



**CCAS CHINA NEWS**  
**by JAYADEVA RANADE**

12 April 2024

**CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING MET FORMER  
TAIWAN PRESIDENT MA YING-JEOU IN BEIJING ON APRIL 10**

People's Daily (April 11) publicised that CCP CC General Secretary Xi Jinping met Ma Ying-jeou in Beijing on April 10. It quoted Xi Jinping as praising Ma Ying-jeou as a patriot who had promoted "peaceful development" across the Taiwan Strait. Xi said compatriots from both sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to the same Chinese nation, and the over-5,000-year history of the Chinese nation saw successive generations of ancestors move and settle down in Taiwan and people from across the Strait fight side by side to recover the island from foreign invaders. He said, "Along the way, the Chinese nation has written the indivisible history of both sides of the Taiwan Strait, and engraved the historical fact that compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are connected by blood." Asserting that people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are all Chinese, Xi Jinping said "There are no knots that cannot be untied, no issues that cannot be discussed, and no force that can separate us". "External interference cannot stop the historical trend of family and country reunion". The distance of the Strait cannot sever the bond of kinship between compatriots from across the Strait. He added that the difference in systems does not alter the reality that both sides of the Strait belong to one China, and external interference cannot hold back the historical trend of national reunification. Xi Jinping encouraged young people from both sides of the Strait to aspire to become more proud, confident, and assured in their identity as Chinese people, work together for the long-term prosperity of the Chinese nation, and continue to create new glory of the nation. He said they share the same bloodline, culture and history as well as the same responsibility for the nation and the same aspiration for the future and underscored the importance of guarding the common home of the Chinese nation resolutely. He said compatriots on both sides of the Strait should resolutely oppose separatist activities aimed at "Taiwan independence" and foreign interference, and called for jointly pursuing the bright future of peaceful reunification which, he said, is a shared aspiration of

compatriots across the Strait. He also underlined the crucial importance of upholding the 1992 Consensus, which embodies the one-China principle, and having the common understanding that both sides of the Strait belong to one country and one nation. Xi Jinping said "We always bear in mind the well-being of Taiwan compatriots," and called on compatriots on both sides of the Strait to strengthen their confidence in Chinese culture, consciously become its guardians, inheritors, and promoters, and enhance the sense of belonging, identity, and honor of the Chinese nation. He also emphasized the importance to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Xi Jinping emphasised that the wheels of history are rolling on toward the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and that eventually it will be accomplished through the successive efforts of compatriots from both sides of the Strait. Ma Ying-jeou said that upholding the 1992 Consensus and opposing "Taiwan independence" are the common political foundation for the peaceful development of cross-Strait relations. He said people on both sides of the Strait belong to the same Chinese nation, and they should deepen exchanges and cooperation, jointly carry forward the Chinese culture, improve the well-being of compatriots on both sides, and work together for the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. PBSC members Wang Huning and Cai Qi attended the meeting.

ii) Separately, Zhu Fenglian, a spokesperson for the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, commended (April 10) "former Chairman of the Chinese Kuomintang party Ma Ying-jeou", who is leading a delegation of young people from Taiwan on a visit to the mainland, for his important contribution to promoting exchanges between the youth across the Taiwan Strait.

(Comment: The People's Daily and Xinhua reports did not refer to Ma Ying-jeou as the former President of Taiwan. Ma Ying-jeou was on a 11-day tour of China and visited Guangdong, Shaanxi and Beijing.)

### **CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING MET RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV ON APRIL 9**

Chinese President Xi Jinping met Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov on April 9 in Beijing.

(Comment: Lavrov arrived in China on April 8. Xi Jinping meeting Lavrov underscores the close ties between China and Russia, especially since Xi Jinping did not meet U.S. Treasury Secretary Yellen. TASS quoting Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova,

said the Ministers would “discuss the situation in Ukraine and the Asia-Pacific region, issues of bilateral cooperation and interaction in the international arena”.)

**CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING MET MICRONESIAN PRESIDENT WESLEY SIMINA IN BEIJING ON APRIL 9**

Jiangsu province's Yangzi News (April 11) disclosed that President Xi Jinping held talks with Micronesia's President Simina at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, and had an in-depth exchange of views on the development of bilateral relations and issues of common interest. President Wesley Simina is on a state visit to China from April 5 to 12 at the invitation of President Xi Jinping.

**CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING REPLIED TO LETTER FROM CHINA'S COUNTER-TERROR FORCE**

People's Daily (April 9) reproduced a Xinhua despatch stating that Chinese President Xi Jinping has replied to a letter from the "Falcon Commando Unit," an elite police brigade, encouraging them to forge a world-class counter-terror special force and be ready to make new contributions to the party and the people.

**CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING MET CHAIRMAN OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF VIETNAM VUONG DINH HUE IN BEIJING ON APRIL 8**

Chinese President Xi Jinping met the Chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam Vuong Dinh Hue in Beijing on April 8. According to Xinhua (April 8), Xi Jinping said the most distinctive feature of China-Vietnam relations is that the two sides are a like-minded pair bound by a common destiny, and "comrades-plus-brothers" is the most vivid portrayal of the traditional friendship between the Chinese and Vietnamese parties and countries. He urged joint efforts by the two sides to promote more achievements in building a China-Vietnam community with a shared future, better serve their respective modernization, further benefit the two peoples and make greater contributions to the global socialist cause. He said China is willing to scale up the exchange of experience gained in governing both the Party and the country, facilitate the synergy between the Belt and Road Initiative and the Two Corridors and

One Economic Circle strategy, and increase exchanges between young people and sister cities, among others.

### **CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHINESE PREMIER LI QIANG CONVENES SYMPOSIUM TO SOLICIT OPINIONS ON STATE OF ECONOMY**

The People's Daily (April 9) reported that Politburo Standing Committee member and Chinese Premier Li Qiang convened a symposium with economic experts and entrepreneurs to solicit opinions on the current state of the economy and the work for the next step in Beijing on April 8. It said the participants reached a consensus that despite a complex external environment and lingering difficulties and challenges, the Chinese economy has continued to pick up with growing positive factors and bolstered market confidence. The People's Daily report said that after listening to the speeches, Li Qiang "acknowledged the rising complexity, severity and uncertainty in the external environment. However, he emphasized that China's development, anchored by a solid foundation, multiple advantages and immense potential, will not change its upward trend in the long run".

