TOP NEWS

Journey of exploration

International travel bloggers experience the making of *rouyan*, a local delicacy, in Fuzhou, Fujian province, on Monday. Dozens of foreign bloggers have set out on an expedition across China, aiming to uncover and showcase the rich cultural and tourism highlights of 10 diverse cities.

WANG DONGMING / CHINA NEWS SERVICE



Telecom fraud fight intensified

Country willing to bolster law enforcement collaboration with ASEAN member states

By WANG QINGYUN and ZHAO JIA

China will work together with the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to combat online gambling and telecom fraud, Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Thursday, during a meeting in Beijing with diplomatic envoys from the 10 ASEAN countries.

A series of severe cases of online gambling and telecom fraud at the Myanmar-Thailand border have posed threats to and harmed the interests of citizens from China and other countries, which requires high attention, Wang said.

He called on relevant countries to shoulder responsibility and adopt effective measures to ensure the safety of people's lives and property, and never allow criminals to go unpunished.

China is willing to strengthen bilateral and multilateral law enforcement and security cooperation with ASEAN nations to provide a safe environment for people-to-people exchanges and maintain the sound order of regional interactions and cooperation, he added.

Earlier, in a statement issued on Wednesday night, the Chinese Ministry of Public Security said it is making all-out efforts to rescue Chinese citizens who went missing or were trapped after being deceived into traveling abroad.

It pledged to strengthen international law enforcement cooperation to dismantle telecom fraud networks, particularly in Myawaddy, Myanmar.

The ministry said it attaches great importance to the frequent occurrence of such cases recently and to the calls for help posted on social media and other channels by family members of the victims.

The statement said the ministry has asked police across the country to comprehensively analyze and investigate the cases, and it is working to rescue the victims with the assistance of foreign affairs departments and Chinese embassies and consulates overseas.

In July 2023, the ministry launched a special campaign during which the Chinese police and Myanmar's law enforcement departments worked together to crack down on telecom fraud dens in northern Myanmar that target Chinese nationals.

The campaign led to the capture of more than 53,000 Chinese citizens suspected of being involved in various scams and wiped out all major telecom fraud dens located near China's border with northern Myanmar. It also forced a large number of criminals to relocate to other regions in Myanmar such as Myawaddy, Wan Hai and Tangyan.

Some fraud dens are facing a "shortage of labor" due to the stringent crackdowns and mass awareness efforts, the ministry said, adding that these dens have started luring Chinese citizens with the promise of "free travel abroad" and "high-paying jobs".

Those who fall for these false promises are abducted or held captive and forced to participate in illegal activities, it said.

The ministry warned Chinese citizens of such fraudulent schemes and advised them to remain extra vigilant when receiving offers for high-paying jobs or business exchanges overseas and free visits for tourism.

It also advised the public to immediately call the police and contact China's diplomatic missions if a family member goes missing overseas, saying the police will act without delay upon receiving such a report.

The ministry's statement came amid public discussions on a recent human trafficking incident involving Chinese actor Wang Xing. He was rescued by Thai police on Jan 7 and returned to China on Jan 11, according to reports.

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Ties: Endeavors focus on modernization of Global South

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"This relationship sets a brilliant example for mutual respect, equality and win-win cooperation between countries of different sizes," Wei said.

Before his visit to China, Grenada's prime minister had told reporters that "many times, as small islands, we don't always get the respect from large islands because they see us as small or insignificant".

However, in the Grenada-China relations, "we are treated with the same courtesies, the same level of respect, and we are listened to in the same manner as any larger country", Mitchell said.

China's achievements in areas like eradicating poverty, which were built on decades of experience, serve as valuable lessons for Latin American and Caribbean countries, he added.

Yue Yunxia, deputy head of the Institute of Latin American Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that China's cooperation with Caribbean countries has witnessed fast progress in recent years, and such cooperation has no political strings attached and does not target any third party.

