

TOP NEWS

Thai king to pay state visit to China

First such monarchial trip in 50 years shows emphasis on development of ties

By ZHANG YUNBI in Beijing and YANG WANLI in Bangkok

King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua of Thailand will pay a state visit to China this month, the first by a Thai monarch since diplomatic relations were established in 1975.

During the Thai king’s visit from Nov 13 to 17, President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang will hold separate meetings with him, according to China’s Foreign Ministry.

The king has chosen China as the first major country for his official visit, which “fully shows the great emphasis both sides place on the development of China-Thailand relations”, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said on Thursday at a daily news conference in Beijing.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China-Thailand diplomatic relations and the golden jubilee of China-Thailand friendship, which “presents new opportunities for the development of bilateral relations”, Mao said.

China looks forward to taking this visit as an opportunity to carry forward the traditional friendship, strengthen political mutual trust and deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, she said.

Beijing also looks to achieve more fruitful results in jointly building a China-Thailand community with a shared future, better benefit the people of both countries and contribute to the region’s peace, stability, development and prosperity, she added.

According to a statement released on Thursday by the Thai Foreign Ministry, King Maha Vajiralongkorn and Queen Suthida Bajrasudhabimalalakshana will undertake a series of official engagements and visit important cultural and religious sites in Beijing.

They are also expected to visit institutions that showcase China’s national development, particularly

in science, technology, innovation and education.

“This historic state visit — the first visit by a Thai monarch to China — reflects the deep-rooted friendship and mutual understanding shared between the two countries at all levels,” the Thai Foreign Ministry statement said.

The visit “will further strengthen Thailand-China bilateral relations for years to come, bringing lasting benefits to the peoples of both countries”, it added.

China has remained Thailand’s largest trading partner for 12 consecutive years.

The bilateral trade volume exceeded \$133.98 billion last year, marking a year-on-year increase of 6.1 percent, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Mao, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, noted that the two countries are “close, friendly neighbors”. In recent years, China-Thailand relations “have maintained a high level of development” under the strategic guidance of the leaders of both countries, she said.

During President Xi’s visit to Thailand in 2022, leaders from the two sides reached consensus on building a China-Thailand community with a shared future.

Last week, Xi met with Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul on the sidelines of the 2025 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Economic Leaders’ Meeting, which was held in Gyeongju, the Republic of Korea.

“The leaders of China and Thailand have maintained close exchanges, like visiting relatives, and many members of the Thai Royal Family have personally promoted friendly exchanges as well,” Chinese Ambassador to Thailand Zhang Jianwei said in a signed article published in Thai media earlier this year.

Contact the writers at zhangyunbi@chinadaily.com.cn

Growth: Consumption and equality cited as vital tasks

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Nakao said the continued momentum of tech-driven investment demonstrates the resilience of China’s economy and potential for future expansion, even though the country faces challenges in the property sector and in local government finances, weakness in consumption and an aging population.

Drawing a comparison with Japan’s bubble economy in the 1990s, Nakao said that there are similarities in terms of rapid asset price growth, but China still has far more space to expand.

“China’s per capita GDP is still about one-fourth of that of the United States, while Japan’s per capita GDP in 1990 was already 30 percent higher than that of the US,” he said. “That means China still has a lot of space to grow because its economy on average is not as much as the US, which is a concept of convergence.”

Nakao added that China’s “entrepreneurship and the sentiment of the people who want to grow and be rich looks stronger than in Japan”, and its vast pool of talent provides another structural advantage. “China has so many PhDs in engineering and science as well as lots of workers who are highly educated. And the research and development expenditure is really strong in China,” he said.

While acknowledging that China’s “high-quality production is very good”, he stressed that it should also “pay more attention to

the demand side”, as strengthening domestic demand will be key to absorbing the nation’s growing production capacity and addressing foreign concerns of oversupply.

According to the recommendations of the CPC Central Committee, over the next five years, China should see that the economy keeps growing within an appropriate range, realize steady gains in total factor productivity, and achieve a notable increase in household consumption as a share of GDP.

Wang Yiming, vice-chairman of the China Center for International Economic Exchanges, said official data showed that household consumption accounted for nearly 40 percent of GDP in China in 2024, which is still far behind developed economies such as the US and Japan.

Nakao echoed Wang’s views, adding that China still faces the challenge of boosting consumption and improving equality. He said that while investment continues to drive growth, household spending must become a stronger pillar.

He acknowledged that globalization is undergoing adjustments worldwide, but China should remain an active participant. “China has gained a lot from globalization and open trade,” he said. “What is most important is to have good relations with other countries — friendship and cooperation.”

Contact the writers at ouyangshijia@chinadaily.com.cn

Masked dance



A foreign tourist tries traditional Nuo dancing on Wednesday in Wanzai county, Yichun, Jiangxi province. The dance, which features masks as a key form of artistic expression, is believed to ward off plagues and evil spirits. The history of Nuo culture can be traced back at least two thousand years. DENG LONGHUA / FOR CHINA DAILY

Diving star Quan makes strong comeback

By ZHENG CAIXIONG in Guangzhou and SUN XIAOCHEN in Beijing

Taller and heavier, but still as precise as she has ever been, China’s diving sensation Quan Hongchan refuses to be written off at the elite level just yet as she overcomes severe physical challenges to shine at the 15th National Games.

