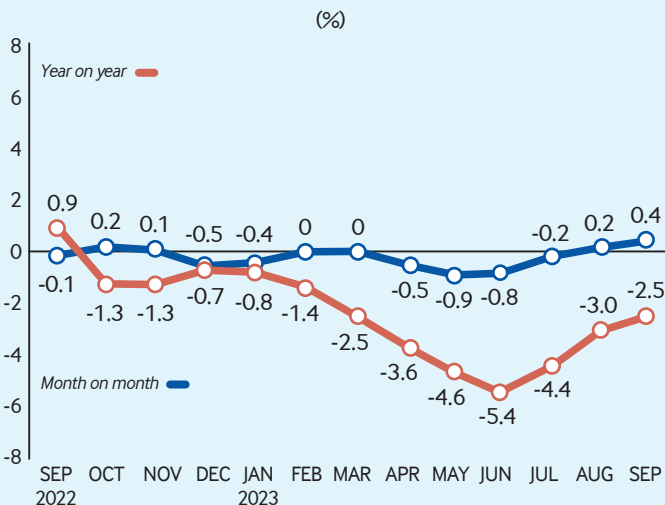
Foreign Trade

China's total imports and exports of goods continued to improve in September, with trade volume hitting a new monthly high this year, official data showed.

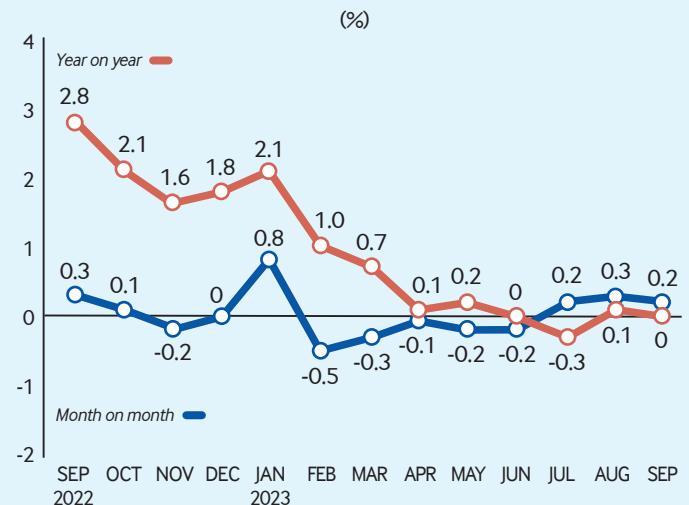
Foreign trade volume reached 3.74 trillion yuan (\$520 billion) in September,

NUMBERS

China's Producer Price Index Growth



China's Consumer Price Index (CPI) Growth



registering month-on-month growth for a second consecutive month, according to the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC).

In the first three quarters of this year, China's goods imports and exports in yuan terms edged down 0.2 percent year on year to 30.8 trillion yuan (\$4.2 trillion), the data revealed.

The country's exports increased 0.6 percent year on year, while imports dipped 1.2 percent in the first nine months, it added.

During this period, China's trade with other Belt and Road Initiative participating countries amounted to 14.32 trillion yuan (\$1.96 trillion), up 3.1 percent year on year and accounting for 46.5 percent of the country's total foreign trade value.

In the January-September period, private enterprises' imports and exports of goods increased by 6.1 percent to 16.34 trillion yuan (\$2.2 trillion),

accounting for more than half of the country's total.

China's exports of machinery and electronic products, which accounted for 58.3 percent of total exports, increased 3.3 percent during the period, with the export value of automobiles and related parts surging 48.2 percent from one year earlier.

New drivers are taking hold, as China saw 41.7 percent export hikes in green products, including electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and solar cells, according to the GACC.

Foreign Ownership

China will mull the feasibility of further removing or relaxing foreign ownership restrictions to draw more global investors, the Ministry of Commerce said on October 12.

While continuing to shorten its negative list for foreign investment, the country will strive to improve its business environment and better serve

foreign companies, ministry spokesperson He Yadong said at a press conference. This negative list refers to China's special administrative measures for the access of foreign investment to certain industries or areas.

China has revised its negative list for foreign investment for five consecutive years, with barriers to foreign ownership reduced in sectors including seed, automobile, vessel and aircraft manufacturing, securities, banking and insurance, the spokesperson said.

According to a report released in September by the Development Research Center of the State Council, China has maintained its position as the world's second largest recipient of foreign investment since 2017 and remains one of the most attractive investment destinations globally.

The country's share of global FDI rose from 8.2 percent in 2012 to 14.6 percent last year.

