

中印对话

Historic Times for China
and the World

CHINA-INDIA DIALOGUE

Work Together to
Advance Global Economic
Development

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Hope Amidst the Pandemic



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半个多世纪，三代人耕耘。
沙地变林海，荒原成绿洲。
寒来暑往，
塞罕坝机械林场的森林覆盖率
已达80%，
栽种树木按二米株距排开，
可绕地球赤道二圈。

塞罕坝

牢记使命 艰苦创业 绿色发展

Saihanba is a cold alpine area in northern Hebei Province bordering the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. It was once a barren land but is now home to 75,000 hectares of forest, thanks to the efforts made by generations of forestry workers in the past 55 years. Every year the forest purifies 137 million cubic meters of water and absorbs 747,000 tons of carbon dioxide. The forest produces 12 billion yuan (around US\$1.8 billion) of ecological value annually, according to the Chinese Academy of Forestry.

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Xi Sends Sympathy Message to Modi over COVID-19 Resurgence in India

Chinese President Xi Jinping sent a message of sympathy to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the COVID-19 pandemic in India on April 30.

In the message, Xi stressed China's willingness to strengthen anti-pandemic cooperation with India and provide support and help to the country.

Noting his concern about the pandemic situation in India, Xi, on behalf of the Chinese government

and people as well as himself, expressed sincere sympathies to the Indian government and people.

The human race belongs to a community with a shared future, Xi said, adding that only solidarity and cooperation will enable all countries around the world to completely defeat the pandemic.

Xi said he believes that under the leadership of the Indian government, its people will surely overcome the pandemic.

China-India Trade Jumps 70% in First Five Months of 2021

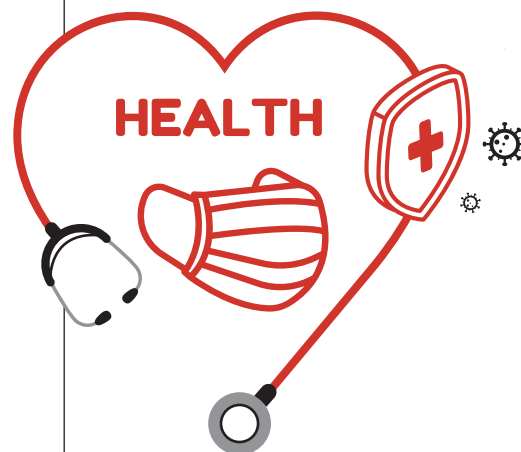
According to June 7 data from the General Administration of Customs of China, bilateral trade volume between China and India from January to May 2021 reached US\$ 48.16 billion, a significant year-on-year increase of 70%. During this period, India imported goods worth US\$ 35.89 billion from China, an increase of 64.1% over the same period last year.

Due to the influence of the pandemic, trade volume between China and India shrank dramatically

in the first five months in 2020. Bilateral imports fell sharply by 23.1% compared with that of the same period in 2019, while India's imports from China fell by 24.8% during that period.

According to the data, the year-on-year growth rate of trade between China and India ranks first among all countries and regions. In addition, the year-on-year growth rate of India's imports from China is only slightly slower than that of the Philippines and the United Kingdom.

Chinese Ambassador to India Holds Online Dialogue with CYL and Universities



Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong held an online dialogue on June 7 with Confederation of Young Leaders (CYL) and students and faculty from Indian universities, through which he shared stories of the CPC and China's development. Ambassador Sun delivered a keynote speech titled "Understand China's Development, Keep Faith in Cooperation," and answered questions from participants. The dialogue was hosted by Mr. Himadrish Suwan, chairman of CYL, and attended by representatives of youth leaders in India and students and faculty from Indian universities.

Sun stressed that the

COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that no country or nation is safe if the virus is anywhere. He continued that mankind's destiny is more closely linked than ever. China-India cooperation on fighting the COVID-19 pandemic has been encouraging. After the outbreak of the second wave, President Xi Jinping sent a message of solidarity and support to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, expressing sincere sympathies to the Indian government and people. Xi stated that China is willing to strengthen anti-pandemic cooperation with India and provide support and help. After the outbreak of the second wave of COVID-19 in India, China was one of the first countries to offer support and take action. In India's fight against the pandemic, China has never been absent nor a mere spectator.

Himadrish Suwan called the stories between the CPC and the Chinese people touching, China's development achievements amazing, and Chinese experience and wisdom worth learning. He sincerely thanked China for the strong support and help in India's fight against the pandemic. He said that India and China are both ancient civilizations and that friendship between the two aligns with the fundamental interests of both and the expectations of the two peoples.

China and India Hold 22nd Meeting on Border Affairs

On June 25, Director-General of the Department of Boundary and Ocean Affairs of China's Foreign Ministry Hong Liang and Additional Secretary of the East Asia Division of the Ministry of External Affairs of India Naveen Srivastava co-chaired the 22nd Meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on China-India Border Affairs via video. Representatives from departments related to diplomacy, national defense, and immigration from both countries attended the meeting.

The two sides conducted candid and in-depth exchange of views on border issues and China-India relations and agreed to consolidate the disengagement results of the front-line troops of the two countries and properly settle remaining issues along the west section of the China-India boundary according to consensus reached by foreign ministers of both countries. Both sides will continuously make efforts to further de-escalate the border situation, prevent a relapse of the incident on the ground, and work together to maintain peace and tranquility in border areas. Both sides agreed to maintain high-level diplomatic communication, provide additional guidance for properly addressing the situation in the China-India border areas, and actively prepare for the 12th Senior Commanders Meeting; the specific time and arrangement of which will be determined through the border defense hotline as soon as possible.



Historic Times for China and the World

By Zheng Bijian



Groundbreaking changes in China's relations with other countries have been driving many of the world's most positive developments.

In a flash, an unexpected pandemic disrupted global development in the third decade of the 21st century, and turned every forecast upside down.

And hardly anyone unexpected the waves of protectionism, unilateralism, populism, and anti-globalization spread and reverberate so widely, creating more

uncertainty for the world.

The resulting adverse and severe impact on the lives and property of people all over the world as well as on the economy, society, production, and everyday life in various countries has become the greatest modern-day casualty since peace and development became the central theme of the times in the 1980s.

With drastic changes taking place all over the world one after another, the world has entered a period of turmoil and change.

GREAT CHALLENGES AMID DRASTIC CHANGES

Many bad things have accompanied the drastic changes that have been so



June 23, 2021: Taicang Port, a nationally recognized arterial port for container transportation in Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province, is brightly lit and busy at night. VCG

frequent as of late. The negative changes are some of the greatest challenges facing the whole world today. For me, the four big ones are:

First, overcoming unilateralism and working together to defeat the virus.

Second, repairing the global industrial chain, boosting a new round of economic globalization, and advancing development while defeating the pandemic by joining hands.

The third is, against the background of bringing the pandemic under control and the recovery of the economy, we have to overcome every obstacle and create new

horizons for world peace and development for a decade to come.

The fourth challenge will be a major historical test for the world involving all of the previous three. On a global scale, the challenge of establishing balance and harmony between various social systems at different stages of development and with different interests and of ensuring they all make the right choice between multilateralism and unilateralism, between being open and closed, and between cooperation and confrontation will become increasingly prominent by 2030 at least.

CHINA'S RESPONSE TO CHANGE WITH DEVELOPMENT

In the face of drastic changes and major challenges, China has responded calmly and made arrangements accordingly. In the global fight against the coronavirus, the Chinese people fought a fierce battle and passed a tough historical test. Thanks to the enormous efforts of the Chinese people, China made a major strategic achievement in fighting the virus and created a remarkable feat in human-kind's struggle against disease. Despite the global economic recession in 2020, China registered positive growth which



June 6, 2021: Changle Street, Shenyang's first themed night market with Tang Dynasty (618-907) style, has been popular with both tourists and locals. Wonderful dance performances attract many. VCG

injected confidence into the global economic recovery in the post COVID-19 era.

At the important moment of marking the centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC), China has completed the task of eradicating absolute poverty as scheduled, and the final 98.99 million impoverished rural residents living under the current poverty line were all lifted out of poverty. Lifting the entire population of 1.4 billion out of absolute poverty, an issue that has plagued the Chinese nation for thousands of years, was an arduous task. China's achievements in poverty eradication have been unprecedented and amount to a "miracle" in human history. Complete victory in the fight against poverty laid a solid foundation for China to realize its first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and demonstrated China's

approach to global poverty reduction.

China's 14th Five-Year Plan and Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 are fundamental strategic choices embraced by the 1.4 billion Chinese people to address major changes and challenges and promote international cooperation in the current domestic and international conditions. The plan aims to answer this question: What is the best way for the Chinese people to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation amid major changes unseen in a century, especially as the country experiences the convergence of the timelines of the Two Centenary Goals during mounting instability and uncertainty in the international landscape?

The 14th Five-Year Plan outlined new prospects for China and highlighted China's responsibilities as a major country, especially its aim to

create opportunities for the rest of the world through its own development. It is the most important blueprint for understanding the CPC's governance of China and the country's economic and social development today.

In my understanding, the main ideas of the 14th Five-Year Plan boil down to four points:

First, China will persist in reform and opening up and continue to focus on running its own affairs soundly.

Second, China will pursue a "dual circulation" strategy. A new development pattern will gradually be created whereby domestic and foreign markets can boost each other, with the domestic market as the mainstay. A new system to foster a higher-level open economy will be established.

Third, China aims to achieve basic socialist modernization by 2035. By the middle of the 21st century, it will achieve its second centenary goal of developing into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful. The Chinese people will continue striving to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Fourth, China will actively participate in maritime globalization and further promote globalization through jointly building the Belt and Road Initiative. A new round of globalization across land and sea unmatched in human history will emerge. China will actively participate in network globalization.

All of these developments evidence that the Chinese people today are grappling with a time of drastic changes, facing major challenges, and calling for large-scale cooperation. They compose a vivid illustration of the guiding principles of building a community of shared future for humanity advocated by Chinese President Xi Jinping, with which China welcomes all parties to seize new opportunities presented by its development.

THE CORE OF "POSITIVE CHANGES"

Over the past year, China has worked hand in hand with other countries and contributed greatly to the global fight against COVID-19. As of April 2021, China had provided emergency anti-pandemic supplies to over 160 countries and international organizations, offered vaccine assistance to 80 countries and four international organizations, and exported vaccines to more than 40 countries. Around the world, China has helped save thousands of lives with real action, which has demonstrated the country's determination to build a global community of health for all.

In the past year, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement was signed. China and the African Union signed a cooperation plan on jointly promoting the Belt and Road Initiative. On the global stage, China's share of foreign direct investment has increased significantly.



March 16, 2021: The second shipment of Chinese-donated COVID-19 vaccines arrives in Harare, Zimbabwe. The global pandemic demands solidarity and action from people around the world. Visual People

China is throwing its support behind a new round of economic globalization and with firm determination to become more open.

China stood up to the rise of unilateralism and protectionism over the past few years and upheld the norms governing international relations with concrete action. China has become the most important pillar of multilateralism and an indispensable, trustworthy force for fostering world peace and development.

Evolution of the world landscape involves both positive and negative changes. In contrast to negative changes such as anti-globalization, protectionism, and unilateralism, the historic development of China's relations with the rest of the world is becoming the heart of the positive changes seen in the world today. China, as a defender, reformer, and contributor to the current international order

and system, should continue to uphold global governance and multilateralism while seeking to build a community of shared future for humanity to fight against hegemony.

China is now poised at a period in which the schedules of the Two Centenary Goals will converge as the rest of the world faces major historical choices and opportunities. In the current situation, the historical and major issues facing the international community are obvious: People should think deeper about economic globalization and global governance and organize solid efforts to build a community of shared future for humanity based on common interests. ■

The author is chairman of the China Institute for Innovation and Development Strategy. This article is an excerpt from his speech at the Think Tank & Media Forum on Global Economic Development.

The Future of Globalization

By Jean-Pierre Raffarin



Any movement towards unilateralism or protectionism helps no one. The right direction is cooperation.

When seeking economic development, we must always work to know and understand our partners better. World peace, which is our common goal, is achieved through better understanding, better information, and everyone knowing and understanding each other better. It is important to note that economic development

is the foundation of most global governance efforts. Because we need growth, we need development and shared wealth. Any movement towards unilateralism or protectionism is the wrong direction. The right direction is cooperation, which has become even more apparent in the face of the challenges that society now faces. Achieving cooperative development often requires

innovation, whether in food or technology. For instance, the current pandemic drove developments in health technologies, especially vaccines. Many cooperative efforts are just waiting for development.

Of course, every country not only needs sovereignty, but also needs cooperation. Any global governance effort is useless without developing cooperation. Today, in this modern world, no single




June 23, 2020: A freight train loaded with anti-pandemic supplies arrives in Paris. It was the first train with supplies for pandemic response to reach the European country. Representatives from COSCO Shipping (France) Agency, Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer (SNCF), France's national state-owned railway company, and SNCF's logistics company pose for a picture in front of the train. Visual People

country can succeed on its own. It is important for us to be aware of this and start sharing a community of fate around the planet.

There is still some good news to report: More and more people are realizing that our planet is a part of our political future. In the past, we used to think about our region, our country, and maybe about our continent. That's fine. We should always think about our country and the people around us. But we also have to think about the

planet. Planetization is the future of globalization. It is the direction we are heading today, especially considering the attitudes of global youth who want to protect what is most important to us all: our common home.

China and France have been working together a lot on COP21 and the *Paris Agreement* to make sure the whole world shares this focus on protecting the future of the planet. This common message from France and China is becoming a global

consensus that empowers us to look towards world governance with hope. Because at the end of the day, economic development is meant to fuel the happiness of people, and happiness of people requires peace. 

The author is the former French prime minister. This article is an excerpt from his speech at the Think Tank & Media Forum on Global Economic Development.

Dialogue and Cooperation: Work Together to Advance Global Economic Development

By Jose Luis Gioja

Only when both developed and developing countries commit to moving forward hand in hand, can various issues that threaten the well-being and life quality of the people be addressed.

The still-rampant COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose a severe threat to global public health. Countries around the world are facing huge challenges. One of the most important challenge remains poverty alleviation, and the pandemic makes related work even more difficult.

2020, A DIFFICULT YEAR FOR ALL

Currently, people around the world urgently need sustainable development of the global economy in a difficult situation. Argentina's

economic recovery is facing strong headwinds. In March 2020, when the World Health Organization first called COVID-19 a pandemic, the newly seated Argentine government faced an exceptionally grave social and economic situation. Plagued by poverty, economic stagnation, enormous external debt, and a collapsed medical system, Argentina was quite weak. With hardly any resources available, the new government met the pandemic three months after taking office.

The world witnessed the lowest ever recorded level of

flow of people in 2020. Schools were closed, international trade dropped sharply, and the economies of almost all the countries contracted tightly. Many countries adopted massive fiscal responses to the pandemic. While the revenues of governments decreased, global financial deficits and public debt reached record highs. The pandemic and its accompanying economic challenges have exerted great pressure on global poverty reduction efforts.

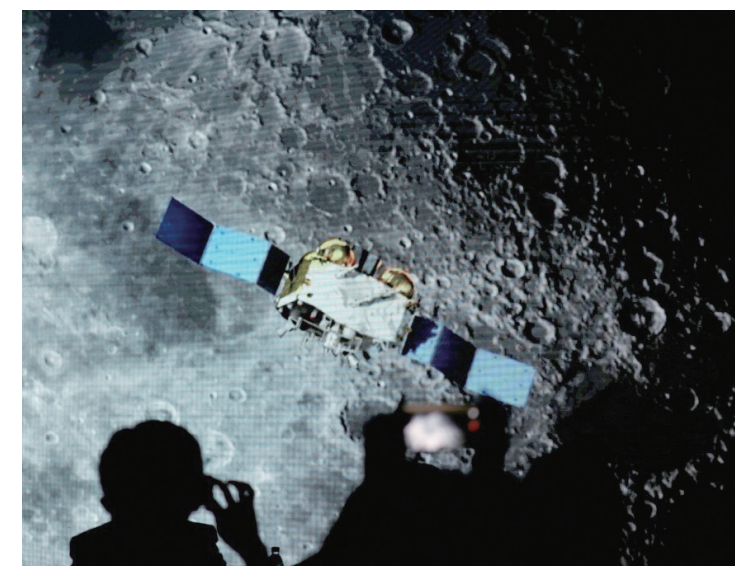
However, the pandemic has made people realize we can win any battle by joining hands. "The way of

brotherhood is unity," goes one line of *The Martin Fierro*, a classic Argentine poem. Great Chinese philosopher Confucius said: "Virtue is not left to stand alone. He, who practices it will have neighbors." We would like to reiterate the firm commitment of the Argentine government in the global fight against hunger and poverty. We view this battle as a part of multilateralism and aim to put sustainable development at the core of our global agenda.

