TOP NEWS

Cooperation with Russia to expand

Premier Li calls on both countries to increase people-to-people exchanges

By CAO DESHENG
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Premier Li Qiang on Monday called for closer cooperation between China and Russia in investment, energy, agriculture and other fields, and expressed the hope that Moscow would provide more convenience for Chinese enterprises to invest and operate in Russia.

Li made the remarks during his talks with Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin in Moscow. Li arrived in the Russian capital on Monday for the 24th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

During their talks, Li recalled that he and Mishustin held the 30th regular meeting of the Chinese and Russian heads of government in Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang province, earlier this month, saying that the meeting comprehensively reviewed the progress of China-Russia cooperation in various fields and made plans for key cooperation in the next stage.

China stands ready to work with Russia to follow the strategic guidance of the two heads of state, further strengthen communication, and continuously deepen mutually beneficial cooperation between the two sides to deliver more benefits to the two peoples, Li said.

He said that the Chinese market welcomes more high-quality agricultural and food products from Russia. Li also called on both countries to continue expanding cultural and people-to-people exchanges, strengthen cooperation in areas such as culture, education and films, and infuse more humanistic warmth into China-Russia relations.

Noting that the Tianjin Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization held from Aug 31 to Sept 1 achieved a series of fruitful results of milestone significance, the premier said that China is willing to maintain close coordination and collaboration with Russia to encourage all parties of the SCO to uphold the Shanghai Spirit and materialize the development blueprint outlined by leaders at an early date.



Premier Li Qiang attends the Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Expanded Format in Moscow, the capital of Russia, on Tuesday.
DMITRY ASTAKHOV / SPUTNIK / GOVERNMENT POOL PHOTO VIA AP

Li called for further advancing pragmatic cooperation to bolster the development momentum of all member states, continuously improving the institutional building of the SCO to enhance its influence in international affairs.

It is also important to stand in solidarity with the vast number of countries of the Global South to promote an equitable and orderly multipolar world as well as a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, he added.

Mishustin said that the Russia-China comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era is at an unprecedented high level.

Russia is willing to further intensify dialogue and exchanges with China at all levels, deepen cooperation in fields such as the economy and trade, energy, agriculture, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, create new growth drivers for cooperation, and continuously enhance good-neighborly friendship, he added.

Mishustin said that Russia is willing to create a favorable business environment for Chinese enterprises investing in Russia.

He expressed gratitude to China for its outstanding work during its presidency of the SCO, especially for the successful hosting of the Tianjin Summit.

Russia is willing to strengthen communication and coordination with China, enhance the institutional building of the SCO, and make greater contributions to promoting peace, development and prosperity in the region and the world, Mishustin said.

Political Lens

Top political adviser calls for advancing Sino-German ties

China's top political adviser Wang Huning on Tuesday expressed the nation's readiness to work with Germany to advance the China-Germany all-round strategic partnership to a higher level and promote the development of China-European Union relations.

Wang, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, made the remarks when meeting with a German Social Democratic Party delegation, led by Lars Klingbeil, co-chairman of the SPD.

Klingbeil, who is also Germany's vice-chancellor and federal minister of finance, said that Berlin would like to promote pragmatic cooperation with Beijing in various fields and strengthen mutual understanding.

Collaboration stressed to promote railway link with Europe

China is willing to work with all parties to strengthen communication and cooperation and promote the China-Europe Railway Express to achieve new development, in order to better facilitate economic and trade exchanges and mutual learning in Eurasia, Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang said on Tuesday.

Ding made the remarks at the second China Railway Express Cooperation Forum in Xi'an, Northwest China's Shaanxi province.

CHINA DAILY

Carrier exercises bolster fleet response capabilities

By JIANG CHENGLONG
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The formation of CNS *Fujian*, China's first aircraft carrier equipped with an electromagnetic catapult system, which entered service earlier this month, recently completed its first live-force training mission at sea, the People's Liberation Army Navy said on Tuesday.

Inside
Comment, **page 8**

The formation led by the carrier, and comprising guided-missile destroyer CNS *Yan'an* and frigate CNS *Tongliao*, conducted multiple exercises, including formation sailing and ship-aircraft joint search and rescue, during the mission, the PLA Navy said in a news release.