In addition to the cricket stadium, 1,000 units of low-income housing, a gift from the government and people of China, have provided comfortable homes for families in Grenada. Furthermore, in the agricultural sector, China has carried out eight consecutive phases of technical cooperation, introducing and promoting advanced agricultural technologies and equipment to Grenada.

The project to upgrade Maurice Bishop International Airport, financed through a soft loan from the Chinese government, has significantly enhanced Grenada's connectivity with the world, opening new opportunities for the further promotion of trade, tourism and cultural exchanges.

According to Yue, the launch of China-aided projects as well as "small and beautiful" livelihood cooperation projects, such as refurbishing community centers, building pedestrian bridges and extending roads in the Caribbean region, have won recognition from countries in the region for their contribution to local economies and the public interest.

Observers noted that as China continues to deepen reform comprehensively, expand opening-up and pursue high-quality development, it has not only promoted its own development, but also provided a broader market and unprecedented cooperation opportunities for the rest of the world, especially Global South countries.

Such endeavors will help inject strong impetus into the modernization process of the Global South and make sure that no country is left behind in the process of global modernization, they said.

Nation's commitment

Speaking at the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in October 2023, President Xi Jinping told foreign leaders that "the modernization we are pursuing is not for China alone, but for all developing countries through our joint efforts".

Two months later, Xi reiterated China's commitment when delivering a speech in San Francisco in the United States, saying, "We are ready to work with all countries to advance global modernization featuring peaceful development, mutually beneficial cooperation and common prosperity, and to build a community with a shared future for mankind."

Wang Bo, dean of the Beijing-based University of International Business and Economics' School of International Development and Cooperation, said that as a significant gap still exists between developing countries and developed ones in terms of modernization, the modernization of the Global South therefore plays a key role in achieving global common development and prosperity.

"For a long time, the international order led by Western countries has posed many obstacles to the modernization of the Global South," Wang said.

"Hegemonism, unilateral economic sanctions and the practice of double standards on human rights issues are all factors that hinder this process," he said, noting that the modernization that China pursues has presented a new vision that is different from the path of Western countries.

The Belt and Road Initiative and the major global initiatives that China has put forward provide an important platform for Global South countries to board the express train of China's development in order to achieve their own development and facilitate the modernization drive of the Global South, he added.

Xinhua contributed to this story.

Apps: Interaction, communication with overseas users seen as beneficial

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Founded in 2013, Xiaohongshu — a comprehensive lifestyle platform with around 300 million monthly active users globally — is reportedly recruiting employees engaged in English content review and plans to roll out English-Chinese translation functions amid the soaring demand from overseas users.

Lemon8, another social media app focusing on lifestyle sharing owned by ByteDance, has taken the second spot on Apple's list of top free downloaded apps.

Meanwhile, a large number of videos have been uploaded on Douyin, the Chinese version of TikTok, by users with internet protocol addresses based in countries such as US, the United Kingdom and Thailand. However, Douyin has denied opening registration for overseas users, saying that it is cracking down on counterfeit accounts.

Zhu Keli, founding director of the China Institute of New Economy, said that against the backdrop of globalization, it is inevitable that Chinese social media platforms are ramping up efforts to make forays into overseas markets for new profit growth points.

"These companies should adopt localized strategies and continue to innovate in content and technologies, such as AI and big data, to lure new users overseas," Zhu said.

The companies should offer tailored content and services in accordance with the needs of users with diverse cultural backgrounds, usage habits and preferences, strengthen cooperation with their foreign counterparts, and establish effective management rules and content reviewing mechanisms, Zhu added.

Jiang Han, a senior analyst at market consultancy Pangoal, underscored the significance of strengthening interaction and communication with overseas users to have a better understanding of their needs. The companies should quickly respond to market changes and improve the quality of content and user experience, he said.

Noting that the migration to Xiaohongshu marks the start of more Chinese social media platforms gaining access to more US users, Jiang said the proliferation of Chinese apps in the US will be conducive to improving international influence of Chinese brands and promoting cultural exchanges and information sharing.