### **CHINA-LEADERSHIP: POLITBURO MEMBER AND HEAD OF UFWD SHI TAIFENG VISITS TIANJIN ON APRIL 9 AND 10**

People's Daily (April 12) disclosed that Politburo member and Head of the CCP CC UFWD, Shi Taifeng visited Tianjin on April 9 and 10. During the visit he urged the cultivation of a stronger sense of responsibility in the Party's united front work to boost the determination and strength for advancing Chinese modernization. He said it is necessary to guide people in the private sector to accurately grasp the CCP CC's scientific assessments of international and domestic situations, promote the optimization of the legal environment for the development of the private economy, and help boost the confidence of private enterprises in China's development while conscientiously pursuing high-quality growth.

### **CHINA-LEADERSHIP: POLICE ON ALERT OUTSIDE DECEASED PREMIER LI KEQIANG'S RESIDENCE TO PREVENT ANY PUBLIC GATHERING**

Police sentry posts set up around Li Keqiang's former Zhengzhou residence, allegedly to suppress expressions of mourning for the former Premier, during China's Tomb-sweeping

Festival. Online videos showed that police and plainclothes officers were on alert inside and outside Qianxi Square in Zhengzhou. The videos showed people occasionally passing by the former residence and taking out their mobile phones to take pictures, but they were stopped by the police and not allowed to take pictures. There were about fifty people (plainclothes and police) around the former residence, on Qingming Festival on April 5.

### **CHINA-SENIOR APPOINTMENTS: SEVERAL VICE AND ASSISTANT MINISTERS APPOINTED**

China's State Council appointed several new officials on April 11:

Long Teng was appointed Vice Minister of Science and Technology. (He will no longer serve as President of the Beijing Institute of Technology.)

Liu Zhongyi and Hu Binchen were appointed Assistant Ministers of Public Security.

Yu Huiwen was appointed Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment.

Mo Gaoyi has replaced Sun Yeli as Director of the State Council Information Office.

Wu Zhaohui was named Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. (He will no longer serve as Vice Minister of Science and Technology.)

Cui Jianchun was appointed the Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

### **CHINA-CCP: POLITBURO MEMBER AND HEAD OF CCP CC UFWD URGES NON-PARTY PERSONAGES TO ALIGN THINKING WITH PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

Politburo member and Head of the CCP CC UNited Front Work Department Shi Taifeng, while addressing a symposium in Beijing on April 8, called on personages without party affiliation to contribute insights on advancing Chinese modernization and high-quality development with a firmer confidence for the country's development. He said this duty is related to giving full play to the efficacy of China's new type of political party system and demonstrates the strengths and advantages of socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics. Shi Taifeng called on personages without party affiliation to align their thinking and action with the Party Central Committee's scientific judgments, decisions and plans on the country's development, firm up their confidence and put forward insightful suggestions on advancing Chinese modernization and high-quality development.

**CHINA-CCP: POLITBURO STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBER AND CHIEF OF CDIC SAYS THERE WILL BE "VIGOROUS POLITICAL INSPECTIONS". TO STRICTLY ENFORCE PARTY DISCIPLINE**

The People's Daily (April 9) reported that Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) member and Secretary of the Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC) Li Xi on April 8, urged efforts to thoroughly study and implement the regulations on disciplinary inspections of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and support high-quality development with vigorous political inspections. Li Xi made the remarks at a meeting on national disciplinary inspection work, which also marked the initiation of the third round of disciplinary inspection missions of the 20th CCP Central Committee. The meeting decided on inspections of departments related to economic work and financial institutions. The same day, a list of 34 targets of the third round of inspection was announced. It included the Party committees and groups of departments and financial institutions such as the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Natural Resources.

**CHINA-CCP: CCP CC GENERAL OFFICE ISSUED CIRCULAR ON NEW DISCIPLINE CAMPAIGN IN CCP FROM APRIL TO JULY 2024**

The People's Daily (April 8) disclosed that the CCP CC General Office issued a circular to launch a Party-wide campaign on CCP discipline education. It said during the campaign, which will run from April to July, CCP members will be studying the newly revised Party regulations on disciplinary action, to strengthen their discipline awareness and always remain loyal, clean and responsible, according to the circular. It stressed that the education should focus on integrating into everyday work and be consistently implemented. The circular urged discussions among Party members on the study, as well as efforts to use typical cases of violation of Party discipline as cautionary lessons so that Party members will understand the bottom line and respect the rules. The circular also called on Party committees at all levels to meticulously carry out the education, and warned against pointless formalities. The "Notice" required Party committees (party groups) at all levels to regard the study and education of party discipline as an important political task, carefully organize the implementation, and strengthen supervision and implementation. It exhorted "We must do a good job in publicity and guidance, resolutely oppose formalism, and prevent "low-level redness" and "high-level blackness."

## **CHINA-RELIGION: CCP PROHIBITS CCP MEMBERS AND MINORS FROM FASTING DURING RAMADAN**

“Bitter Winter” (April 9) claimed to have received a copy of a document issued by the Yuxi Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, prohibiting CCP members and minors from fasting during current Ramadan. The translation of the document is as follows: “Urgent notice on the investigation of party members and minors participating in religious activities such as fasting. Party committees and governments of each county (city, district), municipal units and relevant municipal enterprises should note: Fasting is one of the religious practices of Islam and belongs to religious activities. At present, it is the month of Ramadan in Islam. In order to prevent Party members and minors from participating in religious activities such as fasting, the relevant matters are hereby regulated as follows: Comprehensively carry out the investigation and rectification of Party members’ participation in religious activities such as fasting. Educate the majority of Communist Party members to strictly abide by the political discipline of not believing in religion, be a firm Marxist atheist, and strictly prohibit participation in religious activities. Party committees, governments and municipal units of all counties (cities and districts) shall carry out a comprehensive investigation of Party members in their respective jurisdiction, units, systems, all walks of life and rural Party members, criticize and educate Party members who participate in religious activities such as fasting and worship in a timely manner, and urge corrections. Those who are still not corrected after education shall be seriously dealt with in accordance with relevant regulations”.