ARGENTINA AND CHINA JOIN HANDS TO FIGHT THE PANDEMIC

Friendship between China and Argentina has a long history. In 2022, the two countries will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties. China has scored remarkable achievements both in its fight against the pandemic and in poverty eradication. Against the backdrop of global economic contraction, China was the world's only major economy to achieve growth in 2020.

Benefiting from the traditional friendship between the two countries, Argentina has been working closely with China since the outbreak of the pandemic. Thanks to the many shipments of anti-epidemic medical supplies and equipments we received from China, our intensive care units have all the essential equipment, and our medical workers have been able to take the necessary protections even as the public health system has become overloaded. China has also



January 18, 2021: The China National Space Administration and the Chinese Academy of Sciences jointly invite diplomats and representatives from foreign countries and international organizations to visit the National Astronomical Observatories in Beijing, where the overall ground application system of the Chang'e-5 mission is based. The Paper

provided us with considerable material assistance. It was of great significance to Argentina in difficult times, and the Argentine people are sincerely grateful. In terms of diagnosis and treatment, Argentina and China have maintained close exchange of experience and have taken joint action. On February 25, 2021, the first batch of COVID-19 vaccine doses developed by Chinese pharmaceutical firm Sinopharm arrived in Argentina.

Our priority today is to safeguard the health of our people, but we must not forget other long-term sustainable development goals. Although online teaching has been promoted during the pandemic, the prospects of youth education, especially

for kids in poverty-stricken areas, remain less optimistic. Women's issues should receive more attention because they have been among the groups most affected by the pandemic. The economy and employment have also been hit hard by the pandemic.

Argentina remains committed to economic recovery and rebuilding. It aims to achieve inclusive development through creating more jobs, improving education, and encouraging innovation. We believe that cooperation with China is vital in these areas. In the face of global challenges, we should seek common growth. Both the Partido Justicialista of Argentina and the Communist Party

of China put the people first and attach great importance to safeguarding the interests of workers and seeking economic development, which has provided the basis for cooperation between the two parties.

THE KEY TO GLOBAL POVERTY REDUCTION

The pandemic is not yet over, but it is time to consider new drivers for economic development in this severe situation. The pandemic poses historic challenges and is expected to last for a long time. We must drive the reform of international organizations to a deeper level, improve global economic governance and provide concrete solutions for people in less developed countries. It is very important that countries coordinate social and economic development by embracing multilateralism. Partido Justicialista supports multilateral mechanisms because multilateralism provides every sovereign state with opportunities and methods to solve complex and interrelated problems that cannot be solved by a single country.

General Juan Perón (1895-1974) once said that capital should serve the economy and social welfare. This relationship should never be reversed. I believe that people hope the future generations can develop in an all-round way and live in a better world. Economic development is the foundation of social welfare, and the well-being of citizens

fundamentally depends on the dignity they gain from work. Care for the health of citizens is caring for the present, and care for education is protecting the future. When seeking new economic development solutions, we should always be thinking about poor people first. Hunger is never far from us, and a child who suffers from starvation surely doesn't have the same opportunities as a carefree child.

Solidarity and cooperation between countries is key to zero poverty and hunger in the world. China has made great achievements in this regard through unremitting efforts. China's strong and

This pandemic made people realize that any battle can be won by joining hands.

Great Chinese philosopher Confucius said: "Virtue is not left to stand alone. He, who practices it will have neighbors."

sustained economic development has created windows of opportunity for Argentina and many countries in the world.

Technology and innovation provide the tools to change the world, and specific public policies on technology and innovation need to be formulated. China has set an example in this regard. Argentina also believes that to achieve development, it is necessary to formulate well-timed scientific and technological innovation plans. Not long

ago, the Argentine National Congress decided to increase investment in science and technology from 0.28 percent of the current GDP to 1 percent over the next few years.

The world is a community with a shared future. We are all in the same boat, and no one can detach from the interconnected world. Addressing current problems and unknown future challenges require all countries to join hands and work side by side. This is the foundation of human action. Goals can only be achieved by the world as a community with a shared future, not by any single coun-

try or society. Only when both developed and developing countries commit to moving forward hand in hand, various issues that threaten the well-being and life quality of the people be addressed with our full strength accumulated through global economic development and work in social justice. ■

The author is the deputy speaker of the House of Representatives of Argentina and chairman of Partido Justicialista (Argentina). This article is an excerpt from his speech at the Think Tank & Media Forum on Global Economic Development.

Stronger Ties Through SCO

By Josukutty C. A.

Cooperation between India and China is a must for peace and stability in the region.

The 2020 border clashes between India and China have negatively affected not only their economic and political relations, but more importantly, goodwill and trust built over years. As neighbouring countries with vast populations and diverse interests, it is natural for problems in bilateral relations to emerge. The current downturn in the relationship, however, is not in the interest of either country or the world at large. Cooperation between India and China is a must for peace and stability in the region.

Although India and China work together through platforms like BRICS, RIC (Russia-India-China), and AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank), they have no specific mandate or mechanism to address bilateral issues. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has been a valuable

platform in terms of facilitating meaningful cooperation and trust in India-China relations. The SCO spirit and its guiding principles have immense potential to foster economic collaboration, security assurances, and promotion of people-to-people exchange which should help ease border tensions and help fights against pandemics such as COVID-19.

SCO SPIRIT AND OBJECTIVES

The "Shanghai Spirit" of shared development and common prosperity and the SCO framework have been useful in addressing regional and bilateral issues and ensuring economic cooperation between India and China. The guiding principles of the SCO include mutual respect of sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity of states and inviolability of state borders, non-aggression, non-interference in internal

affairs, non-use of force or threat of its use in international relations, equality of all member states, and peaceful settlement of disputes between the member states. Both countries have remained dedicated to cultivating these values over the years through various treaties and initiatives. The objectives and goals of the SCO include strengthening mutual trust and neighbourliness among the member states, promoting effective cooperation in politics, trade and economy, maintaining peace, security and stability in the region, and jointly combating terrorism, fighting illicit narcotics and arms trafficking, and building a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order in the spirit of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence which have been advocated since the 1950s.

If India and China adhere to the SCO spirit to realize these objectives, a cooperative and



January 31, 2021: The first “Qilu” freight train running from Jiaozhou, eastern China’s Shandong Province to Baku, capital of Azerbaijan, sets out from Jiaozhou. The rail line is operated by Shandong Hi-Speed Group Co., Ltd. Visual People

mutually beneficial relationship will flourish.

REGIONAL SECURITY AND STABILITY

India and China are both concerned with the challenges to regional security and stability posed by terrorism and separatism. The SCO has put special emphasis on dialogue for safeguarding regional security by addressing extremism, separatism and terrorism, which represent a major threat in the region, especially Afghanistan. The SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure established in Tashkent in 2004 has conducted joint anti-terrorism exercises, created a database for counter-terrorism operations, and assisted in

extraditing extremists.

Regional anti-terrorism cooperation can reduce the capabilities, movements, and smuggling options of extremist elements. The SCO provides a viable framework for facilitating regional stability and security through cooperation between India, China, and Central Asian countries. This is essential for the unity and rise of Asia for which India and China both aspire.

SPACE FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

The SCO has huge potential to facilitate comprehensive economic cooperation between India and China because it emphasizes regional bonding and economic integration. It

encourages regional trade and investment through economic collaboration and through platforms like the Belt and Road Initiative and BRICS. The SCO has been involved in many connectivity projects with Indian participation including the International North-South Transport Corridor connecting the European Union through Russia and Iran to India and ASEAN and the Vladivostok-Chennai sea lane of communication connecting India to Russia’s Far East.

The role of the emerging digital economy as an engine for greater socio-economic cooperation in the SCO region has been highlighted by recent SCO meetings. India convened the first virtual gathering of the SCO’s Consortium of Economic and Analytical Centres in August 2020. India also proposed setting up the SCO Special Working Group on Innovation and Start-ups and hosted the first SCO Young Scientists Conclave in November 2020. Sectors such as education, healthcare, and small and medium enterprises are specifically covered by Indian digital technology initiatives in the SCO.

PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONTACT

The SCO People’s Forum attaches great importance to enhancing people-to-people contact. Since the 2018 event in northwestern China’s Xi’an City, themed “promoting regional peace and cooperation, building a community with a shared future for humanity” has been

an inspiration for all parties to enhance mutual understanding, deepen friendship, and strengthen cooperation. The June 2021 Forum in China’s central city of Wuhan emphasized the need for mutual learning between civilizations, good-neighbourliness and friendship among countries, bilateral and multilateral exchange and cooperation in culture, education, academic research, sports, media, tourism, science and technology, health, traditional medicine, folk arts and crafts, and environmental protection.

A trust deficit has been a lingering issue hindering India-China bilateral relations. People-to-people contact can open new channels for communication, explore broader topics for discussion, and create more positive impressions. During times of crises, some media outlets go negative and whip up aggressive nationalism. Deeper engagement between the media and academia is a goal of the SCO. Cultural industries, including tourism, entertainment, publications, and internet services, can all promote and enhance each other. In recent years, films from both China and India have enjoyed enthusiastic receptions from the other. The SCO People’s Forum can move such contact to the next step and facilitate mutual trust and cooperation between the two countries.

FIGHTING THE PANDEMIC

The 2020 SCO Summit emphasized the need for



June 3, 2021: The first Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) non-governmental friendship forum kicks off in Wuhan, central China’s Hubei Province. The forum was attended by some 500 guests including leaders of the SCO member states, observer states and dialogue partners, the SCO Secretary-General, and diplomatic envoys to China, as well as representatives of non-governmental friendship organizations. Visual People

cooperation to strengthen the response of SCO members to the threat of COVID-19. Both India and China proposed a SCO structure for traditional medicine to augment the medical response to the pandemic, which was endorsed by the meeting. The summit adopted a statement on the “Joint Response Efforts” against COVID-19, listing national efforts by its members to respond. The meeting also resolved to work with the WHO on providing a platform for international cooperation to ensure easy and affordable access to vaccines and better future responses. The pandemic continues to threaten human life and can be better fought through India-China cooperation.

The SCO is a valuable

platform with clear objectives and an ideal spirit to ensure cooperation between India and China. The SCO ideals of shared prosperity and mutual respect with emphasis on economic ties, comprehensive security, and people-to-people contact can push India-China cooperation forward. An SCO mechanism ensuring meetings of leaders and officials at the highest level, at least annually if not more frequent, will blunt the impact of future unforeseen crises. ■

The author is an associate professor in the Department of Political Science of the University of Kerala in India.

Consensus and Cooperation: Turning Crisis into Opportunity

By Du Zhanyuan

The third decade of the 21st century will be an important “window period” for human development. The year 2021 is particularly crucial and may determine whether the decade is a success or failure.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, health and safety have been top concerns. But recently, issues like economic development and the improvement of people's livelihood have returned to the center of global public attention. Leaders of various countries have frequently met online to discuss counter-measures, coordinate stances, and consolidate consensus.

Early this year, Chinese President Xi Jinping had dialogues with world leaders on topics such as accelerating

responsible industrial transformation and growth and promoting global and regional cooperation at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Virtual Event of the Davos Agenda. The special address Xi made via video to the event was widely acclaimed by the international community. The 2021 WEF Annual Meeting was held under the theme “The Great Reset,” a common aspiration of the whole world. Today, we are gathered at the 2021 Think Tank & Media Forum on Global Economic Development in hopes of

exchanging views and making suggestions for promoting global development, cooperation, and win-win sharing in the post-pandemic era.

First, the world economy is facing an unprecedented crisis that has only generated greater demand for win-win cooperation. Data shows that humankind is undergoing the severest economic recession since the end of World War II. According to a report released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), global flow of foreign direct

investment (FDI) plunged to US\$859 billion in 2020, down from US\$1.5 trillion in 2019. At least 225 million full-time jobs disappeared worldwide last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic according to a report published by the International Labor Organization. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) predicted that global economic losses due to the pandemic would total US\$7 trillion by the end of 2021. The World Bank estimated that 40 percent of the world's population would be living below the international poverty line by the end of 2021. Such data reflect the contradictions facing today's world: globalization and anti-globalization, multi-lateralism and unilateralism, openness and seclusion, inclusiveness and exclusiveness, consultation and conflict, cooperation and confrontation... The international community has yet to reach consensus on who or which will undertake the major responsibilities of future global development. A survey released by UN Assistant Secretary-General Fabrizio Hochschild early this year showed 97 percent of respondents considered international cooperation vital to tackling today's global challenges. We need to take concrete actions to respond to this call.

Second, the Chinese economy has shown strong resilience amid the pandemic, increasing the country's



June 8, 2021: Citizens go shopping in New Delhi, India. The country has lifted lockdown restrictions in many regions from June 7, which allows the Delhi metro to operate with half seat capacity and the shops and markets in New Delhi to operate on an odd-even basis. Visual People

confidence in its future development. In 2020, China's GDP hit 101.6 trillion yuan (US\$15.7 trillion), making it the world's only major economy to realize positive growth. This made China a key force in accelerating global economic recovery and laid a solid foundation for China to foster a new development pattern. Amid the pandemic, China's economy has demonstrated several prominent features: First, it has strong resilience and elasticity, great capacity to resist risk, and ample room to maneuver. Second, it is sustainable. The Chinese economy has maintained fast growth for more than four decades, and it still shows great potential. Third, it aims to benefit the people. Especially in 2020, China completed the mission of eradicating extreme poverty,

creating another remarkable miracle in human history. Fourth, it attaches importance to innovation. China has placed top priority on improving original innovation capacity and striving to make more breakthroughs from zero to one. Fifth, it pays great attention to opening up. Despite the severe challenge brought by the pandemic, China has managed to stabilize overall performance of foreign trade and foreign investment. Based on such features, perhaps we can see some of the secrets behind China's development miracle and figure out how the Chinese government has won the greatest trust from its people.

Third, China's economic interactions with the outside world have expanded in the post-pandemic era, inspiring more expectations for

joint consultation and close cooperation. We have been unable to return to the world from pre-COVID-19, and the question we face today is how to construct the world in the post-pandemic era. Today, we face growing development inequality, worsening climate change, and increasingly fragile consensus on global cooperation. To address such challenges, we need to find answers in development. In this context, how China will regulate its economy has

China will become an “express train” with greater power and traction speeding towards new goals, and various countries will be welcomed to take a ride on China’s development to achieve common prosperity.

drawn worldwide attention. China’s “two sessions” this year attracted incredible attention from media outlets and think tanks around the world. In the government work report, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang noted that in 2021, China will continue to face many development risks and challenges, but the economic fundamentals to sustain long-term growth remain unchanged. The target growth rate for this year was set at over 6 percent. Over the next five years, China will establish a “dual circulation” development pattern in which the domestic economic cycle works as the mainstay while the international economic cycle serves as an extension and supplement. Figuratively

speaking, in the years to come, China will become an “express train” with greater power and traction speeding towards new goals, and various countries will be welcomed to take a ride on China’s development to achieve common prosperity.

Fourth, countries around the world have reached deeper consensus on promoting global economic development and cooperation through mutual learning among civiliza-

and cooperation projects with many think tanks and media organizations from China and beyond and carried out many activities on cultural exchange and mutual learning among civilizations. In 2020 alone, CIPG joined hands with overseas partners to launch dozens of events including online forums, online releases, and online exhibitions. Such efforts have provided encouragement and support to each other as we survived the toughest days of the pandemic.

The third decade of the 21st century will be an important “window period” for human development. The year 2021 will be particularly crucial in determining whether the decade is a success or failure. The pandemic has cost the world a high price. We need to learn and take immediate measures. Winter cannot stop the arrival of spring and darkness can never shroud the light of dawn. Let us collaborate to turn the crisis into an opportunity, make every effort to accelerate global economic recovery, jointly implement the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and create a bright future for the global community with a shared future. 📺

The author is president of CIPG. This article is an excerpt from his speech at the 2021 Think Tank & Media Forum on Global Economic Development.