Multinational HQ

Shanghai is home to 940 regional headquarters of multinational corporations and 551 foreign-funded research and development (R&D) centers, according to a press conference of the 2023 International Business Leaders' Advisory Council for the Mayor of Shanghai on October 15.

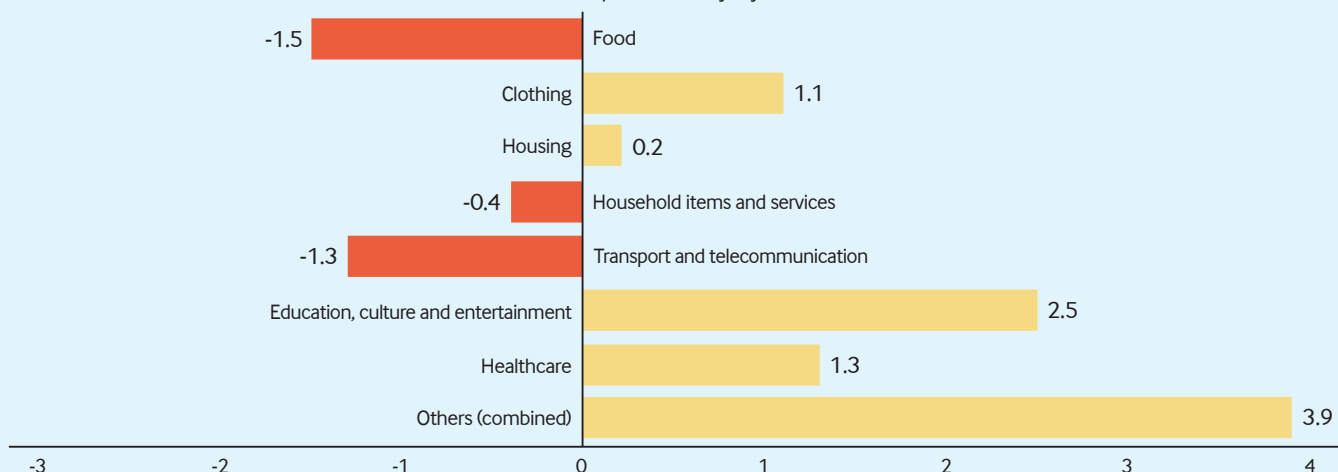
Among them, 49 regional headquarters and 20 R&D centers were launched this year.

Since the beginning of this year, Shanghai's economy has continued to recover and has generally maintained a stable and positive trend, reflecting strong resilience and vitality, Mayor of Shanghai Gong Zheng said at the press conference.

"A good business environment is key for Shanghai to attract foreign companies. We will plan and implement a number of new measures to continuously improve the business environment," Gong added.

China's CPI Growth by Type

September (% y.o.y.)



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)

THIS WEEK **WORLD**



UNITED STATES

Members cast their votes for speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., on October 18. The House failed to elect a new speaker in the second round of voting



POLAND

Voters wait outside a polling station in Warsaw on October 15. At more than 31,000 polling stations across the country and overseas, Poles cast their ballots to elect the 460 deputies of the lower house of Poland's bicameral parliament and 100 senators for a four-year term



IMF

Kristalina Georgieva (first right), Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), attends a press briefing in Marrakech, Morocco, on October 14. Georgieva said that the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) could be "another source of uncertainty" for the global economy



GERMANY

Staff of China International Book Trading Corp. present books from China to attendees at the 75th Frankfurt Book Fair on October 19