## **CHINA-RELIGION: CHINESE AUTHORITIES ISSUE 10 RULES RESTRICTING ACTIVITIES OF TIBETAN BUDDHIST MONKS IN EVENT OF DALAI LAMA'S DEATH**

Radio Free Asia (April 9) disclosed that according to a training manual distributed to monasteries by Chinese authorities in Gansu province, Buddhist monks are banned from displaying photos of the Tibetan spiritual leader and other “illegal religious activities and rituals” in event of the Dalai Lama’s death. The manual, which lists 10 rules that Buddhist clergy should follow, also forbids disrupting the process of recognizing the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation. The manual, which was seen by Radio Free Asia and was issued to monks in Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the historical Amdo region of Tibet, is the latest effort by Beijing to crack down on the religious freedom of the Tibetan people.

## **CHINA-PLA: COMBINED ARMS BRIGADE IN TIBET HOLDS LIVE-FIRE EXERCISE WITH ROCKET LAUNCHERS AND HOWITZERS**

i) Passion News TV telecast a report that a Combined Arms Brigade of the Tibet Military Division recently conducted an intensive live-fire exercise with rocket launchers and howitzers at an altitude of 4600 metres. This exercise is part of a broader strategy to ensure that the brigade is well-prepared for any contingency, emphasizing the importance of artillery in achieving tactical and strategic objectives.

ii) CCTV telecast a report that the Tibet Military Region recently executed a joint land and air combined drill on the high-altitude plateau. This direct attack on the training ground demonstrated the seamless coordination between various land units and air forces. The exercise involved precision strikes, rapid troop deployment, and coordinated defense manoeuvres.

## **CHINA-S&T: SHENZHOU-17 CREW CONDUCTS IN-ORBIT ELECTROCEREBRAL TESTS IN CHINA'S TIANGONG SPACE STATION**

China Space (April 8) reported that the Shenzhou 17 crew has conducted in-orbit electrocerebral tests in China's Tiangong space station, completing the first-stage mission since the first test began in 2016. The project aims to study the space environment's impact on the human brain.

## **CHINA-S&T: CHINESE ACADEMIC IDENTIFIES GRAPHENE AS THE NEW STRATEGIC MATERIAL OF 21ST CENTURY**

China's Economic Observer (April 11) quoted Liu Zhongfan, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, as saying at the Science and Technology Innovation Academician Lecture Hall event held by the Shenzhen Innovation and Development Institute and other institutions on April 10, that "We often say that materials are the forerunner of the industry" and now we often talk about obstacles in technology. He said that "materials are the bottleneck restricting the development of China's high-tech industry". In Liu Zhongfan's view, developing new materials and opening up new tracks are the key to solving the problem of obstacles and achieving leapfrog development of the industry. At the same time, the key to the development of the new materials industry must be driven and led by enterprises to achieve implementation.



He said, "It is very important to bind leading companies and killer application scenarios." Citing the carbon fiber industry as an example, Liu Zhongfan said that the current global carbon fibre market demand has reached 200,000 tons/year, but the main manufacturers of carbon fiber related products are mostly overseas companies. He added that in the current field of new materials, graphene deserves the attention of the domestic high-tech industry and is also worthy of major capital investment. He said, "If silicon is a new strategic material in the 20th century, then graphene is a new strategic material in the 21st century." According to him, China has huge advantages in graphite resources. It has the largest number of papers published and patent applications in the field of graphene in the world, and its basic research and industrialization capabilities are in the first echelon in the world, but China's graphene industry lags behind Europe, the United States, Japan and South Korea.

**CHINA-AVIATION: AVIC XAC COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT CO. LTD CLAIMS SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF FINAL HIGH SPEED TEST OF HH-100 UNMANNED CARGO AIRCRAFT**

Huaxia (April 4) reported that AVIC XAC Commercial Aircraft Co. Ltd, a sub branch of Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC), claimed to have successfully completed the final high-speed test for the HH-100 unmanned cargo aircraft on April 3. The HH-100 is an independently developed aircraft and has two components, i.e. the unmanned aerial vehicle and the ground command-control station. During the test, the HH-100 demonstrated stable performance and precise autonomous taxiing control, including successfully performing a "rotation" by lifting its nose wheel at take off speed. The HH-100 is a unique drone system that combines a UAV with a dedicated ground station. With a maximum take off weight of 2,000 kilograms, the HH-100 can carry a payload of 700 kg over a distance of 520 kilometres at a speed of up to 300 km per hour. It can operate at a maximum altitude of 5,000 meters, making it suitable for a variety of applications including logistics supply, disaster-relief supply, fire suppression, and transportation of emergency supplies, communication relay, and artificial precipitation.

## **CHINA-ANTI-CORRUPTION: CHINA'S FORMER HEAD OF INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL BANK CHARGED WITH EMBEZZLEMENT AND TAKING BRIBES**

The Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC) announced on April 7, that Gu Jiangang, former head of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd.'s (ICBC) asset management department, has been charged with embezzlement and taking bribes. Prosecutors in Gansu province accused Gu Jiangang of using his power and influence in various positions at ICBC to embezzle “huge sums” from the bank, and helping companies or individuals with listings, fundraising and project contracting in exchange for “enormous amounts” of bribes.

## **CHINA-ANTI-CORRUPTION: CHINA'S FORMER JUSTICE MINISTER UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR CORRUPTION**

The Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC) announced on April 2, that China's former Justice Minister Tang Yijun is under investigation for corruption. Although it did not disclose the reason for the probe, Tang Yijun's controversial involvement with fallen real estate giant China Evergrande Group while he was the Governor of Liaoning province raised attention. Before being made Justice Minister in 2020, Tang worked in the eastern province of Zhejiang for nearly four decades, with 12 years spent in the coastal city of Ningbo, followed by a nearly three-year stint in Northeast China's Liaoning province as deputy provincial party chief and Governor.

## **CHINA-ECONOMY: PORK PRICES HAVE BEEN RISING FOR THREE CONSECUTIVE WEEKS**

China's Economic Observer (April 8) reported that pork prices have been rising for three consecutive weeks. It said data from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs showed that in the first week of April, the national pork price was 25.22 yuan per kilogram, an increase of 0.2% from the previous month, and has been rising for three consecutive weeks. Merchants said that the recent rise in pork prices is mainly due to the strong trend in pig prices on the supply side. At the end of March, the national piglet price increased by about 50% from the beginning of the year, reflecting the reduced supply of reproductive sows. The paper said: Pork prices in April may be easy to rise but difficult to fall.

(Comment: Pork prices are a sensitive issue in China.)