Exploring New Measures for Win-Win Cooperation, Sharing New Achievements in Global Development

By Sudheendra Kulkarni

As two ancient civilizations next door to each other and as two major emerging economies with over 1 billion people each, China and India have broad common interests and tremendous potential for cooperation.

The world has just begun to emerge out of the dark shadows of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was the worst public health crisis in the recent memory of most nations in the world. It also precipitated one of the worst economic crises for the global economy and also almost all the economies in the world. Given the scale and global spread of the humanitarian adversity, there ought to have been much greater and closer

international cooperation among nations—especially big nations—to fight the pandemic. Sadly, national differences, disputes and prejudices stood in the way.

It is commendable that both India and China have helped many countries around the world with vaccines. But India and China should have cooperated more in vaccine research, manufacturing, and distribution.

I am delighted at the positive comments made by Mr. Wang

Yi, China’s State Councilor and Foreign Minister, about India-China relations during the 2021 Two Sessions, China’s most important annual political event, namely, the Fourth Session of the 13th National People’s Congress (NPC) and the Fourth Session of the 13th National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

At his annual press conference during the Fourth Session of the 13th NPC,

Wang said, “The China-India relationship is essentially about how the world’s two largest developing countries get along and pursue development and rejuvenation together.”

Mr. Wang Yi added: “On many important issues, our positions are the same or close, due to similar national realities. Therefore, China and India are each other’s friends and partners, not threats or rivals. The two sides need to help each other succeed instead of undercutting each other. We should intensify cooperation instead of harboring suspicions of each other. As two ancient civilizations next door to each other and as two major emerging economies with over 1 billion people each, we have broad common interests and tremendous potential for cooperation.” These observations by China’s leadership echo the sentiments of all the peace-loving people in our two countries.

In India, we highly appreciate the fact that, despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, China has achieved three landmark successes in 2020. First, at a time when all the major economies witnessed contractions, China achieved a GDP growth rate of 2.3 percent. Indeed, in the last quarter of 2020, its GDP growth rate was 6.5 percent year-on-year. This shows the innate resilience and strong fundamentals of the Chinese economy. Second, in 2020, the size of the Chinese economy crossed the milestone of 100 trillion yuan

(US\$15.42 trillion). Third, and foremost from the perspective of humanity, China succeeded in completely eradicating absolute poverty. Within the past eight years, China lifted as many as 100 million people out of poverty and provided them with decent living conditions. This achievement has great lessons for India and all the developing and underdeveloped countries around the world.

I would like to present four thoughts on how win-win cooperation among nations and peoples can lead to a new type of global development with shared benefits to all. First, the rise of China is the most important development in the contemporary history of the world. It has accelerated changes in the world economic and political order. The world has no longer remained unipolar; it has become multipolar. No longer can one country dictate terms to the rest of the

world—in economy, politics, international relations or the governance of international and multilateral organizations. This is an extremely helpful development for promoting global democracy. However, those who dominated the old world order are not reconciled to losing their power and influence, which is why they are trying desperately to contain China. In the economic sphere, they are doing so by trying to break and disrupt global industrial supply chains and value chains—in the name of reducing dependence on China. In the strategic sphere, they are trying to build a NATO-like alliance in Asia in the form of the so-called Quad. Both attempts are doomed to fail. Therefore, it is the duty of all nations to ensure that the world economy remains open, and does not become decoupled and disrupted for political considerations. The world order must become



January 22, 2021: An employee works at the Serum Institute of India. India started vaccinating for COVID-19 with two India-made vaccines: Covishield and Covaxin. Visual People



April 14, 2021: Workers install equipment for a new energy materials enterprise in Huichang County, Jiangxi Province. VCG

more multilateral, and not divided into blocks.

Second, we cannot deny or ignore the fact that global development is deeply unbalanced. Even though China has succeeded in eliminating absolute poverty, nearly 10 percent of the world’s population—that is, nearly 700 million people still struggle to survive on less than US\$2 a day. The World Bank estimates that an additional 100 million people would fall into extreme poverty in 2020, with the total rising to as many as 150 million by 2021, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a cruel paradox that the number of billionaires has increased during the pandemic, and indeed the wealth of these billionaires has gone up. Therefore, it is not enough that the global economy should recover fast after the crisis. Rather, making the world free of poverty, and also

bridging wealth disparities, must become a primary goal of global development.

Third, it is not enough that the global economy recovers quickly. Rather, it should lead to a new green, clean, equitable and sustainable development. The new type of economic growth should reverse the enormous damage inflicted upon the environment and the planet’s fragile and finite ecological resources. Here, major economies like the United States, China, Japan, the European Union and India have a bigger responsibility to make a transition to low-carbon, carbon-neutral and carbon-recycled economic development. This calls for adoption of new green and clean technologies. This also calls for extensive cooperation and collaboration among major economies to reach the goals and targets set in the

Paris Agreement.

Fourth, global development and global security cannot be separated. There cannot be global development without world peace and security for every nation. Therefore, nations—especially big and powerful nations—must eliminate all their nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. They should also reduce their military expenditures and move forward in the direction of a non-militaristic international order. Differences and disputes must be resolved through non-military means. In this context, India and China, two great Asian nations, should show the way to the rest of the world. We should peacefully resolve all our differences in the light of the wisdom of our two ancient civilizations. Furthermore, India and China should join hands to build cooperative relations with all the countries in the region, including the relations between India and Pakistan.

In my view, this is the road to realizing the noble vision of “building a community with a shared future for humanity,” which Chinese President Xi Jinping has been articulating consistently, and which the entire international community should support and make it into its own vision. ■

The author is the founder of the Forum for A New South Asia. This article is an excerpt from his speech at the Think Tank & Media Forum on Global Economic Development.

China and the World in a New Development Pattern

By Huang Qifan

If we work together and move past ideological prejudices to join hands, the pandemic will quickly be brought under control. The world will finally see the dawn of economic recovery.

In October 2020, the fifth plenary session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China concluded. During the session, a major strategic action plan for China's development was formulated that requires the country to ground efforts in the new development stage, apply new development philosophy, and create a new pattern of development. Within the next five to ten years, a "dual circulation" development pattern will gradually be created whereby domestic and foreign markets

can boost each other, with the domestic market as the mainstay. Greater focus on the domestic market doesn't mean China will close its doors. Chinese President Xi Jinping has stressed that China will not close doors to the world and will only become more and more open. In the "dual circulation" development pattern, China will no longer seek solely to expand exports for surplus gains as its strategic economic goal. It will moderately expand imports and seek to build a balance between imports and exports. China's

business environment will be improved to make it more attractive for foreign investment. China will advance development of its free trade zones, build a globally oriented network of high-standard free trade zones, and grow an open world economy.

China's GDP is expected to reach 160 trillion yuan in ten years, about US\$24 trillion at the current exchange rate. China is a big market with the world's greatest potential. The cumulative value of China's imports of goods are expected to exceed US\$22 trillion in the next decade while the total

value of its imports of services will reach US\$5 trillion for a total of US\$27 trillion. Such a huge market will definitely create a direct and lasting positive effect for world economic recovery in the post COVID-19 era, especially for countries in Asia and Europe. China's market will help lift the world out of economic depression and move towards recovery.

NEW CHALLENGES IN NEW CIRCUMSTANCES

Over the past few years, people have witnessed the harm and impact of unilateralism and anti-globalization on the global economic and trade structure. The spread of the COVID-19 and the accompanying interruption of the global industrial chain and supply chain and halt of economic activities have left the already fragile world economy even worse. In response to COVID-19, countries around the world should be working together and cooperating with each other. However, some countries have sought to blame others for their own failures and adopted decoupling measures, which have jeopardized international cooperation and increased instability and uncertainty to the world economy.

The only response is to recruit more people to join hands again and strengthen cooperation. But the world will never go back to the way things were. It would be almost impossible to pursue development like before the pandemic. New challenges are



June 8, 2021: The 2nd China-Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) Expo opens in Ningbo City, Zhejiang Province. Themed "Fostering a New Development Paradigm, Sharing a Win-Win Opportunity," the expo aimed to boost trade between China and CEECs. by Jiang Han/Xinhua

emerging every day.

First, global inflation may become a problem that could spread if unchecked. In the face of the pandemic, some countries are printing more money, and liquidity is running rampant. To save its economy, the United States released a total of US\$7 trillion of liquidity via bonds and an unlimited quantitative easing program. Not long ago, it also unveiled a US\$1.9 trillion stimulus economic package to address the persistent coronavirus pandemic. It is almost certain that more money will be printed. Thus, monetary laxness, production stagnation, and inflation will come. The recent volatility in U.S. stocks and bonds and the sharp rise in prices of commodities such as petroleum and gold are already

early indicators.

Second, the sovereign credit risk of some countries has become increasingly glaring, and black swan incidents could happen. Due to the severe and adverse impact of the pandemic and the global economic downturn, some developing countries will be besieged with debt crisis. This risk is real even for some developed economies. For example, by the end of 2020, the U.S. government debt hit US\$27.78 trillion, equivalent to nearly 133 percent of its 2020 GDP. The U.S. federal budget deficit reached a record high of US\$3.1 trillion in the fiscal year 2020. If this situation continues, U.S. currency and stocks will suffer, causing systemic risk for the world economy.

Third, the challenge of

climate change has become a grey rhino, and the obvious danger that should have been anticipated but was mostly ignored is inching closer day by day. Global consensus on climate change has finally been reached, but global cooperation still faces many difficulties and challenges.

STRENGTHENING GLOBAL COOPERATION THROUGH EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION AND MUTUAL BENEFITS

Considering the current situation, we must discuss new measures to promote cooperation and pursue mutual benefits and win-win outcomes. The core aim of such measures should be to create new development opportunities and foster a new pattern of development, and the key is to strengthen global cooperation.

First, we should commit to multilateralism and building an open world economy. Some countries should stop using tariffs as a barrier. People should restore global economic and trade order through multilateralism and international cooperation, and create a sound environment for recovery of the global industrial chain and supply chain.

Second, we should advance cooperation and innovation to accelerate recovery of the global economy. In the face of the pandemic, the global digital economy has witnessed rapid development. A new round of scientific and technological revolution and

industrial transformation is unfolding. Chinese President Xi Jinping noted that no country can be an independent innovation center or enjoy the outcomes of innovation alone. The outcomes of innovation should benefit the whole world instead of being locked away in a cave. Responding to major infectious diseases and climate change demands concerted efforts from the global community of science and technology and industrial circle. Various ideas, inventions, and technologies should be protected, publicized, traded, and shared in a more efficient way. Acts to decouple national science and technology work hurt everyone.

Third, we should strengthen international macroeconomic policy coordination and improve the global economic governance system. To address problems such as rampant liquidity, the fiscal and financial risk of major developed countries, and the economic difficulties of some developing countries, closer international macroeconomic policy coordination and equal consultation in a responsible manner among major countries are both required. Reform of the global governance system should advance, and black swan incidents should be avoided through joint action.

Fourth, we should uphold the vision of building a community of shared future for humanity and work together to solve global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. Some developing countries

have had more difficulties getting the coronavirus under control due to relatively backward healthcare conditions and epidemic prevention and control systems. As long as any country or region in the world is still suffering from the pandemic, no country is totally safe. Therefore, both in production and distribution of vaccines and research and development of effective cure, international cooperation has become more important than ever. The same goes for addressing climate change. China has announced that it will strive to peak carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060. This is a challenging goal that will require massive work to achieve. Achieving this goal meets China's developmental needs and represents responsibility to fulfill its vision of building a community of shared future for humanity.

The sun always shines after the rain. We believe that as long as we work together, eliminate past ideological prejudices and join hands, the pandemic will be brought under control. The world will finally see the dawn of economic recovery. ☞

The author is the vice chairman of the China Center for International Economic Exchanges and former mayor of Chongqing Municipality. This article is an excerpt from his speech at the Think Tank & Media Forum on Global Economic Development.

A Return to Multilateralism

By Chen Wenling

The key to multilateralism is safeguarding the common interests of all countries and maintaining world peace, development, and normal relations between countries, especially the right to development for all countries.

Many countries now advocate a return to multilateralism. What kind of multilateralism does the world need? In my opinion, multilateralism should never be selfish or put the national interests of one country above shared global interests. It should never be about containing other countries or building alliances with small groups. A country committed to multilateralism cannot make maintaining global hegemony its strategic goal. Nowadays, the world is facing common challenges and problems. It is impossible for any single country to shoulder the responsibility of saving and healing the world.

WHY DO WE NEED MULTILATERALISM?

The world still hasn't overcome the pandemic.

Disasters even more challenging than the COVID-19 pandemic are bound to emerge in the future. This pandemic has already caused greater economic losses and depression than the 2008 international financial recession. The economies of some countries seem to be recovering. However, these economies remain plagued by many problems.

For example, the U.S. economy rebounded strongly in the first quarter of 2021. However, this rebound was the result of a loose monetary policy. The United States' national debt reached the highest level of any country in the world. According to statistics from authoritative international organizations, by the end of 2020, global debt reached US\$282 trillion, and the U.S. national debt hit a record US\$28 trillion. In March 2021, the United States House of Representatives approved

a US\$1.9-trillion COVID-19 relief bill proposed by the Biden Administration which brought the U.S. national debt to nearly 30 trillion. The economic recovery of the United States has relied on high debt, economic stimulus measures, and an ultra-loose monetary policy. It is not a strong recovery in a real sense, and the U.S. economy is still not on the right track.

Alongside the COVID-19 pandemic, the other biggest variable is the environment. Reducing damages to the environment and restoring ecology are imperative. Human beings are being punished by nature. Poverty is another common challenge faced by mankind. At present, 20 percent of the world's population owns 80 percent of the global resources. One billion people lack access to clean drinking water, and one billion people face the grave threat of hunger. To address

all these global challenges and problems, international cooperation is needed, and the world must return to healthy multilateralism. We need to move past the debate over whether to continue multilateralism and make it the consensus and common philosophy and action of all countries.

MULTIPLE LEVELS OF MULTILATERALISM

Recent actions and behaviors of some countries are not a return to multilateralism in any real sense. Multilateralism features several levels: The first level is the cooperation within the United Nations system. The second level is represented by international organizations such as the World Trade Organization and the World Bank. The third level is global consensus in the form of international conventions such as *The Paris Agreement*, *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, and *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. The fourth level is represented by cross-border industrial agreements such as the *Basel Accord*. The fifth level is mechanisms for international dialogue such as the G20 and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. These five levels have a coordinated goal: To establish a long-term institutional mechanism featuring orderly and interactive arrangements followed by all through reaching consensus, determining common goals, following common



January 28, 2021: Children wait in a line for food in Gaza. According to a UN report, around 120 million additional people fell into poverty around the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. VCG

rules and standards, taking joint actions, and dealing with strategies, policies and acts of different countries in a coordinated manner.

The key to multilateralism is safeguarding the common interests of all countries and maintaining world peace, development, and normal relations between countries, especially the right to development for all countries. Such multilateralism aligns with the genuine multilateralism set forth and advocated in *The Charter of the United Nations*. The problem now is that some countries, especially the United States, the world's super power, abuse the concept of multilateralism. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called Washington's ties with China the "biggest geopolitical test" of the 21st century. He claimed that the economic, diplomatic, military and technological power

of China seriously challenges the United States. "Our relationship with China will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be and adversarial when it must be," Blinken said.

On March 1, 2021, the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence of the United States submitted a 756-page report to the U.S. Congress on competition between China and the U.S. in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI). According to this report, AI research is a competition on values, and the U.S. government should continue to counter China's micro-electronics industry and contain China's manufacturing capabilities of high-end semiconductors to maintain the U.S. lead over China. The report even proposed that the United States set its development goal of technologies two

generations earlier than those of China. I personally don't see anything wrong with the United States establishing development goals. However, the purpose of its development should never be to contain China. *The Charter of the United Nations* has made it clear that every country has the right to development. China, a large country with a population of 1.4 billion, has the right to seize opportunities to accelerate its development. On March 1, 2021, the United States Trade Representative delivered 2021 *Trade Policy Agenda* and 2020 *Annual Report* to the U.S. Congress, which sent a strong signal that the U.S. would do every possible thing to counter China's trade policy. U.S. trade chief Katherine Tai stated that the U.S. would use tariffs as a weapon and wouldn't rule out trade

sanctions on China.

What kind of multilateralism does the world want? The world wants multilateralism which advocates equal development, pursues mutual benefits and win-win results, and share global development achievements. Multilateralism should always promote a fair and equitable international order. I think the U.S. needs to foster a correct understanding of "returning to multilateralism."