In the joint search and rescue drill, following orders from the formation command center to handle a simulated emergency, the warships and aircraft coordinated rapidly to complete the rescue task. The training helped refine procedures for handling emergencies associated with carrier-borne aircraft and optimized the deployment of rescue forces, thereby strengthening the fleet's emergency response capabilities, the release stated.

During the mission, a variety of carrier-based aircraft, including the J-35 stealth fighter jet, the J-15T and J-15DT fighters, and the KJ-600 fixed-wing early warning and control plane, conducted multiple electromagnetic catapult take-offs and arrested landings. The drills "effectively tested" the *Fujian*'s electromagnetic launch and recovery systems and flight deck operation capabilities, further verifying the technical adaptability between the vessel and its aircraft, the release noted.

The *Fujian* was commissioned on Nov 5.

The carrier formation returned to a naval port in Sanya, Hainan province, after wrapping up the maritime exercises, a report by China Media Group said on Tuesday.

Bao Yu, a sailor serving on the *Fujian*, was quoted by the report as saying that through continuous training with real equipment, the crew gained a more precise grasp of the performance parameters of the electromagnetic catapult and arresting systems. The sailor noted that the exercises allowed the crew to become more proficient in operating various types of equipment and enhanced the tacit coordination between different battle stations and the pilots. This laid a solid foundation for the safe and efficient launching and recovery of aircraft, Bao added.

The maritime training was a normal procedure based on a work plan, which was aimed at testing the training effectiveness of the troops and improve their capability to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests, according to the report.

Ties: Japanese military buildup, expansion blasted by ministry

From page 1

Recently, some Japanese officials confirmed that the government has planned a far-reaching reform to revert the ranks of Japan's Self-Defense Forces to the names used by the prewar Imperial Japanese Army.

The plan triggered widespread criticism by Japan's Asian neighbors, as it is seen as betraying the Self-Defense Forces' long-lasting tradition of downplaying war-related features and reminds the people of countries invaded by Japan of the atrocities and painful memories of more than 80 years ago.

In response to the rank-reverting plan, Mao, the Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, said Japan's right-wing forces are "sparing no efforts" to remove restraints imposed by the country's pacifist Constitution, and are advancing military expansion and buildup.

She blasted Tokyo's drive in recent years to revise security policies and lift limits on weapons exports, and its plan to abolish Japan's Three Non-Nuclear Principles — not possessing and not producing nuclear weapons, and not allowing introduction of nuclear weapons into Japanese territory.

"Eighty years on, militarism must never be revived in Japan, the post-WWII international order must never be challenged, and world peace and stability must never be ruined again," Mao added.

On the road to gold



Li Huan (right) from the Jiangsu softball team celebrates with teammates after scoring on Tuesday during the ongoing 15th National Games in Zhongshan, Guangdong province. Team Jiangsu went on to win the softball gold. DING LEI / XINHUA **See more, page 20**

Chinese cities dominate global science hub rankings

By CHEN MEILING
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Chinese cities account for more than half of the world's top 10 scientific research hubs, according to the latest Nature Index supplement, with Beijing retaining its position as the leading global science city — a title it has held since 2016.

According to the "Nature Index 2025 Science Cities" supplement, the number of Chinese cities among the global top 10 rose from five in 2023 to six in 2024.

While Beijing tops the chart, Shanghai holds second place. The other Chinese cities on the list are Nanjing (fifth) in Jiangsu province, Guangzhou (sixth) in Guangdong province, Wuhan (eighth) in Hubei province and Hangzhou (10th) in Zhejiang province.

The New York metropolitan area, the Boston metropolitan area, the San Francisco Bay Area and the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area, which are all in the United States, are also among the global top 10 scientific research hubs.

The supplement, compiled by an organization associated with international publisher Springer Nature, draws on the Nature Index open database, which tracks all contributions made by global research institutions to 145 high-quality natural-science and health-science journals.

Chinese cities lead in three of the five major subjects evaluated by the index, namely chemistry, physical sciences, and Earth and environmental sciences. Among these, Chinese cities have, for the first time, swept the top 10 ranks in chemistry, and claimed six spots in each of the other two fields. Beijing ranks first in all three fields.

In biological sciences, Western cities continue to lead, with New York and Boston holding the top two spots, and Beijing making it to third place. In health sciences, US cities account for half of the top 10 positions, while Beijing ranks sixth.

In the overall rankings, Hangzhou, home to tech giants such as Alibaba and DeepSeek, advanced three spots since the 2023 Nature Index supplement was released to make it to the world's top 10 scientific research hubs in 2024.