### **CHINA-ECONOMY: CHINA'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES SURGE TO US\$ 3.2457 BILLION AT END OF MARCH 2024**

China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) disclosed on April 7 that China's foreign exchange reserves had reached US\$3.2457 billion by the end of March 2024, marking an increase of US\$19.8 billion compared to the previous month, representing a growth rate of 0.62%. A senior official from SAFE pointed out that the surge was because in March 2024, the U.S. dollar index observed an uptick alongside a general rise in global financial asset prices. This upward trend, combined with factors like exchange rate conversions and fluctuations in asset values, contributed to the expansion of foreign exchange reserves during the month.

### **CHINA-ECONOMY: CHINESE COMMERCE MINISTER TELLS EU MEETING IN PARIS THAT CHINESE EV COMPANIES RAPID DEVELOPMENT IS DUE TO INNOVATION**

At a meeting to discuss Chinese EV investments in the EU, Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao delivered a tough message to the EU at a meeting in Paris on April 7, with the bloc's officials and Chinese EV companies. Wang Wentao said: "Chinese EV companies' rapid development is driven by technological innovation, integrated supply chains, and market competition, not subsidies. The accusations of "overcapacity" from the US and Europe are unfounded." "[Beijing will] actively support companies in protecting their legitimate rights and interests.

(Comment: In September, the European Commission (EC) launched an anti-subsidy investigation into China's EV exports. In March, the EC said it had found "sufficient evidence" of state subsidies and hinted at the possibility of provisional tariffs as early as July – four months ahead of the investigations' conclusion. China's EV onslaught poses an existential threat to the most important pillar of European industry – something Brussels won't accept. But Beijing is desperate to avoid trade barriers undermining its EV industry – which it considers vital to achieving long-term economic and foreign policy goals.)

## **CHINA-ECONOMY: NETHERLANDS AND INDIA WERE BIGGEST IMPORTERS OF SOLAR PANELS FROM CHINA IN FIRST TWO MONTHS OF 2024**

According to data compiled by analysts at Soochow Securities Co. Ltd., the Netherlands and India were the biggest importers of solar panels from China in the first two months of 2024, as price cuts triggered by overcapacity boosted exports of solar equipment. The Netherlands imported 5.38 gigawatts (GW) of China-made solar modules in January and February combined, while India bought 5.33 GW.

## **CHINA-ECONOMY: WORKERS DAILY STATES 200 MILLION PEOPLE IN "FLEXIBLE" EMPLOYMENT AT END OF 2023**

China's Workers Daily (April) recently disclosed that as of the end of 2023, 200 million people were in "flexible employment" accounting for 14.3% of China's employed population. This scale is expected to expand to 400 million by 2036.

## **CHINA--ECONOMY: SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST ARTICLE EXPRESSES DOUBTS THAT IMF WILL GRANT CHINA MORE VOTING RIGHTS**

An article in South China Morning Post (April 7) said "the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will soon be debating the question of who among its 190 members gets to have how much influence. The outcome will help decide whether Western divisions with China heal or widen". The article said at a time when the world needs global cooperation more than ever, global institutions seem more polarised than ever, adding that any new global financial crisis would require a fully united IMF to cope with its devastating fallout. The article said the US, Europe and Japan will not gladly sacrifice their IMF quotas to give China and others more voting rights.

## **CHINA-ECONOMY: CHINESE AMBASSADOR TO U.S. XIE FENG EXPLAINS MEANING OF "HIGH QUALITY DEVELOPMENT"**

In an interview with Newsweek (April 5), China's Ambassador to the U.S., Xie Feng clarified the term " high-quality development". He said "In brief, it refers to innovation-led, reform-driven advanced productive forces that will boost total factor productivity and promote high-quality development. This includes: Making traditional industries higher-end, smarter and

greener. In fact, China's electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and photovoltaic products all thrive on transforming traditional sectors; Fostering new industries, such as biomanufacturing, commercial spaceflight, the low-altitude economy and life sciences. Last year, the total output value of China's biomedicine, artificial intelligence and nanotechnology applications exceeded \$55 billion; Also, advancing the digital economy, integrating digital technology into the real economy, and building digital industry clusters. China's digital economy is projected to reach \$15.7 trillion by 2027. He added that an integral part of developing new quality productive forces is opening wider at a higher standard. In August 2023, China introduced 24 measures to attract foreign investment. Among them, 60 percent have been delivered. The number of items on the negative list for foreign investment has been slashed from 93 in 2017 to 31 and will be further cut down this year. He also disclosed that all restrictions on foreign investment access to manufacturing will be lifted.

### **CHINA-YUNNAN: YUNNAN PROVINCE HELD WORK CONFERENCE TO RECTIFY FORMALISM AND REDUCE BURDEN ON THE GRASSROOTS**

Yunnan News (April 10) disclosed that the province held a Work Conference in Kunming on April 10, on Rectifying Formalism and reducing the burden on the grassroots. It "deeply studied and implemented" the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important instructions and the deployment requirements of the Party Central Committee, called on party members and cadres, particularly the leaders, across the province to start from now, "to declare war on formalism and bureaucracy, effectively reduce the burden on the grassroots, allow the grassroots to have more time and energy to implement, and inspire the majority of party members and cadres to work harder". Yunnan Party Secretary Wang Ning attended the meeting and delivered a speech and Wang Yubo, Deputy Secretary of the Provincial Party Committee and Governor, presided over the meeting. Liu Xiaokai, Chairman of the Provincial Political Consultative Conference, attended the meeting.

### **CHINA-TIBET: ELEVATED LEVEL OF "PATRIOTIC" ACTIVITY NOTICED IN TAR BORDER COUNTIES**

i) A report (April 3) disclosed that the inaugural 2024 meeting of the Singye Khabab (Ch: Shiquan) Beishan Greening Headquarters, which oversees the Singye Khabab (EN: Indus River) (Ch: Shiquan) Beishan Greening Project in Ngari (Ch: Ali) Region was overseen by Tenpa

Wangchuk, Deputy Secretary of the prefectural party committee and Commissioner of the administrative department. Notable attendees included Xie Zhiqiang, Deputy Secretary of the prefectural party committee and Executive Deputy Commissioner of the administrative department, along with Duan Xiaoyong and Zhou Xunju, Deputy Commissioners of the administrative department, and Wei Dong, Vice Chairman of the regional CPPCC. The meeting concentrated on advancing the Shiquan River North Mountain Greening Project as a pivotal initiative to realize Xi Jinping's ecological civilization thought and accomplish the "double carbon" goal. Emphasizing alignment with directives from the Party Central Committee and the district party committee, the discussions highlighted sustained efforts in long-term greening projects, innovative afforestation models, robust infrastructure development, policy enhancements, rigorous supervision mechanisms, and stringent adherence to quality standards. The gathering also saw the participation of members from the Secretary-General's team and officials from the People's Government of Gar County, underlining a collaborative approach to drive greening endeavours forward.