HOW CAN WE RETURN TO MULTILATERALISM?

Only if all countries follow a few basic principles can promote a return to true multilateralism. We need to do the following to return to the right track:

First, maintain the international order and the basic

norms of international relations formed after World War II and safeguard the authority of international organizations. Second, optimize the role of international organizations that are conducive to world peace and development and help them better coordinate global development. Third, maintain existing global consensus and international conventions formed on this basis. Fourth, maintain cross-border industrial regulations that are conducive to the stable development of all countries. Fifth, firmly oppose containing the development of other countries or building exclusive cliques in the name of multilateralism.

At the same time, China and the U.S., the world's two major countries, should avoid confrontation. Other countries should not be forced to choose sides in a China-U.S. confrontation, which would damage both countries and the whole world. The world is now facing severe challenges and difficulties. All countries, especially China and the U.S., should respond to difficulties and challenges with cooperation instead of conflict or confrontation and by enhancing dialogue and communication instead of erecting new barriers. 🇨🇳



May 20, 2021: U.S. stocks plunge in late trading, with the three major indices all closing down. Federal Reserve minutes suggest that policymakers will discuss tightening monetary policy. The Paper

The author is the chief economist at the China Center for International Economic Exchange. This article is an excerpt from her speech at the Think Tank & Media Forum on Global Economic Development.

RCEP: A Development Opportunity for South Asia

By Lu Yang

South Asian countries must accept regional cooperation and economic integration and leverage the strength of other countries to develop together to enhance the competitiveness of the region.

At a regular policy briefing held by China's State Council Information Office on March 25, 2021, Wang Shouwen, Vice Minister of Commerce and Deputy Representative of International Trade Negotiations, announced that China had already ratified the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement and was ready to fulfill its obligations under the agreement. All other member states of the RCEP have stated that they will ratify the agreement before the end of 2021 to bring the agreement into force by January 1, 2022.

Introduced by the Association of Southeast

Asian Nations (ASEAN), the RCEP agreement was signed by 15 participating countries on November 15, 2020: the 10 ASEAN countries and China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. All these countries already had free trade agreements with ASEAN.

RCEP includes every major country in East Asia. Establishment of the RCEP free trade zone means that about a third of the world's economy will form an integrated market capable of injecting strong impetus into regional and global economic growth. RCEP will not only benefit Chinese companies, but also promote high-quality development of the Chinese economy.

After India withdrew from negotiations in 2019, the agreement was signed without it. However, RCEP preserved India's right to participate in the agreement, and RCEP member states reaffirmed in a joint statement issued after the signing that India could participate in RCEP meetings as an observer and carry out economic cooperation activities with RCEP signatories.

A NECESSARY DEVELOPMENT PATH FOR SOUTH ASIA

During the special period of the COVID-19 pandemic, deepening regional cooperation has become even more necessary. Although India, the largest economy in South



November 15, 2020: The fourth Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Summit witnesses the signing of the RCEP agreement. VCG

Asia, did not sign the RCEP agreement, the signing of the agreement still brings new impetus and opportunities for cooperation and development in South Asia.

The impact of the pandemic has increased inequality in many countries, and it has severely damaged the poor in many places. In South Asia, where the poor population is huge, the regional economy has experienced a sharp decline. This year will be a recovery and adjustment period for the region. From the perspective of economic and social development, South Asian countries need to connect more closely with neighboring countries to recover from the pandemic as

soon as possible.

Cooperation progress in South Asia has not been smooth. The main factor has been the contradictions between India and Pakistan. Also, India does not want to see China's increasing presence in South Asia. In India's view, South Asia is its own "sphere of influence," and India prefers multilateral development mechanisms of its own making.

In the process of regional cooperation in South Asia, several different multilateral cooperation organizations including the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Cooperation

Mechanism (BCIM), and the Bay of Bengal Multi-Sector Economic and Technical Cooperation Initiative (BIMSTEC) have emerged. But so far, none of these organizations have integrated their members into a joint force for development.

Driven by the pandemic, SAARC cooperation, which had been stagnant since 2016, finally made some progress. On March 15, 2020, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi convened a meeting of SAARC countries to discuss a response to the pandemic. However, serious differences between India and Pakistan left the prospects for cooperation in South Asia far from optimistic.

It would be difficult to



August 27, 2019: A bird's-eye view of Wuxiang New District in Nanning, southern China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. A core district of Nanning and part of the Guangxi pilot free trade zone (FTZ), Wuxiang New District is an important financial zone for opening up to ASEAN countries and a key node on the international land-sea trade corridor. VCG

achieve regional prosperity and stability in South Asia only through the existing regional cooperation mechanisms. South Asian countries must accept regional cooperation and economic integration and leverage the strength of other countries to develop together to enhance the competitiveness of the region.

The cooperation model in Southeast Asia can provide some reference. In Southeast Asia, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has also been huge, but the signing of RCEP has provided new impetus for economic development in the region while helping people regain confidence in multilateral cooperation.

The importance of establishing a broader free trade agreement for regional development has been discussed for a long time. In 2012, ASEAN

started leading the promotion of regional economic integration. China joined Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, and New Zealand in the negotiations on RCEP introduced by ASEAN. The signing of the agreement in 2020 also happened due to ASEAN determination.

ASEAN has played a lead role in the negotiations and launch of RCEP, and its signing represented a victory for the "middle power diplomacy" approach of ASEAN countries. The small and medium-sized ASEAN countries have overcome their differences and reached a consensus that cooperation can boost regional development, so they welcome the countries beyond the region to participate in the regional economic integration process, and combine economic and diplomatic

means to create more development opportunities for the region. With the global economy stagnating, the overall economy of Southeast Asia is currently more optimistic.

NEW REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION PLATFORM

As a key member of Asia, India's development can hardly be isolated from other countries in the region. Economic and trade ties with the United States, Europe, and other developed Western countries and regions are certainly important, but India also needs to explore development opportunities and market space in the Asian region.

In recent years, India has actively deepened multilateral cooperation mechanisms under the framework of the so-called "Indo-Pacific Strategy." However, this mechanism places more attention on security cooperation than efforts towards economic cooperation, which are very limited. Some participating countries of the "Indo-Pacific Strategy," including Japan and Australia, are also members of RCEP, and the multilateral cooperation mechanisms under the framework of the "Indo-Pacific Strategy" and RCEP are not exclusive, but overlap. Therefore, whether or not India signs the agreement, RCEP will still result in increasingly closer ties with East Asia and Southeast Asia. In the long run, development of RCEP will also drive India's domestic reform.

China's economic rise has benefited from an influx of

foreign capital. Since the beginning of its reform and opening up in the late 1970s, investment from the neighboring East Asian and Southeast Asian countries and regions has played an important role in promoting China's development. South Asia remains relatively underdeveloped economically, and India, the most powerful country in South Asia, hardly expects the drivers of economic growth to come from its neighboring countries in South Asia.

When Indian leaders realized the need to cooperate with countries in other parts of Asia, they developed the "Look East" policy in the mid-1990s, with a strategic focus on

Digital Silk Road, the Healthy Silk Road, and the Green Silk Road.

China's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) emphasizes the concept of high-quality joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and mentions the need to make enterprises the main force while building market-oriented and diversified investment and financing systems. It also emphasizes the importance of "soft interconnection" in reference to merging various strategies and mechanisms and interconnecting policies, rules, and standards.

Considering China's development goals, green living and sustainability have become

As a key member of Asia, India's development can hardly be isolated from other countries in the region. Economic and trade ties with the United States, Europe, and other developed Western countries and regions are certainly important, but India also needs to explore development opportunities and market space in the Asian region.

expanding cooperation with East Asia. Modi proposed the "Act East" policy after he took office, which also continues in this vein.

As an international economic cooperation initiative, the Belt and Road Initiative has shifted in the last seven years from focusing on infrastructure to large-scale and multi-field international cooperation. It has gradually evolved into new forms and fields such as the

important themes of the Belt and Road Initiative. China seeks not only to provide development assistance in engineering technology, heavy equipment and specialized personnel required for infrastructure construction to countries and regions in need, but also to shift the direction of international cooperation towards greener, more sustainable and more beneficial to people's livelihood.

Since the signing of the RCEP agreement, discussion of the dual-circulation development pattern dominated by the domestic economic cycle has inspired China to actively explore docking methods for the Belt and Road Initiative and RCEP.

As of 2020, China had built 21 free trade zones, and all pilot free trade zones across the country were actively making adjustments in accordance with the requirements of the RCEP agreement to seize the opportunity to expand trade with RCEP countries. The importance China has placed on RCEP ensured development of the Belt and Road Initiative would bend towards greater economic integration in the Asian region.

RCEP remains open to other economies, and in the future it will also seek participation from countries in Central Asia, South Asia, and Oceania. When regional cooperation in South Asia gets stalled, countries there can leverage the strength of East Asian countries to expand through economic cooperation with the rest of Asia. The old "Look East" policy may be the future development direction for South Asia.

RCEP provides a new platform to integrate regional cooperation in South Asia and Southeast Asia in an inclusive manner, and promote development and prosperity throughout Asia. ■

The author is a research fellow at the Belt and Road Initiative Institute of Tsinghua University.

Hope in Tough Time

By Sudeshna Sarkar

Despite disruption in cross-border travels, Indian-Chinese bond stays strong.

Due to the disruption in international travel following the COVID-19 pandemic, many Indians, like other foreigners working in China, haven't visited home for over a year. Those who went home in early 2020 have also found it difficult to come back.

Suvam Pal, journalist and documentary maker, is one of them. Pal worked with the Chinese broadcaster CGTN since 2016, and China became his cultural home. One of his interests is exploring reflections of Indian cultural legacies in China. Last year, he was involved in organizing an online-offline event that

brought Indian and Chinese artists and scholars together to showcase the bauls of India.

The bauls are mystic singers who propagate a deep yet simple philosophy in everyday language — all men are brothers and life is ephemeral. The goal of life is to live in harmony with fellow men and nature. Generations of bauls left their homes and renounced material goods to become wanderers who lived on alms and spread their philosophy. They participated in India's fight for independence and social reform and later had an influence on Western philosophers and artists.

Lalon Fakir was one of

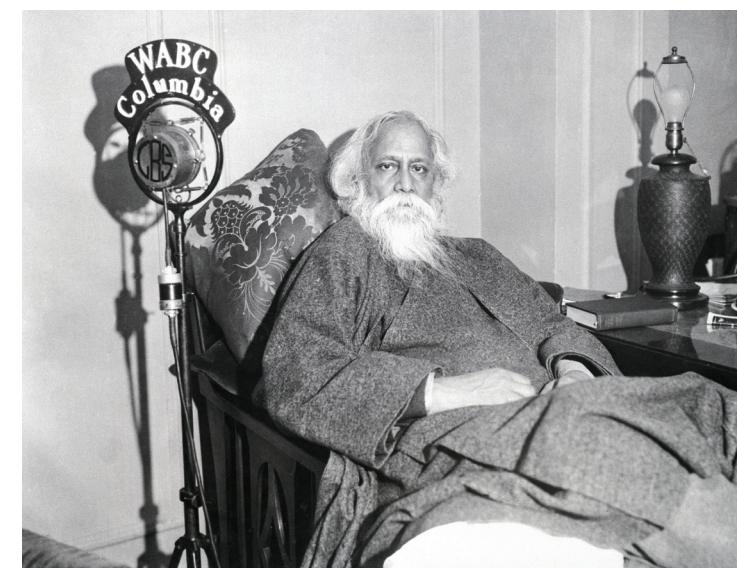
the preeminent bauls whose songs are sung even today in India and Bangladesh and who inspired Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Asia's first Nobel laureate in literature. Lalon's work continues to be researched and interpreted in China as well and Pal's program brought together such culturalati.

Another remarkable cultural bridge the 42-year-old has built between India and China is an eight-minute documentary, *Gitanjali*. Meaning song offerings, it is also a reference to the collection of poems and songs by Tagore who was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1913.

At the same time, it is also a record of the situation in 2020, when COVID-19 triggered an upsurge in online communication to fill the vacuum created by the need for quarantining and social distancing.

"The documentary brings together over two dozen people from different cities in China and India to present Tagore's work online, from his songs to art and philosophy," Pal said from Kolkata. "You have Chinese artists singing in Bengali, the language Tagore wrote in, and Indians doing it in Chinese. While the youngest participant was nine, the oldest was 92, Professor Tan Chung, a doyen of Chinese cultural studies who taught in India, and now lives in Changsha City, China."

Tan, a recipient of both the Chinese Government's China-India Friendship Award and the Indian Government's Padma Vibhushan, is the son of Professor Tan Yunshan (1898-1983), who has a special place in Indo-Chinese



Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) is a well-known Indian writer, poet and philosopher. Tagore paid three visits to China and contributed tremendously to the friendly exchange between the Chinese and Indian civilizations. VCG

features traditional Chinese musical instruments such as the pipa and guzheng, together with Indian classical musical instruments. Plus, he has a second documentary in the pipeline, on Swami

period," Pal said. "In 1893, on his way to the United States to attend the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, he stopped in Hong Kong and went to Guangdong by ferry. He mentions the stopover in a letter to one of the sponsors of his U.S. trip."

Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission, which is an eminent spiritual organization in India engaged in social work, culture and education. The Indian Cultural Center in Indian embassies worldwide was renamed the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Center in his honor. There is one in Beijing, and there are also other legacies of the monk in China through the work of such scholars as Professor Wang Zhicheng of Zhejiang University, who has translated Vivekananda's writings.

Actually, he said it wasn't a difficult decision to make because the economy of Singapore and the United States was stagnating and China had a lot of potential.

cultural history. Tagore met Tan Yunshan in Singapore and invited him to come to India where he founded Cheena Bhavan, the first institution of its kind to teach the Chinese language, literature and culture.

Pal's documentary also

Vivekananda, the influential Indian monk and social reformer who lived in the 19th century.

"While people know about Tagore's three visits to China, not many know that Vivekananda too came to China, though for a very brief



Niren Anand, from the Bihar state, is in his shoemaking factory in Quanzhou, Fujian Province. courtesy of Sudeshna Sarkar

Wang has a Chinese name for Vivekananda, Bian Xi Fashi.

Pal was planning to write a book when he had to go to India following a family emergency and could not come back. “While there are other things I could do elsewhere, I want to go back to China because in these four years I have built a network with Chinese scholars and think tanks with an India link and I would hate to see that rust,” he said.

For Niren Anand, the situation is different. The 47-year-old entrepreneur from India’s eastern Bihar State has deep ties with China that go back to 2007, when he was sent to Quanzhou City in Fujian Province by the footwear and apparel company in Indonesia, he worked for, to oversee outsourcing. In 2010, he was transferred to Singapore, where he realized “sitting in an air-conditioned office was

not the life I wanted, and I was happier in China, going to factories.”

So in 2011, Anand took a “well-calculated risk,” left his job and relocated to Xiamen City in Fujian with his wife and two children to start his own business and see “what comes next.” Actually, he said it wasn’t a difficult decision to make because the economy of Singapore and the United States was stagnating and China had a lot of potential. It was a big market with lots of opportunities and way ahead of others in technology and design, especially in sports-wear, which is the focus of his company along with lifestyle.

In 2014, Anand started his own company, Xiamen Evertrade, and today it has almost 200 people working in the Quanzhou factory plus about 20 more in Xiamen. Europe, India and the Middle East are his main export

destinations, and now the plan is to expand it to the United States.

“We’d been attending trade exhibitions in the United States, Europe, Australia and Japan to get a feel of the market, and then this pandemic disrupted everything,” Anand said wryly. He went home during the Spring Festival last year, but unlike many others, was able to come back to China before the flights suspended.

“We knew in China the epidemic could be brought under control faster while in India it would take time,” he said. “Our factory was working, and it made sense to be in China.”

Besides, he thinks the time is ripe to start his own brand. It was registered in December 2020, and he anticipates more favorable policies since the 2021 Two Sessions in China in March, the annual meetings of the national legislature and advisory body, had a thrust on green growth. “About 30 percent of our products are sourced from eco-friendly natural and recycled materials,” he said.

Anand’s new factory is coming up in the eastern city of Bhubaneswar in India. It will employ about 2,000 workers since India accounts for nearly 40 percent of his exports, which is a hedge against possible disruption in supply channels. 📍

Sudeshna Sarkar is a journalist who has been living in the Chinese mainland since 2014.