The nation’s quadrennial sporting extravaganza, which has kicked off some of its 419 medal events before Sunday’s official opening ceremony, is being held across boundaries for the first time — in Guangdong province and the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions.

After being sidelined from competitions for about half a year due to injuries, Quan, a three-time Olympic gold winner, has returned to the spotlight amid doubts about her current level of preparedness and her future in international competitions, particularly her chances of making it to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

She is no longer the petite 14-year-old who, at the 2020 Tokyo Games, became one of the youngest Chinese divers to win an Olympic gold, or the more mature teenager who clinched gold twice at the 2024 Paris Games. Her larger body frame and six-month hiatus notwithstanding, Quan, now 18, has maintained the striking quality of her dives.

The teen master of the “splash-disappearing technique”, which refers to her delicate body control to keep water splashes at the minimum during a dive, delivered once again on Sunday.

In the women’s synchronized 10-meter platform diving team event, Quan made a strong return, partnering with newcomer Wang Weiying. The duo displayed remarkable synchronicity and composure, earning a top combined score over three rounds and securing the first gold medal in diving for Team Guangdong, successfully defending its National Games title.

Quan’s home crowd at the Guangdong Olympic Sports Center Swimming and Diving Hall welcomed her with the loudest cheers, while her legion of social media fans — around 3.75 million on Sina Weibo — celebrated her comeback online.

The hashtag “Quan Hongchan returns to win” garnered nearly 62 million views on Weibo as of Thursday, and she was among the top trending topics related to the National Games on social media.

“I am awesome,” Quan herself posted an encouragement on Weibo following Guangdong’s team victory.

Quan’s impressive form despite her injuries signals that she is far from retirement.

Referring to the prospect of diving against her star teammate in the individual event at the 2028 Olympics, Quan’s partner Wang said, “I hope I can be her rival. Apparently, she’s not recovered to her best form yet, but I hope she will continue working hard on her way back to the peak.”

In 2021, Quan became a household name after winning the 10m platform gold at the Tokyo Olympics, which was deferred because of the COVID-19 pandemic. She redefined the benchmark of elite diving by effortlessly pulling off some of the world’s most difficult dives.

The pull of gravity felt stronger as Quan grew at least 15 centimeters taller and 10 kilograms heavier by the time of the Paris Olympics. However, she beat the challenges with

countless extra hours on her fitness program, which eventually paid rich dividends. Quan edged out national teammate Chen Yuxi to retain her individual title in Paris, and added a third career Olympic gold in the synchro event with Chen.

Quan will miss another duel against Chen, who is representing Shanghai, in Monday’s individual final, because she hasn’t signed up for the event to keep the intensity of her return in check.

He Weiyl, head coach of the Guangdong diving team, said that Quan has overcome tougher-than-expected challenges to make it to the National Games. “She is competing while still nursing injuries to her (right) tibia and ankle joints, and her body has kinesiology tapes all over to protect her muscles from overstretching,” he said. “It’s extremely tough for her, as she endures severe pain every day. She has to apply ice packs to her leg between each round during both practice and competitions.”

The National Games was Quan’s first competition since she last dived competitively at the World Aquatics Diving World Cup Super Final in May in Beijing.

Chen, 20, a close friend of Quan, has emerged as a favorite for the individual title at the 2028 Olympics, after she claimed a record-extending fourth world championship title in 10m platform in July in Singapore.

Whether it is Quan making a comeback and reigning supreme again or a mature Chen finishing on top, the intriguing rivalry between the duo is expected to keep the diving world stoked in the run-up to the next Olympics.

Contact the writers at zhengcaixiong@chinadaily.com.cn

Political Lens

Xi congratulates new president of Tanzania

President Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory message on Thursday to Samia Suluhu Hassan on her assumption of the presidency of Tanzania.

Xi noted in the message that China and Tanzania enjoy a profound traditional friendship, and bilateral relations have developed at a high level in recent years.

He expressed his willingness to work with Hassan to implement the outcomes of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Summit, continuously advancing the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries to new heights, and making greater contributions toward building an all-weather China-Africa community with a shared future for the new era.

Diplomatic relations with Samoa marked

President Xi Jinping and Samoa’s Head of State Tuimaleali’ifano Va’aletoa Sualauvi II on Thursday exchanged congratulations on the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Also on Thursday, Premier Li Qiang and Samoan Prime Minister Laaualiemalietoa Leuatea Schmidt exchanged congratulatory messages.

Nation ready to upgrade cooperation with Brazil

Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang held separate meetings with Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Chief of Staff of the Brazilian Presidency Rui Costa on Wednesday during a visit to the country.

During his meeting with Lula, Ding said that China is ready to expand and upgrade cooperation with Brazil across various fields and strengthen coordination and collaboration in multilateral arenas, advance the reform and improvement of global governance, and safeguard the interests of developing countries.