(Comments: The Shiquan Beishan Greening project entails afforestation and ecological restoration in Shiquan County's Beishan area, situated within Tibet's Ngari (Ch: Ali) Region. Aligned with Xi Jinping's ecological civilization thought, the project aims to enhance biodiversity and promote sustainable development through tree planting and ecosystem rehabilitation)

ii) The Propaganda Department of the Tibet Autonomous Regional Committee of the Communist Party of China announced (April 2) the designation of seven units, including the Tibet Industrial Museum in Lhasa, as "patriotic education bases" in the region. This decision highlights the department's dedication to spreading the beliefs emphasized in the 20th National Congress of the CCP and Xi Jinping's cultural thought using specific propaganda methods. The announcement signals a concerted effort to strengthen patriotic education, portraying these bases as ideological strongholds crucial for instilling party and state ideologies among Chinese citizens. Emphasis is placed on adhering to laws and guidelines on patriotic education and innovating propaganda methods to effectively convey educational messages. Under the directive's guidance, these bases are poised to play a pivotal role in advancing Tibet's modernization and contributing to the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

iii) On April 1, the Ngari (Ch: Ali) District Public Security Department convened a Region-wide Public Security Management Work Conference, reflecting a comprehensive commitment to upholding public safety and stability in the region. Led by Yuan Fuguo, member of the prefectural party committee and Secretary of the Political and Legal Committee, the meeting focused on summarising the achievements and challenges of public security management in 2023 while charting a course for the upcoming year. Under the stewardship of the prefectural party committee and higher level public security organs, the region prioritized risk prevention, safety assurance, and stability maintenance, aiming to foster social security and stability. Key directives emphasized the implementation of projects aligned with the meeting's objectives, with a particular emphasis on enhancing the main defence functions of police stations and strengthening grassroots-level work. The region's public security management strategy for 2024 centres on improving capabilities, promoting key tasks, and empowering information and data systems to bolster social security measures. Additionally, there is a concerted effort to cultivate a loyal, citizen-centred, fair, and transparent public security team. The conference, conducted via video, saw the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including police officers, departmental leaders, and station heads, highlighting the collective commitment to public security objectives. Following the meeting, personnel visited various sites, including educational institutions and border police stations, to observe and study initiatives such as the "School Security Park" and "Grassroots Governance System," reaffirming the region's dedication to enhancing community safety and security through innovative approaches and continuous learning.

(Comment: While the meeting did not explicitly discuss border issues, but public security is inherently linked to border issues. The presence of leaders of border police stations underscores the interconnectedness between the two. Relevant is the strategic location of Ngari (Ali).

### **CHINA-TAIWAN: FORMER PRESIDENT OF TAIWAN MA YING-JEOU VISITED CHINA'S SHAANXI PROVINCE ON APRIL 5**

People's Daily (April 6) former Taiwan President and former Chairman of the Chinese Kuomintang party, Ma Ying-jeou led members of a delegation of young people from Taiwan visit Famen Temple in Famen Town of Fufeng County in Baoji City, Shaanxi Province, April 5.

## **CHINA-INDIA: NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT INDIA ON CHINESE SOCIAL MEDIA**

A Chinese talk-show host with (188.8k followers) reacted on April 4, to the “India Today” and the “News18” website report (April 3) that the Modi government strongly opposes China’s addition of publicly used place names in southern Tibet. Recalling that on March 30, China’s Ministry of Civil Affairs issued a notice on the “Fourth Batch of Publicly Used Place Names in Southern Tibet,” establishing standardized names for 30 locations in southern Tibet, it said the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in its response said India has repeatedly emphasized that “Arunachal Pradesh (our southern Tibet region) is an integral and inseparable part of India, and China’s actions cannot shake this fact.” It also quoted former Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla saying, “We need not worry; we believe India will firmly respond to China, just as it did during the border clashes in 2020.” It noted that the Biden administration supports the Indian government’s position, recognizing that “Arunachal Pradesh belongs to India.” The post attracted numerous comments which, for illustration, said: "If we really want to reclaim southern Tibet, we need to implement secondary sanctions on all individuals, companies, and other entities that have economic dealings with India"; "We don't even need to take action ourselves. The Indians are doing it themselves. Just look at how India has treated ethnic Chinese in India since the 1962 Sino-Indian War"; "Just dismember India. The Northeastern states have no real connection with India; it's time for them to become independent; Investing in India is aiding the enemy!"; "Lure the enemy deep and then use gasoline bombs for fire attacks"; Prepare for this year's border conflict. India suffered a loss a few years ago; will they intensify their efforts this time to try to turn the tables? We need to be fully prepared on our side, hit hard with heavy blows, in order to once again thwart India's ambitions to take advantage.

(Comment: Chinese mainstream media comments on India have also been negative over the past year. Social media comments have been equally so.)



**CHINA-INDIA: CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY, REACTING TO PRIME MINISTER MODI'S REMARKS TO NEWSWEEK, REITERATED THAT BORDER ISSUE IS NOT ENTIRETY OF RELATIONS**

The South China Morning Post (April 11) reported that responding to Prime Minister Modi's call to both sides to “urgently address” their prolonged border disputes, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said “The border issue is not the entirety of China-India relations, and it should be appropriately managed and controlled in a proper position within the framework of China-India relations.” She added that the two countries had maintained close communication through diplomatic and military channels and positive progress had been made.

**CHINA-SRI LANKA: SRI LANKAN BUDDHIST MAHANAYAKA THERO SAYS CHINA NOT ALLOWING DALAI LAMA TO VISIT SRI LANKA**

The Most Venerable Dr Waskaduwe, who is head or Mahanayaka Thero of Amarapura Sambuddha Sasanodaya Maha Nikaya, said in an exclusive interview with WION's diplomatic correspondent in Delhi, that China has been blocking the visit of Tibetan Buddhist Spiritual leader, Dalai Lama to the country. He said, "We respect him and invited him to Sri Lanka, but China did not like that. China pressed against our government as well, we don't like that. He is a Buddhist leader, he has the freedom, and we have the freedom to invite."