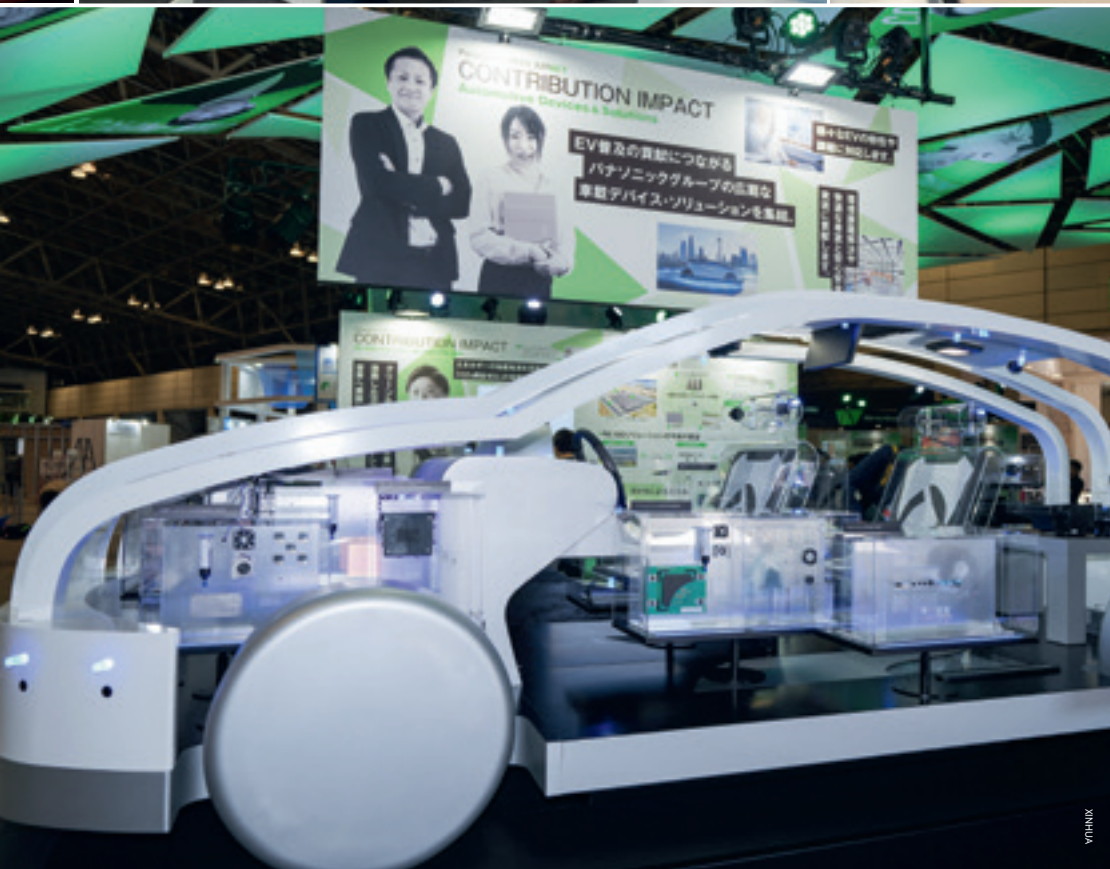
REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Tourists wearing traditional Hanbok pose for a photo in front of Gwanghwamun, the largest gate of Gyeongbokgung Palace in Seoul on October 18. The gate has recently reopened to the public after being restored to its original state for the first time



JAPAN

A Panasonic electric vehicle is on display during the media tour day of the Combined Exhibition of Advanced Technologies 2023 in the city of Chiba, east of Tokyo, on October 17



THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

↓ BEST ACTRESS AWARD WINNER

Lu Xingchen won the best actress award at the Pingyao Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon International Film Festival on October 16. She won the honor for her performance in *Carefree Days*, a drama about the life of a woman who suffers from uremia, a condition involving abnormally high levels of waste products in the blood.

Graduating from the Beijing Dance Academy and majoring in musical theater, Lu has starred in many Chinese films and dramas since 2010. She has won several awards for acting, including the best actress award at the 14th Shanghai International Film Festival in 2011.



Founded in 2017, the festival, named after eminent director Ang Lee's masterpiece, is held annually in Pingyao, an ancient city on the UNESCO World Heritage List in Shanxi Province. The festival this year screened 57 films from 33 countries and regions, including China, Argentina and Tunisia.

Sugar Labels Hit Shanghai Shelves

Yanzhao Evening News
October 11

Over the past few weeks, Shanghai has been running a pilot system to protect its citizens from the negative health impacts of consuming too much added sugar. As of now, 159 local supermarkets and convenience stores have put up color-coded labels in their beverage aisles. For instance, the green label reminds consumers to read a beverage product's nutrition label before purchasing. The red label warns of health risks related to the immoderate consumption of sugary drinks.

Excessive sugar consumption may put a

person at higher risk of obesity and diabetes, as well as tooth decay, fatty liver disease and metabolic disorders. According to a study conducted by the International Diabetes Federation, the number of diabetic patients aged 20 to 79 in China increased from 90 million in 2011 to 140 million in 2021, and is expected to reach 164 million by 2030.

Despite its ability to alert consumers to the danger of excessive sugar intake, Shanghai's pilot system does not indicate the amount of sugar that beverage products contain. To lessen the impact of sugar intake on health, health authorities and beverage companies should work in tandem to set up a color-coded grading system that classifies sweet drinks according to their sugar content.



Hit the Road

China Newsweek
October 2

China witnessed a surge in tourism during its longest holiday of the year—an eight-day Super Golden Week (September 29–October 6) that combined the Mid-Autumn Festival and the National Day holidays. Data released by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism show that 826 million domestic trips were made, a 71.3-percent increase from last year.