Unlikely Heroes of India’s Second COVID-19 Wave

By Rohit Tyagi

Volunteers made their presence felt everywhere from spreading information on social media to delivering food and monitoring patients’ needs.

I was among the first Indians to become aware of COVID-19 through first-hand experience in 2020. I had been living in Wuhan since starting a Ph.D. program in biological sciences at Huazhong Agriculture University in 2016. But life became a roller coaster in January 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the city, and fear of the unknown caused everyone nervous and sad. My experience in Wuhan and knowledge of infectious diseases were tremendously helpful in understanding and coping.

I quickly returned to New Delhi later in 2020, where many Indian friends of mine and acquaintances asked me about precautions they could take and dangers related

to the virus. I made a few informative videos in my local language to minimize fear of the unknown, which was a source of anxiety for most people. I was also interviewed about the on-going global vaccine situation and manufacturing. As a student of biological sciences, I am acutely aware how efforts like these help spread safety measures and ensure people can work to avoid infection and keep their families safe. Things went normally during the first wave of pandemic as we lived under strict lockdown. All the efforts paid off, and people became fully aware of the dangers of this pandemic.

DISASTROUS SECOND WAVE

After a successful leap over

the first COVID-19 wave in 2020, India was struck with a highly infectious second wave in the middle of April 2021. The hyper delta strain took the whole country by surprise, and millions of lives were threatened by a lack of medical facilities and basic amenities. As the second most populous country in the world with still-developing infrastructure, it was a great challenge for India to handle the catastrophic effects of the second COVID-19 wave.

No one doubts that every COVID-19 warrior including doctors and medical staff did everything they could to cope with the situation, but the wide scope of the pandemic wave was tremendously difficult to handle. There was a lack of beds and basic necessities and many patients went on

searching for hospital assistance and ventilator access. Demand for oxygen peaked during every major cluster of infection. Even big cities like Delhi ran out of industrial oxygen because the city is not industrial in nature and relied on supply from other states. So, the masses stepped up and helped the needy. The presence of volunteers started being felt everywhere from social media to food delivery, patient needs, and even cremation grounds.

Experts and patients described India's worst-hit cities as warzones. Hospitals were so full that patients shared beds or lied on the floor. Many died before they could see a doctor. Communities and volunteers set up makeshift clinics consisting of rows of plastic chairs and mattresses under tarpaulins, where patients laid gasping for air in the sweltering heat.

The spread of the virus reached mammoth scale in highly populous areas. Growing numbers of fatality was a great concern. International business hubs and major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore were all hit by the pandemic, one after the other, which led to a general panic situation among masses. Nearly all families were affected greatly by the virus, and everyone rushed to the best available facility. Patient load was highest in the hospitals, and nursing staff all worked tirelessly and did everything in their power to save every life they could. News full of death and demise



July 11, 2021: A volunteer helps a slum child put on a face mask during a COVID-19 awareness campaign in New Delhi. The campaign aims to help children learn how to better respond to the pandemic. Visual People

was devastating and destroyed the people's confidence that things would improve.

ALL OF SOCIETY MOBILIZED

Social media has emerged as the most powerful tool to rescue people and spread information. Social media platforms were flooded with helpful data. People were in desperate need of information about oxygen cylinders, hospital beds, life saving drugs, and protective clothing because so many had family dealing with the more infectious delta strain. By the last week of April, many help-lines had opened. Volunteers started sharing contact numbers of local pharmacies and dealers to help people in need. Many groups set up online portals to share information regarding medical supplies. Police and government Twitter pages were

closely followed for authoritative news and information. All hoaxes and false alarms were denounced by authorities via Twitter, which increased the confidence in the masses.

Volunteers' hard work is to thank for rural people getting any information about the second COVID-19 wave. Public lists of distributors of thermometers, medicines like Remdesivir, Tocilizumab, and other steroids, oxygen concentrator distributors, masks and personal protective equipment (PPE), and even hospitals were published. The situation improved over time, and things got better. Many social media influencers also helped to spread information in their native languages, and related videos were circulated in rural areas to help contain infection there.

Social and religious organizations like Gurudwaras and Hindu temples stepped up

to help. Gurudwaras opened their gates to people searching for oxygen and medicine. They organized free service facilities for COVID-19 patients that provided food, medical supplies, and quarantine space. Radha Soami Satsang group provided space for a makeshift hospital during the first wave of pandemic, and came through again by arranging facilities in coordination with the Indian government. Many Hindu temple trusts donated massive sums of money to support COVID-19 care facilities.

Big organizations like BAPS community services imported tons of oxygen from the UAE to supply people in need. ISKCON organization is operating a 200-bed hospital in Delhi ("As the COVID-19 situation in Delhi was under control, makeshift hospitals aren't in use since June 21," said an official from Delhi's ISKCON Centre) and providing other basic facilities like food to everyone in need. Volunteers produced advertisements about doorstep delivery of free food to affected families. Local resident welfare associations performed food distribution for many migrant workers and helped poor people who lost their jobs or source of income. Mosques in old Delhi refilled and distributed oxygen to meet the surge in demand. Many NGOs stood shoulder to shoulder with governmental organizations to work day and night for the people's causes. I became personally aware of the great work the Sewa Bharti organization did

throughout the pandemic.

HEROIC INDIVIDUALS

Many heroic stories of individuals stepping into harm's way voluntarily emerged. The most famous was Bollywood actor Sonu Sood helping COVID-19 victims during the first wave. One of my friend Mr. Sunny converted his car into an ambulance to help COVID-19 patients and their families. Many drivers added ambulance features to their three-wheelers so they could transport patients who needed to bring oxygen. Localities cremated unclaimed bodies because few could afford the price of wood after it skyrocketed due to the lack of supply. Volunteer teams even shoveled the ashes of India's unclaimed COVID-19 victims into sacks at Nigam Bodh Ghat crematorium in Delhi, which had been burning around-the-clock after the surge of deaths.

Many volunteers also shared their personal contact details on social media so people could reach out in emergencies. In Hyderabad, a social worker named Nivetha Sakthivel designed an app called Doosra to give users a virtual phone number to protect their privacy and safety. It can easily be discarded to avoid harassment and unwanted calls. Various other databases and apps spearheaded by individuals sought to provide wider and more convenient access to municipal and personal health information. They made everything about the COVID-19 fight available to anyone with access to a smartphone capable

of downloading apps.

In my city, some politicians also did important work in community services. BJP member Gautam Gambhir distributed 200 oxygen concentrators to the public. He has been active in providing medicine and food to constituents in need. Many others from different parties have fueled the campaign to serve society.

Now, when the infection rate drops, threats of a third wave and new strains continue to persist. India is trying hard to cover most population with vaccines as soon as possible. Many volunteers have joined this vaccination effort and are now working to cover as much of the population as they can.

In conclusion, I believe that the 1.5-month period from mid-April to the end of May was the most difficult phase of many of our lives. Virtually everyone in Indian society joined the fight and won against the second wave of infection, which would have been impossible without frontline heroes. We must recognize and celebrate their efforts and motivate them to continue improving our public health services. Whenever the country was in need, an impressive supply of ordinary citizens, charities, private companies, and public servants stepped up through their own initiative to mitigate the crisis. 🇮🇳

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People's Heroes Amidst a COVID-19 Catastrophe in India

By Saheli Chattaraj

To attend to the needs of the increasing number of COVID-19 affected patients, the common Indian people displayed extraordinary kindness at the most difficult time of crisis.

The second wave of coronavirus hit India in the worst possible way since mid-April and early May, witnessing high numbers of COVID-19 infections and fatality rates. It uncovered the inadequacies and the faultiness in India's healthcare ecosystem. The metropolitan cities as well as the small towns and the rural areas were all engaged in firefighting to save lives and provide the essentials needed to meet the local demands.

Unlike the first wave, in the course of the second wave, India witnessed more young people infected with the virus and the infection spread at a much faster rate among different age groups as well. Due

to the sudden increase in the number of infections across cities in different regions, hospitals also faced a serious crisis in coping up with the treatment and hospitalization of patients infected with COVID-19. Shortness of breath was the most common clinical feature among symptomatic patients of COVID-19 which required oxygen therapy as the quintessential form of treatment. Following this, an acute panic wave stormed the country with apprehensions on oxygen supply in hospitals and also for patients who were unable to get access to immediate medical attention.

On one hand, when the health sector of the country was grappling to meet the increased demand for oxygen

supply and doctors for increasing number of COVID-19 affected patients, the common people displayed extraordinary kindness at the most difficult time of crisis in order to overcome the situation at the earliest.

CONSISTENT EFFORTS TO FIGHT THE VIRUS

With the number of infected people steadily on the rise, staying home was the only way India's citizens could have saved themselves. However, the pandemic posed challenges in more than one manner and left several groups of people vulnerable in the society. Other than the elderly and those directly affected by the virus, one of the most



July 1, 2021: A girl gets snacks after testing for COVID-19 in New Delhi. Visual People

vulnerable group who fell victims to the COVID-19 infections were infants who were orphaned with both parents succumbing to the deadly virus. Therefore, there were numerous orphans who were brought to life but lost both parents to the virus.

With more new-born children losing their parents to the virus, there also emerged the issue of raising these kids without their nearest kith and kin. More importantly, to keep up with the good health and the well-being of these kids, it was important to provide them with breast milk which is an important source of nutrition for new-borns without much of an alternative. This issue appeared to be one which could not be

resolved immediately with any common infrastructure or money, and the situation further aggravated with more children falling prey to such situations.

Taking note of this situation, overnight social workers and students and researchers put their minds together to find a solution. To cite a specific example, two research scholars from Hyderabad Central University and Tata Institute of Social Sciences worked on a scheme to put together a spreadsheet connecting such unfortunate infants to the families with mothers who were willing to donate breast milk. This case became an example to many, and slowly several groups of people came forward to bring together

similar initiatives in different parts of the country and with consistent effort resolved this heartbreaking issue. It did put forward a noble initiative starting from small actions at individual levels and yet played a deep impact on this grave issue.

On several other fronts, there still remained the issue of oxygen supply not only to those who were hospitalized but also to several others who were not even in a position to avail hospital services owing to poverty or even lack of people's support to aid in the transportation for such patients to the nearby hospital facilities. Coming forward to aid such grave issues another outstanding initiative was that of the "oxygen langar."



June 2, 2021: A boy receives a COVID-19 test in New Delhi. Children are among the most vulnerable groups of the COVID-19 pandemic. Visual People

“Langar” is a Punjabi term meaning a free community kitchen intended for the service of the people. Here the term “oxygen langar” implies free oxygen for the service of the people. The “oxygen langar” was set up by two prominent sikh organizations -- Khalsa Help International and Gurudwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha at the gurudwara in Indrapuram in Delhi. They arranged beds and also the facility for people to come in and readily get access to immediate lifesaving oxygen. Almost 70 people were being provided oxygen by this specific unit on an everyday basis. Needless to say that more gurudwaras around the country came ahead to render similar help at a dire time of need.

CALLING FOR CONCRETE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE MEASURES

Other than these basic needs for oxygen and medical facilities, with entire families affected by the virus, there also emerged the issue of healthy food being made available to the COVID-19 infected families who weren't in a position to arrange for such facilities. Responding to this issue, overnight there were several people who opened up their homes to prepare home-cooked food door to door for COVID-19 affected people. One such example was Swastik Pal from Kolkata who took initiative to provide home-cooked food to the families

in the surrounding regions. This was a great example to people who also decided to lend a helping hand to similar initiatives.

In the first two weeks of the second wave of the coronavirus attack in India, another issue which became very prominent was the cremation and burial of dead bodies of people who succumbed to the virus infection. However, even under such circumstances, common people came forward and performed the final rites for even strangers, upholding a humanitarian example of love, compassion and respect for their fellow citizens.

Given the sudden rise in health hazard posed by the virus, several NGOs across the country set up fund-raising initiative to help those in need and with the support of several people across the world help poured in through several channels. More than 40 countries including China, the United States, Germany, France, Italy, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Pakistan extended immediate help in different forms like providing supply of liquid oxygen, emergency supplies, ventilators and health kits. This prompt help from India's friends reflected the solidarity of the international community with India in time of need.

The second wave of COVID-19 in India caught the people by a sudden shock, however the tireless work of healthcare staff and the common people helped India



June 2, 2021: A community worker dressed as a clown performs disinfection work in a Mumbai slum. VCG

battle the second wave in the most courageous manner. People came forward on their own initiative in a humanitarian urge and stood firm beside their fellow citizens in every possible way. There were those in the hospitals who relentlessly strived to uphold the safety of each and every one, those who helped with funds, those who cooked and provided with food and water, those who made provisions for access to oxygen for all, and those who helped in transporting patients from hospitals and health care units from all walks of life including students, housewives, sanitation workers and also research organizations and the NGOs. Under a situation where infection spread

like an explosive reaching a world record of up to 300,000 cases in a single day, it was a heartening example when people stood strong even amid the major fear, despair and death that engulfed the country.

The COVID-19 pandemic proved to be one of the most serious health crises facing the globe with profound implications on global peace and security. The long-term economic impact of the pandemic especially on developing nations is also not something that can be neglected. With millions of people across the globe affected by the far-reaching impacts of the virus and requiring humanitarian assistance in terms of

resolving issues from hunger, poverty, health and conflict, it is time that the world adopts concrete global governance measures preparing for the prevention of similar crisis in the future. A situation like this has made clear that the responsibility lies on all including policy makers, academicians, social workers and practitioners to debate and discuss the impact and the minimization of the loss and damage created by spread of the COVID-19. ■

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Recalling India's Response to COVID-19

By Aditya Kumar Pandey

A major lesson from the pandemic could be the value of implementing a comprehensive and sustainable policy to serve lower-income groups.

India reported its first COVID-19 case on January 30, 2020. Although the havoc that this pandemic was about to wreak could hardly be expected at that point, that very day, the WHO declared it a global emergency as cases began booming rapidly throughout the world. On March 10, 2020, the total cases reported in India exceeded 50, with the number of cases doubling in a mere four days. On March 12, India banned international flights to curb the spread. With the situation becoming more alarming with each passing day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for a one-day "Janta Curfew" to create awareness regarding

the virus. Finally, on March 25, 2020, a nationwide lockdown was imposed, with only essential services allowed to function.

During the lockdown, infections continued to surge, and on June 12, India became the fourth worst coronavirus-hit country surpassing the UK. The economy took a toll and the situation eased slightly later that month, but a phase-wise unlock unfurled on July 1. By mid-July, a ray of hope glimmered for the people when the first phase of clinical trials of India's first indigenous vaccine "Covaxin" started nationwide. The overall situation continued to improve, and domestic and international aviation eventually resumed. In September

2020, the total number of coronavirus cases surpassed one million, although the recovery rate continued to improve.

The fresh year brought a new glimpse of optimism when a nationwide vaccination dry run commenced on January 2, 2021. Two domestically-produced vaccines, "Covaxin" and "Covishield," were approved by authorities for emergency usage. India also aided its neighbors by supplying over 5.5 million vaccine doses. On March 15, 2021, India reached the milestone of 30 million vaccinations, making it one of the fastest nations to do so. Things started to take a turn later that month when cases around the country started

mounting at an alarming rate. The second wave of the deadly pandemic saw daily cases jump to over 400,000 at its peak, with daily death tolls reaching over 4,000. The worst hit places were Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, and Delhi. A total lockdown was implemented to curb the spread. Conditions have improved since with case numbers leveling at around 60,000 per day and the vaccination drive reaching full swing in late June.

WHO SUFFERED MOST?

The COVID-19 pandemic not only resulted in loss of innumerable lives in India, but also left a permanent impact on the socio-economic fabric of the nation. Except for a handful of sectors which could manage to sustain themselves during this period, most businesses and industries saw a cascading effect on their usual growth. Just like everywhere around the world, sectors such as aviation, tourism, MSME, hospitality, tourism, and automobiles were the worst hit due to the complete closure during the two-month nationwide lockdown and consumer insecurity since the outbreak of COVID-19.

