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Xi: Nation to expand opening-up

President meets with new envoys, calls for deepening cooperation

By ZHANG YUNBI
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President Xi Jinping, who received the credentials of 16 new ambassadors to China on Friday, welcomed the envoys to their new posts in Beijing and sent a clear signal that China will resolutely expand its high-level opening-up.

During a group meeting with the ambassadors, Xi also voiced optimism about China's economic prospects, saying that the nation will share "the dividends of its supersized market".

Currently, China is advancing the building of a strong nation and the great cause of national rejuvenation on all fronts through the Chinese path to modernization, while its economy "continues its upward momentum amid steadfastness", Xi said.

The nation will turn its new development into new opportunities for various countries, and "inject more certainty into global economic growth", he added.

On Friday morning, as welcoming bugles sounded and honor guards of the People's Liberation Army stood solemnly in formation outside the north gate of the Great Hall of the People, the new ambassadors of Vietnam, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Albania, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Angola, Egypt, Nicaragua, Iran, Chile, Ukraine, Benin, the United States, Israel and South Sudan arrived one by one to meet the president.

Xi accepted the credentials presented by the envoys and also posed for photos with each of them. He also met with Nurlan Yermekbayev, secretary-general of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

President Xi Jinping delivers a speech on Friday at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing after receiving the credentials of 16 new ambassadors to China. FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY

After the ceremony, Xi delivered a speech welcoming the envoys and asked them to convey his best wishes to the leaders and the people of their respective countries.

Xi expressed his hope that the envoys will gain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of China, and make earnest contributions to deepening China's friendship with various countries and enhancing its exchanges with the rest of the world.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45) and the World Anti-Fascist War, as well as the 80th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

China stands ready to work with all countries to firmly safeguard the international system with the UN at its core and the international order underpinned by international law, Xi said.

China is willing to work with all countries to practice friendly cooperation, promote mutual learning among civilizations, build a community with a shared future for humanity, and "join hands to create a better future for this planet", he added.

Xi emphasized that amid accelerating global changes and a turbulent international landscape, countries around the world need to enhance solidarity and cooperation more than ever before. They should embrace a broad vision to rise above divisions and conflicts, and bear in mind the future of all humanity, he said.

China always cherishes its friendship with people across the globe, and stands ready to strengthen all-around cooperation and exchanges with other countries on the basis of mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, Xi said.

Talks urged to resolve China-EU trade issues

By CAO DESHENG
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Expressing confidence in the scope of future trade and investment cooperation between China and the European Union, business executives from both sides voiced their earnest hope that the two sides will maintain communication to resolve existing trade disputes.

Their comments came as the 25th China-EU Summit was held in Beijing on Thursday, which coincided with the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and the EU.

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Liao Lin, chairman of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, said that amid increasing challenges, Chinese companies investing and operating businesses in Europe look forward to a market-oriented and law-based business environment, and they hope the EU will provide greater stability and certainty for Chinese enterprises in Europe.

"We hope that both sides can engage in closer dialogue and communication and properly address frictions and differences, in order to foster markets featuring mutual benefit for industries and businesses and build a future-oriented partnership between China and the EU," Liao said at the China-EU Business Leaders Symposium, which was also held in Beijing on Thursday.

From just $2.4 billion in trade in 1975 to nearly $785 billion in 2024, China-EU economic relations have become one of the most vibrant engines of global growth. However, the ties have been disrupted by trade disputes. The issues of disagreement include tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles and China's export control on rare earth elements.

As a positive outcome of the summit, which was co-chaired by Premier Li Qiang, President of the European Council Antonio Costa and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, both sides agreed to create an upgraded export supply mechanism to address the existing problems. They also committed to positively managing their differences to pave the way for a more equitable trade and investment relationship.

Jens Eskelund, president of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China, said the ties between the EU and China over the past 50 years have created enormous value for both sides.

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Nighttime economy savoring more success

By ZHU WENQIAN
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Nightly sales of foods and beverages are booming across China this summer and spicing up the nation's nighttime economy, as extended retail business hours and more convenient delivery services attract more late-night consumers.

In Beijing, several new after-dark markets have mushroomed this season and more vendors are setting up shop to rake in the benefits.