**CHINA-NORTH KOREA: NPC CHAIRMAN AND PBSC MEMBER ZHAO LEJI VISITING NORTH KOREA FROM APRIL 11-13**

Politburo Standing Committee member and NPC Chairman Zhao Leji will be visiting North Korea from April 11-13 “to pay an official goodwill visit and attend the opening ceremony of ‘China-DPRK Friendship Year.’” The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said the trip “reflects the deep friendship between the two countries and the great importance China attaches to its relations with the DPRK. We believe that with the joint efforts of both sides, the visit will be a full success and further deepen bilateral ties."

(Comment: Zhao Leji will be the highest-ranking Chinese official to visit since North Korea shut its borders during the pandemic, ending even diplomatic exchanges.)

## **CHINA-SAUDI ARABIA: SAUDI ARABIA CONTEMPLATING VISA WAIVER FOR CHINESE TOURISTS**

Gloria Guevara, Chief Special Adviser to Saudi Arabia's Tourism Minister, told Caixin that Saudi Arabia is planning to introduce more measures to help Chinese tourists visit the country, potentially including visa-free entry. She said, "The Chinese market is very important for Saudi Arabia," adding that it received 100,000 Chinese visitors last year and aims to boost the figure to 5 million by 2030.

## **CHINA-SWEDEN: SWEDEN EXPELS 57-YEAR OLD CHINESE ON GROUNDS OF "SERIOUS THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY"**

Sweden has expelled a Chinese journalist who has been categorised by the authorities as a "serious threat to security." The South China Morning Post (April 8) quoted Swedish media outlets Göteborgs-Posten and SVT reporting the expulsion on April 8 of an unnamed 57-year-old woman journalist who was said to have been in close contact with Chinese diplomats in Sweden for several years. SVT reported she was named last year in a report by a think tank about Chinese foreign media with close links to the Chinese Communist Party and pro-Chinese "lobbying." The woman, who denied all the accusations, came to Sweden almost 20 years ago, where she is said to have married a Swedish man. She is reported to have been in close contact with the Chinese embassy and organised trips by Chinese delegations to Sweden. She has been held in custody since October 2023.

## **CHINA-RUSSIA: RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV MET CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING AND FOREIGN MINISTER WANG YI SEPARATELY ON APRIL 9**

i) The People's Daily (April 10) reported that Chinese President Xi Jinping met Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Beijing on April 9. It quoted Chinese analysts who said "the meeting sends a strong signal that China will firmly develop its strategic partnership with Russia, despite pressure from the West. The China-Russia partnership continues to be key for the global strategic balance and the hope for promoting a multipolar world in which countries of the Global South will have greater roles to play". The People's Daily said Xi asked Lavrov to convey his sincere greetings to Russian President Vladimir Putin and that China and Russia

have embarked on a new path of harmonious coexistence and win-win cooperation between major countries and neighbours, which has benefited the two countries and their peoples and contributed wisdom and strength to international fairness and justice. Xi said "China always attaches great importance to the development of China-Russia relations, and stands ready to strengthen bilateral communication with Russia and enhance multilateral strategic coordination in BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)". He said that the two countries will show more responsibility, unite countries in the Global South in the spirit of equality, openness, transparency and inclusiveness, promote the reform of the global governance system, and vigorously lead the building of a community with a shared future for humanity. China and Russia are trying to promote a multipolar world where developing countries and emerging economies of the Global South will play a greater role, which is the antithesis of the unipolar world dominated by the US. The People's Daily quoted Li Haidong, a Professor at the China Foreign Affairs University, saying "China and Russia will not target any third party, but if hegemonic forces threaten China and Russia, or threaten world peace, China and Russia will stand together and fight to protect their own interests and safeguard world peace together."

Earlier in the day, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with Lavrov in Beijing, where both sides expressed hope for strengthening practical cooperation in various fields. They held a joint press conference after their meeting. Wang Yi said that the two countries should always follow the strategic guidance of head-of-state diplomacy, and should always adhere to the principle of no-alliance, no-confrontation and no-targeting at any third party. The two sides also had in-depth exchanges on the Ukraine issue, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the situation in the Asia-Pacific region and other international and regional issues of common concern.

ii) Beijing Daily (April 9) quoting China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said (April 9) that "since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Russia 75 years ago, the relations between the two countries have gone through ups and downs and forged ahead. On the basis of non-alignment, non-confrontation, and non-targeting of third parties, the two sides adhere to permanent good-neighbourly friendship and deepen comprehensive strategic coordination, creating a new paradigm of major-country relations that is completely different from the Cold War era, which is important for maintaining global strategic stability and promoting emerging major powers. Cooperation has irreplaceable important value. Maintaining and developing China-Russia relations is not only an inevitable choice for China and Russia as two major neighbouring countries, but also fully conforms to

the fundamental interests of the two peoples. He added the two sides should take the opportunity of Russia taking over the rotating chairmanship of the BRICS this year and China taking over the rotating chairmanship of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the second half of the year to strengthen the coordination and strategic collaboration between the two countries on multilateral platforms, practice true multilateralism, and promote more fair and reasonable global governance, earnestly promote equal and orderly world multipolarity and democratization of international relations, resolutely oppose all unilateralism and hegemony, and push the world towards a bright future of peace, security, prosperity, and progress. Lavrov thanked China for its valuable support for Russia's presidential election and said that Russia-China relations are based on mutual respect, equal cooperation and trustworthy dialogue. He said, "Thanks to the strategic guidance of the two heads of state, Russia-China relations have reached an unprecedented high level and continue to move forward, surpassing the Cold War military alliance". He said Russia supports global security initiatives and is willing to deepen cooperation with China on multilateral platforms such as BRICS, SCO, the United Nations, and the G20 to promote the establishment of a more just and democratic international order. The two sides also had an in-depth exchange of views on international and regional issues of common concern such as Ukraine, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the situation in the Asia-Pacific region. After the talks, the two sides jointly signed the 2024 consultation plan between the two foreign ministries and jointly met with reporters.