Tourism, which contributes over 6 percent of India's GDP and employs incredible numbers, incurred revenue loss of over Rs.1.25 trillion in 2020 alone. The lives of roughly 38 million people depending on the tourism industry directly or indirectly



June 7, 2021: India eases COVID-19 restrictions as infections hit a two-month low. In New Delhi, the subway system resume services at 50 percent capacity and stores in shopping malls and stalls at markets are allowed to take turns to do business on alternating days. VCG

were crippled. The aviation industry, which was already middling, incurred losses of over US\$4 billion according to the Center for Asia Pacific Aviation. MSME and the informal workforce of India, which according to the International Labor Organization accounts for over 76 percent of the total workforce, faced a serious existential crisis. The low-paid working class of the country which lacked basic amenities and social security suffered badly under the sudden lockdown. A major chunk of the informal workforces is migrant laborers and workers employed in bigger cities such as New Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata trying to save money. The socio-economic impact on such lower strata was even more catastrophic. Complications such as unemployment, poverty, debt traps

and reverse migration further worsened the plight of this marginalized section of society.

STIMULUS AND RELIEF

When Prime Minister Modi announced the country's first nationwide lockdown on March 25, 2020, he urged citizens to stay indoors to help curb the spread of the virus. Despite such announcements and because of a lack of alertness, millions of migrant workers employed in metropolitan cities began returning to their respective hometowns. Due to unavailability of trains and other sufficient transportation, huge crowds could be seen at railway and bus stations. Some even chose to walk thousands of kilometers in a desperate attempt to get back home. For the relief



June 2, 2021: Villagers perform last rites of 560 COVID-19 victims by a river in Belakavadi, India. On June 2, India's COVID-19 tally rose to 28.3 million, with 132,788 new cases reported in the previous 24 hours, and the new deaths of 3,207 took the overall death toll to 335,000, according to data from the country's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. VCG

of such migrant workers, the Indian Railways began operating dedicated trains called “Shramik Special” on May 1, 2020. On June 20 of the same year, Prime Minister Modi launched “Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan” to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to villages in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. The plan identified 25 key employment areas and aimed to spend Rs.500 billion on building durable rural infrastructure.

On March 26, 2020, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a Rs.1.75 trillion scheme to help the economically weaker sections endure losses of employment and income caused by the coronavirus outbreak. The government pledged to provide the needy with 5 kilogram extra wheat or rice

free for three months under the National Food Security Act. It was announced that farmers, as the backbone of the nation, would receive the first installment of their yearly payment of Rs.6,000 under a direct cash transfer scheme. Another helping hand to the poor involved nearly 83 million families below the poverty line receiving free cooking gas cylinders for three months.

Another massive stimulus package worth Rs.20 trillion was announced by Prime Minister Modi on May 12, 2020. This package aimed at land, labor, liquidity, and laws. It targeted various groups including the cottage industry, MSME, laborers, and the middle class. With an aim to incentivize employment generation as a part of pandemic recovery measures, the Finance Minister

announced a stimulus package of Rs.2.65 trillion later that year, spreading across sectors such as manufacturing, real estate, banking, agriculture, and science.

Alongside such efforts from the central government, state governments across the country have done everything they can to help as well. State governments of major farming states such as Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, and Haryana provided food and direct cash to the economically deprived sections and needy farmers. The Uttar Pradesh government announced on April 1, 2020 that it would use a US\$86 million fund to distribute cash to 2.7 million workers under the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act. The government of Delhi established hundreds of hunger relief centers to provide free food for those facing difficulties during the lockdown. The government of Andhra Pradesh provided free rations, financial aid of Rs.1,000, and cash support of Rs.2,000 to COVID-19 patients and Rs.15,000 to kin of people who succumbed to COVID-19. The government of the northern Indian state of Bihar announced free treatment of COVID-19 patients under the Chief Minister Medical Assistance Fund and assistance of Rs.400,000 to the family of a person who died of COVID-19. Parallel welfare and economic measures were also taken by various other state governments.

The second wave of COVID-19 hit the nation in

April 2021 and took a huge toll on health infrastructure. To revitalize health infrastructure, the Reserve Bank of India offered banks free range to borrow Rs.500 billion at repo rate (4 percent) for onward lending for health

of essential food items and cooking gas, economic aid to small businesses, and wage security for the low-skilled, low-wage labor force ensured that the majority of the poverty-stricken will be able to survive the after-

Despite the sharp economic contraction due to the pandemic, fiscal measures taken by the government ensured that once restrictions eased off and gradual unlocking took place, the economy would immediately start to show positive signs of recovery.

care spending by hospitals, manufacturers and individuals. These loans were classified as COVID-19 loans. The central government also revised vaccination policy to ensure speedy procurement and quick administration of doses. On June 7, 2021, Prime Minister Modi announced that citizens over the age of 18 would be vaccinated for free at government facilities and that the cost of vaccinations at private hospitals would be standardized. Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan vowed to vaccinate all adults in the nation before year end.

WHAT WORKED AND WHAT DIDN'T?

The prompt stimulus packages and economic measures rolled out by the government after the outbreak provided considerable aid to marginalized sections of the society. Direct cash transfers, delivery

of this socio-economic avalanche. Despite the sharp economic contraction due to the pandemic, fiscal measures taken by the government ensured that once restrictions eased off and gradual unlocking took place, the economy would immediately start to show positive signs of recovery. India ramped up production of essential medical supplies such as masks, PPE kits, and hand sanitizers, which were once seriously scarce during the pandemic. It also successfully started producing two homegrown vaccines. This Asian giant has helped its neighboring countries and allies with more than 70 million doses of vaccines.

The second wave of the pandemic left a serious impact on the healthcare system and the briskly improving economy of India. It exposed the existing constrained reach and deficient public

provisioning of healthcare. It was a wake-up call for the government to accelerate the nationwide vaccination drive because another wave could be coming. Moody's Investors Service research predicted a strong rebound in India's first-quarter 2021 real GDP data following a contraction of 7.1 percent last year. The International Monetary Fund also raised its growth projection for the Indian economy to 12.5 percent for fiscal year 2021-22. Such predictions show that despite the deadly second wave and threat of a looming third, a swift vaccination drive might rekindle the spark in India's economic growth and lead the country back to the track of normalcy.

A major lesson from the aftermath of the pandemic could be the value of implementing a comprehensive and sustainable policy to serve the lower-income groups of India. These are the segments of society which have been neglected by various governments since India's independence. Perennial reliance on the government by this informal sector should be gradually reduced by fostering education and skill development. This is how we can strike a balance between the formal-informal sectors and better prepare for future economic slowdowns. ■

The author is a research scholar at the Centre for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Future for 2.8 Billion: Opportunities and Challenges for China and India

Concept by *China-India Dialogue*

China and India are the two most populous countries, representing about 36 percent of the world's population. Population development in the two countries matters not just for their own economic and social stability, but also casts a far-reaching global influence.

In this issue, *China-India Dialogue* invited Professor Li Jianmin from the Institute of Population and Development of the School of Economics at Nankai University and Dr. Geeta Kochhar, assistant professor at the Center for Chinese and South-East Asian Studies of Jawaharlal Nehru University to discuss

the future. Considering current trends of the two populations, they shared insights on how China and India are confronting development challenges in light of rapid industrial restructuring and technological impact to ensure long-term healthy economic and social development.



LI JIANMIN

Professor at the Institute of Population and Development of the School of Economics at Nankai University



GEETA KOCHHAR

Assistant Professor at the Center for Chinese and South-East Asian Studies of Jawaharlal Nehru University

What do the future prospects for Indian and Chinese population look like?

Li Jianmin: According to China's seventh National Census (data as of November 1, 2020), the Chinese mainland has a population of 1.41 billion, and 2020 data shows that India has a population of 1.38 billion. The numbers are quite close, but the two countries are in different stages of population development. China's population is rapidly aging with a low birth rate. Its urbanization rate has reached close to 64 percent while India has only urbanized 35 percent of its people. In 2020, India's infant mortality rate was 26.6 per 1,000 live births, and its average life expectancy at birth was 70.4 years. These indicators are equivalent to China's level in the late 1990s. In future, the Chinese population will turn to continuous negative growth with shrinking child population and growing elderly population, while India's population will maintain growth, and is likely to overtake China to become the world's most populous country by 2023.

Geeta Kochhar: Because India has an ever-growing population, most predict that it will overtake China before 2027. However, with the recent shift in China's population policy allowing couples to have up to three children, the older predictions of stagnation in China's population could change. The inevitable scenario is that

India and China will jointly remain the most populated countries of the world and the largest providers of the human labor force.

What are the major challenges affecting populations of India and China?

Li Jianmin: For China, the biggest challenge is increasing the child population to counter the aging society driven by a fast-growing elderly population and extending life expectancy. So the main task for China is to achieve balanced population development and accumulate human capital as demographic dividends disappear. For India, the challenges arise from the pressure of population growth. The country needs to optimally leverage its demographic dividends and improve the overall health of its people. China and India face similar problems related to birth sex ratio, and both demand higher-quality urbanization.

Geeta Kochhar: Growing population entails greater consumption of resources as the material needs of the populace grow. China and India both focusing policy on urbanization will create greater demand for energy resources, which could create challenges in the two developing countries as they cope with climate change. Both countries will cater to their population by providing improved living standards. The huge aging population will create

an extra burden on social welfare. Considering the ongoing pandemic, it is clear that health and hygiene will remain a priority for a long period, and both India and China will need larger expenditure on medical facilities. Poverty alleviation and education will also remain of great concern.

China has benefitted from a huge market and low-cost labor in past years. Is the slowing population growth taking away China's advantages?

Li Jianmin: Population is one factor determining market scale, but not the most important. The most decisive factor is income level. The Chinese market has been expanding mostly because of rising income. By sustaining economic growth, China's market will remain stable despite negative population growth.

The impact of a shrinking labor force on the Chinese economy is more notable. As the population ages, the shorter supply of labor will result in more costly labor. So, it is essential for China to drive economic growth through technological progress and human capital and increase overall factor productivity and upgrade industrial structure to become a high-income country. As for social development, it is necessary to build a social system and environment adapted for the aging society, which requires greater innovation

in income redistribution, pension, medical care, and public services. Raising the birth rate while slowing the aging process demands more visionary plans for population development.

Geeta Kochhar: China had the advantage of a low-cost labor force when its industry was labor-intensive. Whether the slowing population growth will influence the labor cost and eventually affect the market depends on various factors, but there are a few things to keep in mind. First, China has already introduced the three-child policy. Even if the actual impact may not be huge due to the choices of married couples, it might alter predictions of a massive decline in the labor force. China is in the stage of transforming industries from labor-intensive to high-tech driven, which means the demand for labor will decline.

China needs to be mindful of avoiding the middle-income trap and falling into the economic stagnation Japan endured. At the same time, it must grapple with the excessive burden of catering to the old population. However, focus on health can create a better environment. China will need to take another look at its social welfare policy and assess the needs of the masses based on current and future challenges.

Q **India's population is the youngest in an aging world. Does this present an opportunity for its economic growth and development?**

Li Jianmin: India does have a young population. Its median age is 28.4 years, ten years lower than that of China. According to the World Bank, in 2020, 26.2 percent of Indian people belong to the age group of under 14 years old, 8.5 percentage points higher than China. India also has a rich pool of labor as 928 million of its people belong to the age group of 15 to 64 years old, only 58 million fewer than China. In the context of economic globalization, sufficient supply of low-cost labor is of enormous attractiveness to international capital. China once leveraged its strength in this respect to achieve rapid economic growth. Now, the huge labor force with a cost considerably lower than China is creating significant opportunities for the Indian economy. However, the period of opportunity may not last as long as it did for China because the new technological revolution featuring digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence is weakening the comparative advantage of low labor cost, and furthermore, the Indian population has also started aging.

Geeta Kochhar: Indeed, there is opportunity, but it requires nurturing and training the population. India's economic growth and development can only be boosted by greater focus on manufacturing. Now, India is still highly dependent on the service industry. To leverage the young labor force and

gain an advantage in the global market, there is great need to upgrade their skills. India has started a plan to boost AI technologies and innovation. Prime Minister Modi has called for "Make in India" as the mantra for India's growth trajectory, but unless all states work towards this goal in a rigorous manner, the actual gains will be minimal.

Q **What actions should India take to ensure adequate employment opportunities for its large and young labor force?**

Li Jianmin: India has the world's largest young labor force with 478 million of its people aged 15 to 34 years old. However, the unemployment rate among India's young workforce is relatively high. As the International Labor Organization estimated, the unemployment rate of Indian workers aged from 15 to 24 years old over the past decade has been more than 20 percent. In addition, India's industrial development is still in an early stage with the urbanization rate at only 35 percent. In 2019, agricultural workers accounted for 42.6 percent of the population, industrial workers accounted for 25.1 percent, and service industry workers accounted for 32.3 percent. The employment of young people in India is largely constrained by its economic structure. India needs to accelerate industrialization and urbanization to tackle

this problem.

Geeta Kochhar: India needs to focus on vocational training and upgrading the skills of the populace. Employment opportunities can also be created by boosting manufacturing industries as well as some service industries, which have been the backbone of India's growth. However, to cash in on the advantages of the young labor force, India will have to promote the notion of "innovation" among the masses. If only half of the young labor force in India starts small-scale businesses and the rest join the secondary and tertiary industries, India would see fast growth and high speed economic development.

Q **What are the key issues to be tackled to support healthy population growth? What are your recommendations for upcoming family planning policies considering the current situation?**

Li Jianmin: In 2020, China's total fertility rate dropped to 1.3 while India registered 2.2. In the foreseeable future, the major and only approach for China to slow the aging of its population is to increase the fertility rate. China introduced the "three child" policy in May 2021, which should bring it closer to the goal of slowing the aging process. But it will not be enough. More policies need to be implemented such as lifting all restrictions on family planning, taking more specific and vigorous

measures to boost fertility, and adopting more inclusive policy for childbirth outside wedlock.

Geeta Kochhar: For family planning, India has already advocated one couple giving birth to only two children, and some of the most populous states are introducing measures to cap the number of children at two. Adequate investments need to be made in family planning. These policies will also exert a larger impact on overall economic development factors such as poverty alleviation, gender equality, education for all, and overall quality of living. The pandemic has also made Indians aware that health is a priority. The large middle-class population in India has developed renewed consciousness for healthy living. The Indian government will also need to enhance the share of medical and health spending per GDP while promoting infrastructure building.

Q **If adjusting population policy alone isn't the solution, what other policies could support future development?**

Li Jianmin: China is witnessing an extremely low fertility rate and willingness. Alongside factors such as the economic burden of raising children, short supply of formal care, and working-parenting conflicts, deeper structural factors are playing a role. For instance, in the current income

distribution system, both parents in a working-class or middle-income family must be employed, which intensifies the working-parenting conflict. In some cases, there is a "wage punishment" for women who give birth as well as barriers impeding their return to the labor market, which further depresses women's willingness to give birth. Furthermore, intensified competition forces people to invest more time, money, and energy into activities and commodities that increase their competence (including children's education) and highlight their social status. In this scenario, people tend to have fewer kids or even none. Therefore, population policy alone is far from enough to realize balanced population development. It is necessary to carry out comprehensive and systematic reforms on policies related to people's livelihood.

Geeta Kochhar: In India, first and foremost is coordination of policy implementation among all stakeholders and actors, which requires a balance between Central and State policies. Some are already in the pipelines: boosting infrastructure investment, improving farmers' income, prioritizing education, strengthening the social justice system, mitigating religious and caste based differences to maintain social harmony, empowering women and creating opportunities and a safe environment for the female labor force and stressing skill development. **Q**

Looking Back at Old Revolutionary Bases

Edited by **Hu Zhoumeng**

Designed by **Liu Peiyao**

Old revolutionary base areas were founded under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) during the Agrarian Revolutionary War (1927-1937) and the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-1945). During wartime, the people living in old revolutionary base areas selflessly

supported the CPC, provided manpower, material and financial resources to continue long-term struggles, and made great sacrifices and contributions to strengthening the revolution and achieving final victory. The year 2021 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC. What do old revolutionary areas mean for the CPC's century of glory?

Jinggangshan City, Jiangxi Province

At the end of the 1920s, the CPC established its first rural revolutionary base, Jinggangshan Revolutionary Base, which ignited the spark of "surrounding the city from the countryside and seizing power by armed force." The Jinggang Mountains, with more than 100 revolutionary sites scattered in the mountains, have become a "revolutionary history museum" without walls around.

Jinggangshan City is located in the southwest of Jiangxi Province. It covers an area of **1,462** square kilometers and has a population of about **190,000**.

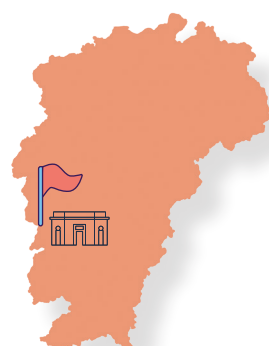


In 2020, the regional GDP of Jinggangshan City was approximately seven billion yuan (around **US\$1.08** billion).
Per capita disposable income of urban residents was **39,398** yuan (around **US\$6,083**).
Per capita disposable income of rural residents was **12,872** yuan (around **US\$1,987**).