Huda Restaurant, a popular crayfish eatery on the capital's Guijie Street, is operating four outlets in the same area. During the peak period on some nights, customers generally have to wait in line for three hours, according to the restaurant.

"Tourists are often unable to wait that long to dine in. Some choose the takeaway option, or order deliveries to their hotels. We have seen a rapid growth of orders — and revenues — on food delivery platforms," said Zhang Shengtao, deputy general manager of Huda.

Kuafood, a domestic chain that offers a variety of meat and vegetable skewers and boasts more than 2,300 stores nationwide, said that 50 percent of its stores have extended their operating hours from 9 pm to midnight this summer.

"The traditional Chinese dinner-time and the late-night snacking period have been our peak sales hours. Stores with extended operating hours are expected to record 10 to 30 percent increase in revenues. Community stores located in first-tier cities usually witness higher nighttime sales, which is mainly contributed by food deliveries," said Zhang Rongrong, director of delivery business at Kuafood.

Momojia Rougamo, a restaurant chain founded in Shanghai, which offers specialty cuisines from Northwest China, said it has extended its business hours since March, and nighttime orders have been accounting for about 15 percent of the total each day.

According to a report released by the Ministry of Commerce, 60 percent of China's urban consumption takes place after dusk. At large-scale malls, sales between 6 pm and 10 pm usually account for over half of the whole day's revenue.

Hong Yong, an associate researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, said that late dining meets the needs of young people in a better way, especially with more of them working overtime or having late-night social engagements.

Foreign visitors tour a night market on Thursday in Dashilar, a popular commercial street in the heart of Beijing. CHEN QIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

"Urban residents usually spend the morning and afternoon working or studying, while the night is reserved for unwinding. With the days being longer in summer, people are more willing to venture out for leisure activities, making night markets and night tours widely popular and stimulating the vitality of nighttime consumption," he said.

Hong added that multiple online delivery platforms, such as Taobao Instant Commerce service and Meituan, have been innovating and reinventing their business models to gain an edge, and this competition is giving consumers more options.

China has prioritized consumption as the nation's top economic initiative this year, and policymakers have introduced various measures to strengthen consumption growth.

With the market size of China's nighttime economy surpassing 50 trillion yuan ($7 trillion), according to marketing consultancy Zhiyanzhan, it is continuing to inject fresh momentum into the nation's economic growth, Hong said.

Language education seen as key link in intl relations

By ZHAO YIMENG
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International language education is emerging as a vital force in fostering cultural exchanges and connecting civilizations across countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, senior officials and experts said at the opening ceremony of two events on Friday.

As the global landscape shifts and artificial intelligence transforms the way people communicate and learn, language education is taking on new significance in promoting mutual understanding and international cooperation, they said.

The Belt and Road Forum for Language and Culture Collaboration and the Global English Education China Assembly opened at Beijing Normal University on Friday, drawing insightful discussions on the pivotal role of language education and cultural exchange.

The assembly, which runs through Sunday, and is jointly organized by China Daily, Beijing Normal University and Shanghai International Studies University, features topics such as how AI is rapidly transforming the language learning environment and reshaping the demands placed on language educators and learners.

Du Jiangfeng, vice-minister of education, highlighted the role of AI in reconfiguring the language learning ecosystem. "As AI becomes more widely used in the language field, the demand for foreign language talent is shifting from purely linguistic expertise to interdisciplinary proficiency," he said.

The function of language has evolved from a basic communication tool to a carrier of cultural value, Du noted.

"We must leverage the transformative power of AI to build a more accessible, personalized and globalized language learning system," he said, adding that through international cooperation, China will actively share innovation in holistic education and contribute Chinese wisdom to the digital future of global education.

Qu Yingpu, publisher and editor-in-chief of China Daily, called for collective effort to harness the power of AI in language education to drive the advancement of global civilization in the digital era. "New technologies like AI are making language education more intelligent, personalized and diversified, while improving access to massive educational resources," he said.

Qu said that AI can be used to construct knowledge systems that interpret multicultural classics and support high-quality digital courses and virtual language environments. On the other hand, he said, "we need to promote multilingual education in order to safeguard the diversity of languages and civilizations".

He added that promoting dialogue among young people can open new avenues for cultural exchanges and help cultivate the next generation of leaders committed to building a community with a shared future for humanity.

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