### **CHINA-US: U.S. TREASURY SECRETARY JANET YELLEN HAS TALKS WITH HIGH-LEVEL LEADERS DURING 4-DAY VISIT TO CHINA**

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen during her 4-day visit to China met Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Finance Minister Lan Foan on April 7 and People's Bank of China (PBOC) Governor Pan Gongsheng and former Vice Premier Liu He on April 8. Yellen spoke about Beijing's "massive state support" for electric vehicles (EVs), batteries, solar panels and other green energy goods and complained that Beijing's overinvestment has built factory capacity far exceeding domestic demand, while fast-growing exports of these products threaten companies in the U.S. and other countries. She however did not threaten new tariffs or trade actions. China's Vice Finance Minister, Liao Min, told Chinese media that Beijing "has fully responded" to U.S. questions on overcapacity and expressed "grave concern" over restrictions Washington imposes on trade and investment. Yellen reportedly suggested that a possible short-term solution was for China to take steps to bolster consumer demand with support for

households and shift its growth model away from supply-side investments. She spoke about the issue at length with Premier Li Qiang. At a press conference at the U.S. Ambassador's residence on April 8, Yellen said "I stressed that companies, including those in the PRC, must not provide material support for Russia's war, and that they will face significant consequences if they do." "Any banks that facilitate significant transactions that channel military or dual-use goods to Russia's defense industrial base expose themselves to the risk of US sanctions." In an interview with CNBC, Yellen remarked "China and Russia do a lot of trade and much of it is non-problematic, but anything that involves aiding Russia's military in their brutal war against Ukraine is unacceptable to us and we have the ability to sanction it." Earlier in Guangzhou, Yellen held two days of what she described as "extensive and productive" meetings with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng when China and the United States have agreed to launch initiatives to fight money laundering and foster "balanced" economic growth.

ii) The Chinese Vice Finance Minister Liao Min gave a press briefing on Yellen's visit on April 8. He said:

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen visited China from April 4 to 9. Secretary Yellen is the first U.S. Cabinet member to visit China this year. During her visit, multilevel and multidisciplinary talks were held between the Chinese side and Secretary Yellen. I will now provide details on this matter.

- On April 7, PBSC member and Chinese Premier Li Qiang met Secretary Yellen in Beijing. They exchanged in-depth views on China-U.S. relations, economic ties, and global challenges. From April 5 to 6, the co-leader of the China-U.S. economic and trade talks, PB member and Vice Premier He Lifeng, held several rounds of discussions with Secretary Yellen in Guangzhou. They engaged in in-depth, candid, pragmatic, and constructive communication regarding the macroeconomic situations of both countries and the world, addressing global challenges and concerns in the economic field. On April 7 and 8, China's Finance Minister Lan Fo'an and the Governor of the People's Bank of China, Pan Gongsheng, held separate talks with Secretary Yellen in Beijing to discuss the macroeconomic situations of both countries and financial and fiscal matters. During her stay, Yellen also met with Chinese political and academic figures. Here, I would like to focus on the discussions between Vice Premier He Lifeng and Secretary Yellen.

- In the talks, the Chinese side emphasized the need to adhere to the three principles for China-U.S. relations proposed by President Xi Jinping: valuing peace, stability, and credibility. Efforts should be made to transform the "San Francisco Vision" into reality. Both sides agreed

to implement the important consensus of the two heads of state, continuously strengthen communication and cooperation in economic and financial fields, strive to create a favourable environment for bilateral trade and investment activities of enterprises from both countries, and promote the healthy and stable development of China-U.S. economic relations.

- Regarding the macroeconomic situation, the Chinese side provided an overview of China's economic situation and policies. It said China's economy has maintained healthy and sustainable growth. Last year, China's economy continued to recover well, achieving its main expected goals and leading major economies in growth rate, remaining the primary engine for global economic growth. These achievements were made while mitigating risks, promoting economic transformation, and upgrading. China is confident in maintaining a positive trend and achieving its annual growth target this year. China emphasized that reform and opening up are its national policies, with no pause in reforms and no stop in opening up. China is planning and implementing a series of major initiatives to deepen reforms comprehensively, actively resolving bottlenecks hindering the development of a new growth model. China insists on deepening supply-side structural reform and expanding effective demand in coordination, accelerating the construction of a unified domestic market, and continuously creating a market-oriented, law-based, and internationalized first-class business environment, providing broader development opportunities for enterprises from all countries, including the United States. The U.S. side gave a briefing on its macroeconomic situation, including the labour market, inflation, the financial system, and fiscal and monetary policies.

- Regarding global challenges, both sides exchanged in-depth views on debt issues in developing countries, World Bank reform, governance reform of the International Monetary Fund, anti-money laundering, and counter-terrorism financing, agreeing to continue communication and cooperation on related issues in multilateral channels.

- Concerning mutual concerns, both parties acknowledge that every country has legitimate needs to safeguard national security. However, the Chinese side stressed that the concept of "national security" should not be generalized or used as a pretext to disrupt normal trade and investment exchanges and supply chain stability between the two countries and globally. China expressed serious concerns about U.S. sanctions and restrictions on Chinese enterprises, additional tariffs on China, and investment restrictions, noting that these measures harm the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese businesses and people, and are also detrimental to the welfare of U.S. businesses and people. China welcomed the U.S. statement of not seeking decoupling from China and hoped the U.S. would take concrete actions to stop sanctioning and

restricting Chinese enterprises. Regarding issues including overcapacity raised by the U.S. side, China provided a full response.

- Regarding consensus and outcomes, both sides reaffirmed the three-point consensus reached during the San Francisco talks in November on "enhancing communication," "preventing decoupling," and "addressing common challenges." They also reached the following new consensus and outcomes:

- (a) led by the finance ministries of both countries, to exchange views on balanced economic growth in China, the U.S., and globally within the framework of the China-U.S. Economic Working Group;

- (b) led by the People's Bank of China and the U.S. Treasury, to continue exchanges on financial stability, sustainable finance, anti-money laundering, and other topics within the Financial Working Group framework.