He said China is willing to work with Brazil to ensure the success of the climate summit in Belem and inject new momentum into multilateral processes in the climate field.

During his meeting with Costa, Ding said that China would like to work with Brazil to promote greater development of China’s relations with the Southern Common Market and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

CHINA DAILY — XINHUA

Observation: Comet holds key scientific research value

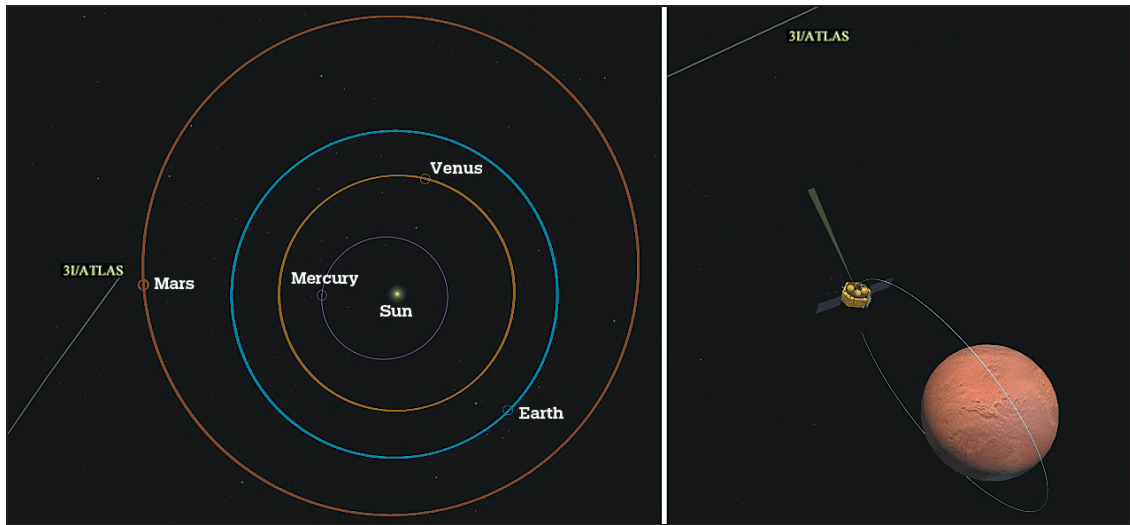
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At the time, the spacecraft was orbiting about 29 million kilometers from the comet, realizing one of the closest observation operations of the celestial body, the CNSA said in a news release.

Scientists and engineers in the Tianwen 1 project team started making preparations for the 3I/ATLAS observation in early September. They carried out rounds of calculations and simulations before working out a specific observation and imaging plan, which was based on 3I/ATLAS’ trajectory characteristics, brightness, size and the capabilities of the orbiter’s scientific payloads, the CNSA said.

The comet was first discovered on July 1 by the NASA-funded Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System, or ATLAS, survey telescope in Rio Hurtado, Chile.

Since the first report, spotting records of the comet before the July observation were gathered from the archives of three different ATLAS telescopes around the world and California Institute of Technology’s



The combo diagram illustrates the relative positions of the interstellar object 3I/ATLAS and the orbiter of China’s Mars mission Tianwen 1. The diagram on the right is an enlargement of a section of the diagram on the left. CHINA NATIONAL SPACE ADMINISTRATION

Zwicky Transient Facility at the Palomar Observatory in San Diego County, California, the United States.

According to scientists, the 3I/ATLAS may have formed around an ancient star at the center of the Milky Way galaxy, with an estimated age of about 3 billion to 11 billion years, possibly older than the age of the solar system. It is a rare sample for detecting the composition, evolution and early stellar history of exoplanets.

The comet reached its closest point to the sun around the end of October, at a distance of about 1.4 astronomical units, or 210 million km, just inside the orbit of Mars.

Liu Jianjun, a senior Tianwen 1 mission planner, said the orbiter’s optical imaging apparatus was orig-

inally designed to photograph the bright Martian surface, and this is the first attempt for it to take the images of such a distant and relatively obscure celestial body.

Liu said the observation of the 3I/ATLAS is an important extended task of Tianwen 1, and has served as a technical test and accumulated experience for the Tianwen 2 asteroid exploration mission, which was launched in late May.

Wang Yanan, chief editor of Aerospace Knowledge magazine, said that calculations indicate the 3I/ATLAS originated from galactic regions outside the solar system, possibly a fragment ejected by gravity from a stellar system in the early stages of its formation billions of years ago.

“It has drifted through interstellar space for an extremely long time, like a grain of dust from the cosmic frontier, until it accidentally strayed into our solar system recently. It streaks across the sky at an extremely high speed — more than 200,000 km per hour — far exceeding the orbital speed of ordinary comets,” he said.

“More notably, the direction of its tail is opposite to that of ordinary comets. This anomalous phenomenon leads scientists to believe it holds significant scientific research value, providing an opportunity to study extraterrestrial icy objects and helping us understand the material composition and evolutionary history of substances not belonging to our solar system,” Wang added.