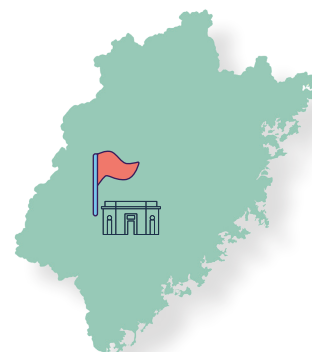
The efforts to develop tourism, new industries, and modern agriculture have driven high-quality development of Jinggangshan:

- Jinggangshan has become a national **5A-level** tourist attraction.
- Industrial parks, such as the Intelligent IoT Industrial Park, the New Economy Industrial Park, and the Intelligent Warehousing and Logistics Park, are emerging one after another.
- **15** agricultural enterprises in the city have passed the organic certification to produce **42** organic agricultural products.



Gutian County, Fujian Province

In December 1929, the Ninth CPC Congress of the Fourth Army of the Red Army (the Gutian Meeting) was held in Gutian County and established the principle of "ideological Party building and political army building." In January 1930, Mao Zedong wrote the article *A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire* in Xiechengdian, Laifang Village, Gutian Town.



Gutian Town is located in Shanghang County, Fujian Province. It covers an area of **227** square kilometers and has a permanent population of nearly **20,000**.



In 2019, the regional GDP of Shanghang County was about **40.2** billion yuan (around **US\$6.2** billion).
Per capita disposable income of urban residents was **42,288** yuan (around **US\$6,529**).
Per capita disposable income of rural residents was **18,444** yuan (around **US\$2,848**).



With a beautiful ecological environment, Gutian Town has vigorously developed leisure agriculture, rural tourism, and red tourism: Gutian Tourist Area is a national **5A-level** tourist attraction and the first **5A-level** red tourist attraction in Fujian Province.

Zunyi City, Guizhou Province

In 1935, the Red Army fought in Zunyi for three months during the Long March where there was the legend of the Four Crossings of Chishui River. The Zunyi Conference in January 1935 established Mao Zedong's de facto leadership position in the Party Central Committee and the Red Army. The Zunyi Conference is remembered as a life-and-death turning point in the Party's history because it had saved the Party, the Red Army, and the Chinese Revolution at a most critical moment.

Zunyi City is located in northern Guizhou Province. It covers **31,000** square kilometers and has a permanent population of **6.61** million.



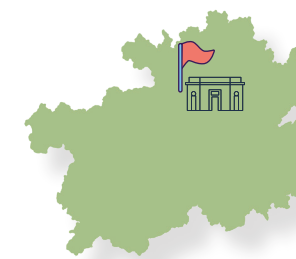
In 2020, the regional GDP of Zunyi City was **372** billion yuan (around **US\$57.4** billion);
Per capita disposable income of urban permanent residents was **37,190** yuan (around **US\$5,742**).
Per capita disposable income of rural residents was **14,718** yuan (around **US\$2,272**).



Zunyi is an emerging industrial city and an important agricultural commodities production base:

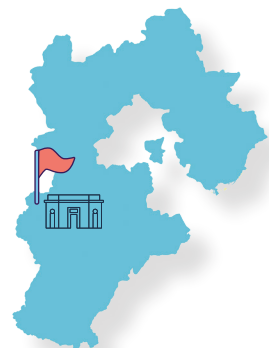
- As of the end of 2020, Zunyi had **738** industrial enterprises above designated size, **212** high-tech enterprises, and **1,876** valid patents.
- In 2020, the annual output of grain was **2.27** million tons, and the annual output of vegetables was **5.75** million tons.

Zunyi is also an energy production base for China's "West-East Power Transmission."



Fuping County, Hebei Province

In 1937, the Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei resistance base, the first in the country, was established. Fuping was one of the sites of the publication of *People's Daily*. It is also where the first volume of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* was published and the first Renminbi currency printed.



Fuping County is located in Baoding City, Hebei Province. It covers **2,496** square kilometers and has a population of **230,000**.



Fuping is a mountainous county with only **219,000 mu** (**146** million square meters) of arable land and **0.96 mu** (**640** square meters) per capita. With outstanding ecological advantages, its forest coverage rate exceeds **39 percent**, and the vegetation coverage rate exceeds **80 percent**.



In 2019, the per capita disposable income of rural residents in Fuping County was **9,844 yuan** (around **US\$1,520**).

Yimeng, Shandong Province

During the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the War of Liberation, Yimeng hosted the first column of the Eighth Route Army, the headquarters of the 115th Division, the headquarters of the New Fourth Army, and the headquarters of the East China Field Army for a long term. At the time, the Yimeng base had a population of 4.2 million, with more than 1.2 million supporting the army. More than 100,000 revolutionary martyrs heroically died there.

The Yimeng area is located in southeast Shandong Province, and its main area is in today's Linyi City. Linyi City covers a total area of **17,200** square kilometers and has a total population of approximately **11.97** million.



In 2020, the regional GDP of Linyi City was approximately **480.5** billion yuan (around **US\$74** billion). The per capita disposable income of urban residents was **39,466 yuan** (around **US\$6,094**) and that of rural residents was **15,918 yuan** (around **US\$2,458**).

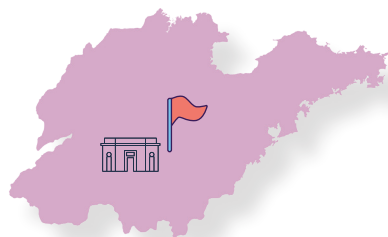


Yimeng Mountain is a national **5A-level** tourist attraction. Yimeng Mountain Global Geopark is a member of the UNESCO Global Geopark Network.



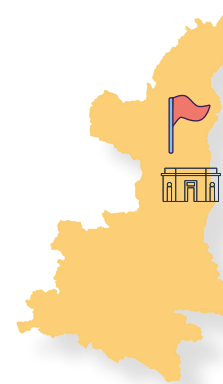
Linyi is a famous commercial city:

- Linyi Mall offers **123** wholesale markets that facilitated transaction volume of **440.3** billion yuan (around **US\$68** billion) in 2020.
- The city established an information platform covering more than **2,000** cities across China, with more than **2,300** logistics operators, **23** logistics parks, and over **2,000** domestic loading lines.



Yan'an City, Shaanxi Province

From April to June 1945, the Seventh National Congress of the CPC was held in Yan'an, at which Mao Zedong Thought was established as the Party's guiding ideology and written into the Party constitution. The first Xinhua Bookstore in the country was opened there. It was the site of the publication of *Liberation Daily*. Yan'an Xinhua Radio Station was the earliest radio station founded there by the CPC. Yan'an is now home to 445 revolutionary sites and 30 revolutionary-themed museums.



Yan'an City is located in northern Shaanxi Province. It covers a total area of **37,000** square kilometers and has a permanent population of about **2.28** million.



In 2020, the GDP of Yan'an City was approximately **160.2** billion yuan (around **US\$24.7** billion). Per capita disposable income of urban residents was **36,577 yuan** (around **US\$5,647**) and that of rural residents was **12,845 yuan** (around **US\$1,983**).



- During the 13th Five-year Plan period, Yan'an, the birthplace of China's petroleum industry, accelerated conversion to new kinetic energy, and the proportion of the petroleum industry in GDP fell by **19.7** percentage points.
- It built **111** modern agricultural demonstration parks, **103** intelligent fruit selection lines, and air-conditioning storage capacity of **1.473** million tons.
- It established **20** crowd-creation spaces and incubators and introduced **1,076** new economy enterprises.

Xibaipo Village, Hebei Province

From July to September 1947, the National Land Conference was held in Xibaipo, and the *Outline Land Law of China* was formulated to implement the system of "farmers owning their land." From May 1948 to March 1949, the Central Committee of the CPC organized and commanded the three major campaigns for national liberation, namely the Liaoshen Campaign, the Huaihai Campaign, and the Pingjin Campaign. The Second Plenary Session of the Seventh CPC Central Committee was held there, where a grand blueprint for new China was drawn.

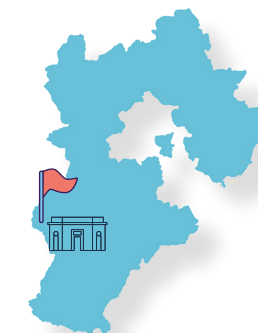
Xibaipo Village is located in Pingshan County, Hebei Province, and has about **1,600** households and **6,040** villagers.



In 2019, per capita disposable income of urban residents in Pingshan County was **32,771 yuan** (around **US\$5,060**), and that of rural residents was **10,350 yuan** (around **US\$1,598**).



Xibaipo is a national patriotism education base and a national **5A-level** tourist attraction, with tourism and green food development and processing industries as its leading industries.



Source: Xinhuanet, Jinggangshan City, Shanghang County, Zunyi City, Fuping County, Linyi City, Yan'an City, Pingshan County and other local government portal websites.

My COVID-19 Story: How Young People Overcome the Pandemic

Concept by *China-India Dialogue*

Few things are more powerful than a positive push

Amish Vyas

Occupation: Plastic Surgeon
Birth place: Jodhpur, India
Current residence: Shanghai, China



I'm an Indian plastic surgeon working in China. I've studied from Wenzhou Medical University and have been working as a plastic surgeon for past few years. When the COVID-19 outbreak started in China, I was in Hangzhou working as a doctor, but my clinic suspended operations for a month.

As a doctor by profession, I felt that I could utilize my skills and experience in volunteering and supporting COVID-19 workers.

I initiated the process by volunteering in my local community. As I've good command on several languages like Hindi, English, Chinese, Urdu, basic Spanish and Arabic, I started sharing information related to COVID-19 in my community. I used to translate

the information into desired language and would try to pass it on to all the fellow foreign residents. It helped a lot of foreign friends to get updated information in their native language. As the initial months of 2020 were a bit crucial, I started helping with the temperature check near the main entrance of our building. Also, all the community residents were provided with an Entry-Exit card, which we used to check on their arrival.

This little effort made me feel closer to my profession, despite the lack of direct contact with patients. Just communicating with people and hearing their experiences were enough to impress upon me the gravity of the situation. Volunteering also helped me to develop a sense of responsibility and motivated

me to play this role until the end of the pandemic tension. I started helping people around by communicating with them, just to make sure they're in good health. I remember once I spoke to this elderly lady who lives next to my apartment about her health and she was so deeply touched that she had tears in her eyes. She said, it felt like her son was back from another province, who was stuck in a lockdown there. I was moved by her reaction and could totally relate to her feelings. That incident made me realize that during this hard time, it is so important to be in touch with everyone, regardless of one's age or background. Since that day, I used to call her every day, just to get an update about her. When my community was in a need for someone to be a volunteer at the entrance gate of our community, I thought of helping there. I asked basic questions about general health to both Chinese and foreigners living in my community.

I must say that I've got an overwhelming response from my community residents. Chinese residents offered me chocolates and even a cup of hot tea. I would have felt helpless being at home, and so being able to help my community made me feel like I was doing something worthwhile, and I just wanted to help in every possible way. Volunteers were available on the doorstep, but I didn't know about them before, and as a volunteer I have found out so much more about what is going on in the community. I

have met some lovely people, and there have been so many people I have been grateful and thankful to. The volunteering experience has helped me immensely with my personal and professional development. I believe I have become more aware about the pandemic, thus making my family and surroundings safe too. I feel empowered and confident, and closer to my dream of working for needy ones.

Reflections on the Epidemic

Xu Yangdan

Occupation: Postgraduate student at the College of Foreign Languages and Cultures of Xiamen University
Birth place: Xiangyang, Hubei
Current residence: Xiamen, Fujian



In early January 2020, I boarded a train, headed home from my university. The train stopped in Wuhan, capital city of Hubei Province, right before

the stop for my hometown in Xiangyang. The Chinese New Year was approaching, and I was full of joy.

On January 20, however, an epidemic caused by a novel coronavirus seemed to envelop Hubei overnight. The atmosphere of the festival quickly faded, and discussion of the virus replaced holiday greetings. "Stay home!" became the phrase I heard most frequently from my family and friends. The number of infections kept rising and the locations crept closer and closer to my home. I used to look forward to ringing the New Year's bell and exchanging greetings with relatives and friends. However, that New Year's Eve brought the news of the lockdown in Wuhan. My hometown was "sick." The virus was like a thick haze of misty rain shrouding the whole province.

March and April are normally the most beautiful time of the year in Wuhan, but every family stayed hidden behind closed doors, waiting for another warm spring. During the lockdown, I stayed safe from the virus through care and support from society, the community, and school instead of the separation of cold walls. Body temperature measurement and material procurement were carried out in an orderly manner, and fresh vegetables were delivered to every household.

The Party secretary at my university hosted an online meeting and encouraged all Party members to contribute whatever they could to

epidemic prevention and control while keeping themselves safe. He also specifically asked how I was doing and what was needed in my hometown, reassuring me that the school and society were ready and willing to help.

In early February, I received 10 masks and a cheer-up letter from Xiamen University, about 1,000 kilometers away from my hometown, even though express delivery had not resumed in Hubei Province. Whenever I think of how difficult it must have been to send the letter to me, I am touched. The special care and support brought spring to my heart. Any raging winds or surging storms — all difficulties and challenges facing the Chinese nation will surely pass if people stand up with one heart and mind.

When I could finally walk down a familiar street again, it occurred to me that the most ordinary life is the most valuable. The virus knows no borders, and everyone made a contribution in the fight against the epidemic by staying indoors and quarantining.

Medical workers from across the country came to aid Hubei. The strength of the whole nation gathered like a strong fist and a sharp knife, determined to bring the epidemic under control through concerted efforts.

Who cares if the medicine stays on the shelf untouched because everyone in the world is always healthy? Medics not only rescued the dying and

healed the wounded but also sought ways to buoy the spirits of their heavy-hearted patients. Lovely hand-painted decorations on protective clothing and square dancing with patients testified to the Chinese confidence and determination to fight the epidemic.

The country advanced slowly yet steadily after the reopening of companies, schools, and shops. Everyone firmly resolved to move forward with vigor and courage.

Nearly 400 A-level scenic

What I have experienced makes me even more confident and grateful. I know the happiness, peace, and stability I enjoy today are the result of the contributions and sacrifices of so many.

spots in Hubei opened for free to visitors from across the country from August to the end of 2020. The free admission was a token of gratitude to the assistance and support to Hubei from across the nation during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Come and visit Hubei, my lovely home. It has slowly stretched and regained beauty. Its splendour is just as radiant as before.

The tenacity, resilience, and endless hope in stories from this land represent an unforgettable microcosm of the history of our great motherland.

In this mighty battle without gunpowder, some sacrificed their lives, but the people and

country will never forget their names. They have transformed into stars in the sky and street lamps, emitting a warm ambience and lighting the way forward.

Why do my eyes well up with my love for this land so deeply? What I have experienced makes me even more confident and grateful. I know the happiness, peace, and stability I enjoy today are the result of the contributions and sacrifices of so many.

Many touching stories

emerged in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, ranging from the sacrifices and contributions of individuals and families to the macro coordination and planning of the whole country. All the stories of this battle represent ideal patriotic education. The country is dependent on the people, and the people are the future of the country. When the people have ideals, their country will have strength, and their nation will have a bright future. The ideals are strengthened by protection and support of the motherland in times of crisis, and the strength is found in the unity of all Chinese people. 🇨🇳



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The Deep Roots of Mumbai's Chinese Community

By Srividya Mehendale
Photographs courtesy of Srividya Mehendale

For most of the year, Kuan Kung Temple remains tranquil, tucked away in a busy city until Chinese New Year arrives and the Chinese community from across Mumbai congregates there on the New Year's Eve.

“There was once an entire lane devoted to Hubeinese dentists’ practices along Grant Road,” said Dr. Tseyun Yi, a retired dentist, raving about his roots in Hubei, a Chinese province known for its fine dentistry skills.

Dr. Yi and his 84-year-old father recalled their family moving to Mumbai in the 1930s. At the time, Dr. Yi’s father was one of the first dentists in Kalyan and received considerable support from the locals when setting up his practice. In those days, skills were valued more than degrees, and word of mouth was more trusted than fancy advertisements.