- (c) Regarding the next steps, following the instructions of the co-leaders, the working-level teams of both sides will continue to implement the above consensus under the economic and financial working groups. The fourth meeting of both working groups is scheduled to be held in Washington, D.C., during the World Bank/International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings in mid-April.

iii) A Xinhua Commentary reproduced by People's Daily (April 11) said "The "overcapacity" charges reveal Washington's double standard on practicing the principles advocating market economy, free trade and the global division of labor, which the United States has claimed to embrace for centuries". It said a "top priority of U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen during her just-concluded second China trip was to raise Washington's concerns to Beijing over the so-called "overcapacity" in China's flourishing green industries". It added "Washington's concerns are as unfounded as they are misleading. They are also a reflection of the zero-sum mindset of some policymakers in Washington". It pointed out that prior to her visit, "Chinese overproduction" accusations coming out of Washington have flooded mainstream Western media, claiming that China could overwhelm world markets with cheap exports of solar panels and electric vehicles (EVs).

(Comment: Yellen appears to have returned to the U.S. empty-handed with the Chinese leadership yielding no ground. Last week, US President Joe Biden told his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, that US restrictions on high-technology exports to China were necessary to prevent advanced US technologies from being used by Beijing to undermine American security. Xi

Jinping responded stating that such curbs would create ‘risks for bilateral ties’ by suppressing China’s trade and technology development. According to the Chinese readout, Xi also told Biden that Beijing would not ‘sit back and watch’ if the US continued to impose such restrictions.)

### **CHINA-US: BLOOMBERG SAYS U.S. WARNING ALLIES ABOUT CHINA'S INCREASED SUPPORT FOR RUSSIA INCLUDING SATELLITE IMAGERY**

Bloomberg News (April 6) divulged that the US warned allies that China has stepped up its support for Russia, including by providing geospatial intelligence, to help Moscow in its war against Ukraine. Quoting people familiar with the matter it said China has provided Russia with satellite imagery for military purposes, as well as microelectronics and machine tools for tanks. It added that China’s support also includes optics, propellants to be used in missiles and increased space cooperation. It quoted the sources as saying China’s support for Russia has deepened in recent months.

### **CHINA-US: U.S. AND CHINA BEGIN MILITARY LEVEL TALKS IN BEIJING ON APRIL 3-4**

U.S. and Chinese defense officials met in Hawaii on April 3-4, 2024, for the 2024 China-US Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (MMCA) Working Group meeting to discuss unsafe and aggressive ship and aircraft incidents between the two militaries in the Pacific region. This meeting included about 18 senior military and civilian officials from each side from the Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Pacific Air Forces and the People’s Liberation Army. The U.S. and China delegations each brought up several specific incidents over the past several years that they believe raised operational safety concerns, and the group discussed them. China’s Ministry of National Defense said that during the meeting, the Chinese side noted it firmly opposes any action that jeopardizes China's sovereignty and security in the name of freedom of navigation and overflight and will continue to respond to all dangerous and provocative actions in accordance with the law. U.S. Army Col. Ian Francis, who is the Director for Northeast Asia policy at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, said “Open, direct, and clear communications with the PLA – and with all other military forces in the region – is of utmost importance to avoid accidents and miscommunication” and the U.S. is encouraged that the People’s Liberation Army is honouring its commitments to the maritime agreement.



(Comment: The thaw in relations between the two countries got a kick-start last November when U.S. President Joe Biden and China's President Xi Jinping met on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco. About a month later, Gen. CQ Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke with his Chinese counterpart in a video call — in the first senior military-to-military contact since the Pelosi visit. Other top-level contacts are the call earlier this week between Biden and Xi, and a visit to China by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen that began on April 4.)

### **CHINA-US: CHINESE VICE MINISTER WANG SHOUWEN LED DELEGATION TO U.S. FOR MEETING OF THE FIRST WORKING GROUP ON TRADE**

Chinese Vice-Minister of Commerce Wang Shouwen led a delegation to the US for the first meeting of a working group on trade between the two nations, which aimed to improve communication and manage disagreements between them in the face of growing tensions. Vice-Minister of Commerce Wang Shouwen met US Undersecretary for International Trade, Marisa Lago on April 4, and discussed issues of tariffs and market access. Wang Shouwen mentioned China's concerns on the trade restrictions that had been imposed and opposed "overstretching" the notion of national security. He highlighted concerns over the imposition of Section 301 tariffs by the US and the associated inquiries against China and demanded that the US and China must manage their disputes and increase their collaboration. The US raised its concerns and complaints about the missing level-playing field for its businesses in China and the frequent raids on US companies by the PRC. It criticised the cross-border data flows and lack of transparency. According to the Chinese statement, both sides have agreed to improve interactions over export control regulations and conduct regular talks on trade facilitation and to help each other out through events like the China International Import Expo and the China-California Business Forum respectively.

### **CHINA-US: TAIWAN'S TSMC INCREASES INVESTMENT IN U.S. BY 60 PERCENT AND WILL OPEN A THIRD CHIP PLANT IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

Buttressed by a U.S. federal grant of US\$ 6.6 billion, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. has agreed to increase its U.S. investment by more than 60% to over \$65 billion and produce the world's most advanced 2-nanometer chips on American soil. U.S. Commerce

Secretary Gina Raimondo said TSMC will also build a previously unannounced third chip plant in Phoenix, Arizona, which will be operational by 2030.

**CHINA-CZECH: CZECH LEGISLATORS ANGERED BY CHINESE MILITARY DIPLOMATS CLOSELY FOLLOWING TAIWAN VICE PRESIDENT-ELECTS CAR IN PRAGUE IN MID-MARCH**

Radio France International (RFI) on April 6, reported that Yang Yaku, Director of the Czech think tank "European Values Security Policy Center" quoted Czech media sources on April 5, saying that Fisher, Chairman of the Czech Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, called for the expulsion of Chinese military diplomats suspected of following Taiwan Vice President-elect Hsiao Meiqin in a car. It is reported that Xiao Meiqin was reportedly followed by the Chinese during her visit to Prague and nearly caused a car accident. According to the Central News Agency report (April 6), Czech media Seznam Zpravy wrote on the social media X platform that after Hsiao Meiqin was harassed by Chinese military diplomats during her visit to the Czech capital Prague in mid-March, Pavel Fischer called for this person to be deported from the Czech Republic on the grounds of direct violation of the Vienna Convention. Fisher told Seznam Zpravy that it is a scandal for Chinese diplomats to engage in dangerous activities. He was driving a civilian vehicle when he followed Hsiao Meiqin, but when the Czech police came forward for questioning, he took out his diplomatic passport.