Wuhan, which ranked ninth in 2023, climbed a spot to eighth place in 2024. The city is now home to more than 16,600 high-tech enterprises, with the transaction value of technology contracts exceeding 260 billion yuan last year.

Yin Hejun, minister of science and technology, said last month that sci-tech innovation can catalyze new industries, growth models and growth drivers, serving as the core element in developing new quality productive forces.

Shang Yanran, deputy chief planner at the Tsinghua Tongheng Planning and Design Institute in Beijing, said: "As the competitiveness and influence of these cities grow, they are better positioned to attract top talent and resources, becoming critical nodes in the global innovation network and contributing Chinese solutions to worldwide sci-tech advancement."

Wei Wangyu, Yang Cheng and Xinhua contributed to this story.

Japan's tourism battered as travelers cancel trips

By ZHU WENQIAN
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There has been a slew of ticket cancellations after Beijing issued travel alerts for Chinese citizens planning to visit Japan in the wake of Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's erroneous remarks over Taiwan, which drew strong protests from China. South Korea has now emerged as the most popular overseas destination for Chinese travelers.

Over the weekend, flight booking data revealed that South Korea was the top destination for Chinese travelers heading overseas. There was a healthy demand for air tickets to Thailand, China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam as well, according to Qunar, a Beijing-based online travel agency.

Meanwhile, Tuniu Corp, an online travel agency based in Nanjing, the capital of Jiangsu province, said cancellations of group tours to Japan booked on its platform had been higher than usual. Shanghai-based travel agency Spring Tour said it is closely monitoring the situation. Spring Airlines, a Shanghai-based budget carrier operating multiple flights between Shanghai and various Japanese cities, has canceled some of its flights.

Spring Airlines said the flight cancellations were in line with its previous plans. Asked whether subsequent Japan-bound flights would be curtailed or canceled, the carrier said it will closely track and evaluate ticket change and cancellation patterns before making a decision.

Multiple major domestic airlines, including Air China, China Southern Airlines, China Eastern Airlines, Hainan Airlines and Sichuan Airlines, have issued public notices stating that passengers holding tickets issued for travel before Dec 31 are eligible for free refunds or rescheduling for flights to and from Japan.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning reiterated China's firm position to defend its core interests and international justice at a regular news briefing in Beijing on Tuesday. "Japan must retract its erroneous remarks, repent and change course, offering a clear and satisfactory answer to the Chinese people," Mao said.

The Foreign Ministry issued a travel advisory on Friday, noting that public security in Japan has remained unstable since the beginning of this year, with a high incidence of illegal and criminal cases targeting Chinese citizens. The ministry solemnly reminds Chinese citizens to avoid traveling to Japan in the near term, as Japanese leaders had recently made provocative remarks on the Taiwan question, which have seriously undermined the atmosphere for China-Japan personnel exchanges and posed significant risks to the personal safety and lives of Chinese citizens in Japan.

China's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture and Tourism released similar alerts on Sunday.

Liu Yuxing, a senior university student, said she and her friends decided to change their travel destination after seeing the reminder issued by the culture and tourism ministry. "We originally planned to travel to Osaka, Japan, before the Spring Festival of 2026. We haven't booked the flights yet. Now we are discussing changing to a tour to Hong Kong and Macao," Liu told Beijing Business Today.

This ongoing downturn in Chinese outbound travel to Japan has taken a toll on Japan's tourism industry and relevant sectors. China has consistently ranked among the top sources of tourists visiting Japan. Shares of Japan's major tourism-related stocks declined on Monday and Tuesday.

Japanese beauty and cosmetics company Shiseido saw its shares drop nearly 3 percent more on Tuesday. Japan Airlines lost around 1 percent during the trading. Isetan Mitsukoshi Holdings, one of the largest department store groups in Japan, edged down 0.43 percent. Shares of Japanese sportswear firm Asics Corp fell 1.87 percent. The Nikkei 225 Index also declined 3.22 percent on Tuesday.

China is Japan's largest trading partner and its largest source of imports, according to China's General Administration of Customs.

Japan's Nomura Research Institute said on Sunday that a significant decline in the number of Chinese tourists visiting Japan could lead to a 0.36 percent drop in Japan's GDP. Preliminary calculations indicated that the resulting economic loss was expected to reach 2.2 trillion Japanese yen ($14.18 billion).