Like Dr. Yi’s father, many Chinese people settled in India for the job opportunities that arose near famous ports and industrial establishments in Chennai, Kolkata, and Mumbai. Mumbai is now home to several thousand Chinese immigrants. They came from different regions of China, but broadly fell into categories such as Cantonese carpenters, Hakka shoe-makers and tannery workers, Hubeinese dentists, and Shandong silk traders.

“Chindians in Mumbai mostly work in three professions: dentistry, catering, and salons,” said Annie Chen, a 21-year-old Chinese-born lifelong resident of the city. “Chindian” refers to the Chinese diaspora in

India. According to Chen, the Chinese dentists always encourage their kids to pursue dentistry to keep their family business running. It is amusing to compare the similarity of Chinese and Indian philosophy in this respect.

India and China, two Asian neighbors, have much in common, culturally, historically, and mythologically. These similarities encouraged famous Chinese travelers like Xuanzang and Yijing to visit India during the Tang dynasty (618-907). Their work is now appreciated in both nations.

Alongside Chinese scholars and travelers, countless other Chinese people have also become curious about India. Records show that many Chinese immigrants ventured



Inside Mumbai's only Chinese temple, the Kuan Kung temple in Mazgaon.

to India in the late 19th century. Initially, settlements were restricted to major ports like Kolkata, Chennai, and Mumbai. In Mumbai, Chinese mostly worked as skilled port workers or launched

salons, schools, and restaurants emerged with peculiar Chinese characteristics, which led to the establishment of two Chinatowns. Chinatowns in Mumbai starkly contrasted those in

dominated by even larger settlements of traders operating businesses.

LIVING TRADITIONS

Architecturally, Chinese left major marks in the form of a Chinese temple and cemetery. Mumbai's only Chinese temple, located at the Dockyard Road in Mazgaon, is managed by Albert Tham and his family. The two-story temple features a captivating shrine to the Chinese warrior God Guan Kung alongside a depiction of the Goddess of Fertility and some other smaller shrines. A mild aroma of incense wafts through the temple over vibrant red scrolls and famous Confucius quotes. The temple continues

Although shrinking, the Chinese community in Mumbai remains close-knit. More and more initiatives have been organized to bring people together.

businesses. A few wandered in and traveled the country subsisting through street performances.

As the Mumbai settlements grew, new shops,

London, Toronto, and even Kolkata. In its heydays, the Chinatown in Kamathipura offered several medical services and grocery shops. Another in Mazgaon was

to fascinate its visitors with unique practices like throwing the moon couplets (*Jiaobei*) and reading reflective poems and predictions.

The tranquil temple remains quiet throughout the year, tucked away in the busy city, until Chinese New Year arrives and the Chinese community from across the city gathers on New Year's Eve. The festival is celebrated enthusiastically at homes as well as at the midnight gathering. A sumptuous feast of eggs, fish, dumplings, and other lucky food and beverages are prepared and merrily relished by families.

An old saying about the red envelopes (*Hongbao*) that younger generations receive during the festival suggests that if someone is unable to return home for the Chinese New Year, the funds will be passed to other houses, which lures youth back to their hometown.

As the years pass, more and more Indians started participating in the festivities. The lion and dragon dance is certainly a spectacle. The Kuan Kung (Guan Yu) temple, once served as a shelter for tired traders, and it is now one of the few places in Mumbai offering a glimpse of Chinese culture.

As a part of the tradition, the community offers prayers to departed loved ones at Antop Hill, the only Chinese cemetery in town. Most visit graves for occasions like Chinese New Year and All Saints Day. A board outside the cemetery claims that it was bought for six annas per

yard by Chinese merchants in Mumbai in 1889. For a long time, it was the only place for the Chinese community across India for burial until the Maharashtra Chinese Association constructed another cemetery in Wadala after persistent efforts. This led a few members of the community to adopt the Hindu tradition of cremation.

Alongside the temple and the cemetery, a Chinese school and club emerged in the southern part of the city. The school was opened in 1930 but closed in 1996. Before the 1960s, Chinese clubs in and around Mumbai catered players of cards and, of course, Mahjong.

The 1962 war between India and China, however, hugely impacted the community. Growing tensions reduced activities in the clubs, leaving very few able to operate. Immigrant parents who could afford to send their kids to more developed countries did so, and a few returned to their hometowns in China. Ever-prevalent racism increased even more.

TURNING LOCAL

Although the community is still not completely accepted today, they have adapted and integrated Indian culture into their households. Dr. Yi and his father know more about the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* than Chinese mythology, and they speak better Marathi than Mandarin.

Bhivandi, once the eye of the storm for Hindu-Muslim

communal riots, also hosted a few Chinese families. Elderly residents reported that their deep integration into the local culture and society enabled them to endure the distressing times safely. Their adaptation to the local communities is seen in many aspects from eating habits to dating and marriage.

Although shrinking, the Chinese community in Mumbai remains close-knit. More and more initiatives have been organized to bring people together such as the digital activities hosted by the Maharashtra Chinese Association. The youth today are also making collaborative efforts to keep the community alive and share their collective knowledge about the indigenous culture.

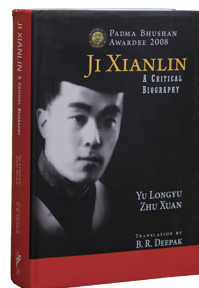
Regardless of background, most from the Chinese community identify themselves as Indians and wish to be treated equally with a spirit of oneness and brotherhood. Border tensions between the two nations and the COVID-19 pandemic did cause damage to the perception among locals especially last year, but we hope this "niu" year (Year of the Ox) heralds a great spirit of camaraderie throughout humanity. 🐮

The author is a Mandarin Chinese teacher in Mumbai.



The Sooner the Vaccination The Better the Protection





Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography

By Yun Longyu and Zhu Xuan

Translated by B.R. Deepak

Pentagon Press

2018

Ji Xianlin: Crossed the Himalayas

Text By Zhu Li

Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography, co-authored by Yun Longyu and Zhu Xuan, is the first book to focus on both the life and academic work of Ji Xianlin. After comprehensive and in-depth research, the authors presented Ji, an iconic figure in Chinese and global cultural and intellectual circles, from ten aspects and dove deep into the “Ji Xianlin phenomenon.” The book was released in English, Hindi, Bengali, and the Tamil language versions. The Hindi version was sponsored by Silk Road Book Project in 2016 and published by Prakashan Sansthan, while the English version was published by Pentagon Press and Tamil by Aazhi Publishers. The Bengali version remains in translation.

A Shandong (eastern Chinese province) native, Ji Xianlin was a master scholar who made remarkable contributions to historical science, literature, and cross-border cultural and publishing

exchange. We continue to enjoy Ji’s legacy today. “People like to come closer to the upright and modest senior,” wrote Hong Kong cultural scholar Rao Zongyi (1917-2018) in the preface for *Ji Xianlin Biography* by Cai Degui. “In terms of his writing, it is very impressive and full of brilliance. He is a very typical Shandong scholar with a bold and inclusive flavor.” In 2016, we published *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography* by Yun Longyu and Zhu Xuan. We are a publishing house based in Ji’s hometown, so we prioritize books related to Ji to promote his academic achievements and charisma and assume the responsibility of honoring and commemorating him.

Since 2005, we have been planning a large set of books on exchange of Chinese and foreign literature. Professor Yu Longyu, then director of the Center for Indian Studies of Shenzhen University, was in charge of the China-India

volume. During publication, I became acquainted with Professor Yu and doctor Zhu Xuan, who were writing *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography*, which was supposed to be the first book in China featuring comprehensive and in-depth research on Ji’s life and academic accomplishments. The book analyzes Ji from ten aspects: top Indology expert, enlightened Buddhism scholar, founding Orientalist, indispensable translator, comparative literature master, peculiar essayist, cultural exchange ambassador, expert on Dunhuang and Turpan studies, Marxist follower, and emotional reservoir. The authors studied Ji, an iconic figure in cultural and intellectual circles in China and the world and dove deep into the “Ji Xianlin phenomenon” to present a true-to-life great scholar and thinker also with flaws and sensibilities. The book is a good reference and of great value of historical data

in terms of foreign cultural exchange, Chinese study of Indology, Orientalism, translation, Dunhuang, and Turpan. I expressed our enthusiasm for publishing this book. Thanks to Professor Yu’s trust, he accepted my pleas largely because we are located in Ji’s home province.

In January 2016, China was the guest of honor at the New Delhi World Book Fair for the first time. When *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography* appeared at the fair, it drew a spotlight to potential copyright export of its English, Hindi, and Tamil language versions. At the copyright contract ceremony, Satya Vrat Shastri, an Indian Sanskrit expert and two-time winner of the Padma Award, TCA Rangachari, a renowned sinologist and retired Indian ambassador to China, Professor B. R. Deepak, and Professor Sabaree Mitra expounded on Ji’s academic contributions and recalled their association and friendship with him. Professor Lokesh Chandra of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations couldn’t attend the event because of eye illness, but he sent a letter stating: “Each library and educated family in India deserve this book.”

B. R. Deepak, Professor at the Center for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies of Jawaharlal Nehru University, translated the book into English and Hindi. Deepak once studied Chinese history and China-India relations at Peking University and the Chinese Academy of Social Science. “I believed, it was important to let the larger



June 2007: Yu Longyu (rear), one author of *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography*, visits Ji Xianlin in the hospital. courtesy of Shandong Education Press

number of people in India and the world know about this doyen of Indology, an erudite scholar of Buddhism, a translator of par excellence, an unrivalled essayist who not only took Indology to China, but also to the world. It was for this contribution that the Government of India conferred on him India’s third highest civilian award, the Padam Bhushan. As for the translation of *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography*, I enjoyed it. It broadened my knowledge about both the biographee and the author.”

The English, Hindi, and Tamil language versions of *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography* have already been published. In August 2018, the books’ launch ceremony was held at Beijing International Book Fair. Gautam H. Bambawale, then ambassador to China and Geetika Srivastava, then Indian Cultural Consulate to China, attended the ceremony. In September 2019

before the Chinese President Xi Jinping’s visit to India, a forum on the publication of English and Hindi *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography* was held at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Li Bijian, then China’s envoy to India, Harivansh Narayan Singh, deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament, and Jagadesh Kumar, vice-chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University, jointly hosted the event. Indian experts, writers, sinologists, and students from the Chinese Department of Jawaharlal Nehru University participated in the gathering. Xinhua News Agency’s New Delhi bureau and major Indian media outlets such as Dainik Jagran, Jansatta, and Prabhat Khabar reported on the meeting, which helped the activity become an example of promoting Chinese culture worldwide and cultural exchange between two countries.



A group photo at the founding ceremony of Indian Culture Institute of China in September 1982. Ji Xianlin is in the middle front. courtesy of Shandong Education Press

On January 27, 2008, then Indian President Pratibha Patil approved a list of 135 laureates for the 2008 Bharat Ratna, the highest Civilian Award in India, according to *The Times of India*. One of the most notable honorees was 97-year-old eminent Chinese Indologist Ji Xianlin, the first Chinese person ever to win this honor.

On June 6, 2008, on behalf of the then Indian President, Pranab Mukherjee, Indian Minister of External Affairs, presented the award to Professor Ji, witnessed by Li Zhaoxing, the former Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs and director of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress, and Nirupama Rao, the Indian Ambassador to China. "For the first time, a Padma Bhushan has crossed the Himalayas to reach out to a scholar who introduced the *Ramayana*

and other aspects of Indian tradition to China," wrote *The Times of India* to describe this special and belated award.

Encouragingly, *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography* in English, Hindi, and Tamil was published in India ten years later, thanks to the joint efforts of China's Indology circles driven by Professor Ji, India's Sinology scholars, and publishing circles in the two countries, all of which journeyed across the Himalayas in one way or another.

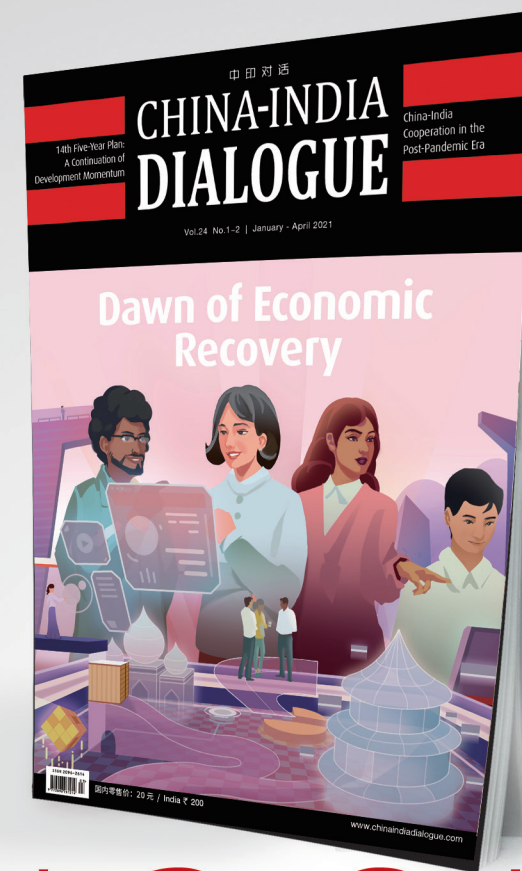
When translation is complete, the Bengali version will be published by Prakashan Sansthan. German and Japanese versions are also in the works. The German version will be translated by Professor Haiyan Hu-von Hinüber from German's Freiburg University. Trained in Sanskrit and Buddhist studies under professors Jin Kemu and Ji Xianlin at China's Peking University

and Indology at the Göttingen University, she taught and served as a research scholar at universities of Freiburg and Vienna. "It is my sense of honor to translate the biography of Professor Ji because I was entrusted and encouraged for further studies, by him nearly 40 years ago to go to Göttingen, where he studied Indology in his early years," said Professor Haiyan Hu-von Hinüber. The Japanese version will be translated by Professor Amamura Yuiji from Japan's Fukuoka International University, who has great admiration for Professor Ji. The two scholars' participation in the translation brought Chinese culture to the international stage again.

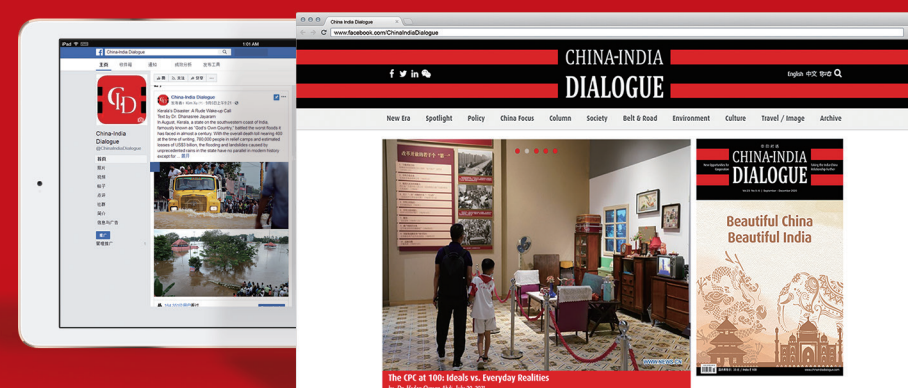
I was very impressed by the admiration these scholars, sinologists, and publishers showed for the subject through their enthusiasm for translating and publishing multilingual versions of *Ji Xianlin: A Critical Biography*. The support has been a blessing for the book, Shandong Education Press, and all followers of Professor Ji. Hong Kong-based Phoenix TV hailed Professor Ji a bridge builder between China and India, China and the West, and ancient and modern times when he received the Bharat Ratna award. His cultural influence began in Shandong Province and radiated across the entire country and beyond.

Long live Professor Ji's legacy! 🇨🇳

The author is the deputy editor-in-chief of Shandong Education Press.



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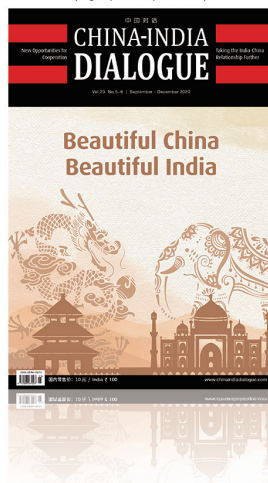
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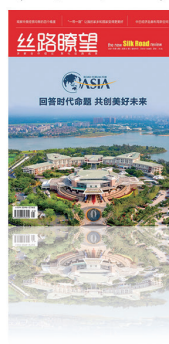
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