Zhou Mi, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation in Beijing, said the imminent ban on TikTok shows the US government's strengthened oversight of Chinese-owned social media platforms.

Such platforms should reinforce compliance capacities and abide by local laws, rules and regulations to mitigate risks amid rising geopolitical tensions, Zhou added.

The US Supreme Court is set to rule on enforcing a law that would either ban TikTok or force its Chinese parent company ByteDance to sell it to a US company within this week.

US President-elect Donald Trump is considering an executive order that would suspend the enforcement of the TikTok sale-or-ban law for 60 to 90 days, The Washington Post reported on Wednesday.

Political Lens

China, Sri Lanka agree to foster practical cooperation

Premier Li Qiang and top legislator Zhao Leji met separately with visiting Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Thursday in Beijing.

Li told Dissanayake that China is willing to work with Sri Lanka to promote the development of the Port City Colombo and Hambantota Port projects, expand exchanges and cooperation in areas such as trade, the economy and agriculture, and constantly bring forward their strategic cooperative partnership.

China will also deepen political mutual trust, better align development strategies, and advance high-quality Belt and Road cooperation with the South Asian country, Li said.

Dissanayake reiterated Sri Lanka's strong commitment to its relationship with China and its steadfast adherence to the one-China principle. Sri Lanka is willing to strengthen practical cooperation across various sectors with China and enhance multilateral collaboration to write a new chapter in Sri Lanka-China relations, he said.

During their meeting, Zhao, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, told Dissanayake that the NPC is willing to continue to deepen exchanges between the two countries' legislatures at all levels, and contribute to each other's national development and bilateral practical cooperation.

CHINA DAILY

US allegations, reports of cyberattacks rejected

By ZHANG YUNBI
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Chinese diplomats on cyber affairs, in conversation with their United States counterparts, have firmly rejected US allegations of cyberattacks, sources said.

The allegations made by the US "lack evidence", the sources told China Daily.

The Chinese diplomats "have expressed concerns about the US targeting China by rolling out large-scale cyber espionage and moves jeopardizing critical information infrastructure", the sources added.

In recent months, some leading US media organizations, including The Wall Street Journal and The Washington Post, have claimed that Chinese hackers, as part of a "Chinese government-affiliated group" or campaign that US investigators and researchers have dubbed "Salt Typhoon", intercepted phone calls of US political figures and collected audio recordings.

Even US government officials publicly joined the verbal attacks on China in this regard.

However, cyber affairs experts and policy observers in China pointed out that the US media reports, while falsely linking China to such alleged attacks, also shed light on the scandalous side of US espionage missions by federal agencies, including massive wiretaps.

A report by The Washington Post on Oct 27 said the so-called "Salt Typhoon" group is thought to have targeted "the system that tracks lawful requests for wiretaps made by the federal government of carriers".

Beijing has made public rebuttals against Washington's similar allegations that label China as the perpetrator of cyberattacks against the US.

Shen Yi, a professor at Fudan University in Shanghai and a leading expert on cyberspace governance studies, said, "US intelligence agencies have a typical behavioral pattern in hyping cybersecurity governance and national security issues, which is fabricating facts using false and inaccurate information, and fabricating so-called cyberattacks by other countries."

The objective is to hype security threats and create anxiety, Shen added.

Earlier this month, the US Department of the Treasury sanctioned a Beijing-based cybersecurity company, accusing it of helping Chinese hackers infiltrate US telecommunication systems and conduct surveillance.

At a recent news conference, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun said: "We urge the US to stop using the issue of cybersecurity to vilify and smear China. For quite some time, the US has been trumpeting so-called 'Chinese hacking' and even using it to impose illegal and unilateral sanctions on China."

Cultural connection



Staff members display the first-day cover of the postage stamps for the Year of the Snake from the Eastern Calendar series in Minsk, Belarus, on Wednesday. This year marks the release of the sixth set in the series, following the order of the Chinese zodiac. XINHUA