While, as many had expected, megacities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen

“I fear that we are at the brink of a deep and dangerous abyss that could change the trajectory of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, if not of the Middle East as a whole.”

Tor Wennesland, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, warning of dangers of an expansion of the ongoing conflict at a Security Council emergency meeting on October 18

“Our long-term presence in China over the past three decades is a strong testimonial of our continuous confidence and commitment to the market.”

Shen Bo, Senior Vice President of Dutch chip manufacturing equipment provider ASML, in a recent interview with *China Daily*

and Chengdu reigned supreme, many small towns also were among the country's top tourist destinations. Like domestic travel bookings, outbound tourism also showed a shift away from major tourist destinations, such as Thailand, Japan and Western Europe, toward niche travel options, including Brunei, Tunisia and Serbia.

This quite visible shift in the country's domestic and outbound tourism scene is largely rooted in the rise of social media. Video platforms such as Douyin, the Chinese version of TikTok, and Bilibili, a Chinese video-streaming giant, have allowed previously unknown places to acquire sudden fame. Zibo, a city in the coastal province of Shandong, became insanely popular after videos of college students trying out its local barbecue went viral on Douyin. Taipan, a remote village in Guizhou Province in the southwest, was catapulted to fame after videos of local basketball games became a massive online hit.

While social media are opening up new, exciting grounds for tourism, online fame can sometimes backfire. After a fleeting spark of soaring popularity, many places soon fell back into obscurity; the sudden influx of tourists can also put enormous environmental pressure on an area. How to convert a sudden spurt of fame into enduring popularity is a question left to be answered.

Virtual Livestreamers

Ce.cn
October 9

As artificial intelligence (AI) technologies continue to evolve, virtual hosts have popped up in many livestreams across China's e-commerce platforms. China's livestream industry now employs 140 million hosts, of which 40 percent are AI-generated avatars.

Despite its enormous size, the livestream sector faces a critical shortage of well-trained employees, as few have mastered the skills needed to be a successful streamer. For this reason, many livestream accounts have switched from real people to digital avatars. An AI-generated livestreamer can work around the clock and be consistently friendly, energetic

and engaging. What's more, it needs only a virtual background, instead of the costly studio settings required by traditional livestreams.

However, no matter how hyper-realistic they are, these livestreamers still seem slightly robotic. The occasional appearance of lip-sync errors, unnatural body movements and slow responses can undermine consumer trust and disrupt the ability of livestream sellers to connect with their audience.

A feasible solution is to integrate the use of virtual and human hosts into a new hybrid format of livestreaming. AI-generated hosts can be used in the daily announcement of detailed discount information, while human streamers, with their loyal followings and authentic interactions, can showcase a brand's products in action.

NEW FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Senior sports official **Song Kai** was elected president of the Chinese Football Association (CFA) at its 12th membership conference on October 16.

Song, 58, is former head of the Administration of Sport in Liaoning Province. During his tenure in Liaoning, the province revitalized its soccer, basketball and volleyball teams. Notably, its basketball team, the Liaoning Flying Leopards, won triple triumphs in the Chinese Basketball Association national tournament.

Fans have pinned their hopes on Song to turn Chinese soccer around in the wake of recent scandals within the professional game for alleged bribery and corruption involving players, coaches, managers and officials. Earlier this year, Du Zhaocai, former deputy head of the General Administration of Sport of China, and former CFA President Chen Xuyuan came under investigation for taking bribes.



"Education is one of the most important things that we can collaborate on here."

Tim Cook, CEO of Apple Inc., during a visit to a primary school in Ya'an, Sichuan Province in southwest China, on October 17

"European automakers have to take BYD very, very seriously. I cannot think of another car that offers so much in terms of range, power and quality for such an attractive price."

Zsolt Csikos, a renowned Hungarian car journalist, commenting on the debut of Chinese automaker BYD's new-energy vehicles in Hungary on October 17 in an interview with Xinhua News Agency



COVER STORY

THE DAWN OF ANOTHER GOLDEN DECADE

After 10 years of fruitful cooperation, BRI participating countries envision how to bring the initiative to a new stage of higher-quality and higher-level development

By Ma Miaomiao

The best way to predict the future is to create it,” Peter Drucker, who

is described as the “father of modern management” in the West, once said. This statement was echoed by eminent Singaporean diplomat and academic Kishore Mahbubani while referring to the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) while attending the Third Belt

and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) in Beijing from October 17 to 18.

“Looking back now, it’s quite remarkable that 10 years ago, China