



CHINA • YUNNAN



BRICS SUMMIT

BRICS nations stride on for second 'golden decade' of cooperation



The picture shows the BRICS Business Forum of the BRICS Xiamen Summit.

Photo by Xie Huanchi(Xinhua Agency)

Rabi Sankar Bosu

On September 5, the emerging-market bloc of BRICS concluded their 9th annual summit hosted by the city of Xiamen in southeast China's Fujian Province. Running from September 3 to 5 under the theme of "BRICS: Stronger Partnership for a Brighter Future," the summit saw the signing of a joint declaration on September 4, four cooperation agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs).

Looking to the second "golden decade", the BRICS leaders stressed their resolve to act jointly for development in

the Xiamen Declaration.

Enhancing BRICS cooperation

The Xiamen Declaration reviewed achievements made over the past 10 years, recalling increased development and multilateralism fostered by previous summits in Goa in India and Ufa in Russia, especially the fruitful progress of the New Development Bank (NDB) and the initiation of the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA), institutions that have ensured greater cooperation among BRICS countries.

It is worth mentioning that China will offer 500 mil-

lion yuan (\$76.4 million) for a BRICS economic and technology cooperation plan, and another \$4 million for projects at the NDB.

National Currencies

According to the declaration, leaders agreed to establish a bond fund in national currencies in order to contribute to capital sustainability in BRICS member states. They have also agreed to increase the use of national currencies, including in direct investment.

Opposing protectionism

BRICS countries have proved to have a leading role for global economic growth as well as a higher prestige in

the world economy. With this newfound standing, BRICS leaders reaffirmed that they remained committed to an open and inclusive world economy and firmly opposed protectionism.

Facing challenges together

According to the Xiamen Declaration, BRICS leaders condemned terrorism in all forms and said those "committing, organising or supporting" such acts must be held accountable. There are 17 references to terrorism in the 43-page Xiamen declaration.

In the declaration, the leaders stressed that the fight against terrorism must be conducted in accordance with international law.

Stronger partnership, brighter future

Undoubtedly, this year's summit deepens South-South cooperation. Let us hope the BRICS countries of the jaguar (Brazil), the bear (Russia), the elephant (India), the dragon (China) and the springbok (South Africa) will continue to work together in forging a new partnership that is fair, open, and innovative to benefit the welfare of humankind.

(The author is secretary of New Horizon Radio Listeners' Club in West Bengal, India)

VOICE

Brazil to seek convergence on economic issues within BRICS

In recent years, BRICS, which groups Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, has made great progress in the group's institutionalization process and financial field.

Brazilian President Michel Temer said, "The New Development Bank is a real example of BRICS's capacity for realization. The Bank allows mobilization of financial resources in an innovative manner for infrastructural and sustainable development projects, both priorities in our countries."

"It is necessary that BRICS remains focused in areas where there is concrete convergence among its members. It is necessary that BRICS remains committed to generating tangible results for our peoples," he stressed.

He hailed the role that

political dialogue among BRICS countries plays in global governance and political stability as well.

"We are going through a time when uncertainties multiply in the midst of isolationist and protectionist tendencies. In view of these challenges, dialogue among countries like ours becomes more important than ever. We defend the WTO's multilateral trade system, and we defend the Paris Agreement on Climate Change," Temer said. (China Daily)



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NEIGHBOURS

Laos-China basketball match held in Vientiane

Jointly organized by the Laos Basketball Association, the Shanghai Youth League Municipal Committee and the Chinese Young Volunteer teams, the 2017 Laos-China Youth Basketball Friendship Match was held in Vientiane. The Laos national team and Shanghai youth team competed.

Political counselor Zhao Chenggang of the Chinese Embassy in Laos kicked off the match. After fierce competition, the Shanghai youth team won the game by a small margin at 74-72.

Chinese youth volunteer team captain Liu Yong said he hopes that the friendship between youth of both countries will be strengthened through these types of games. The game was part of the volunteer service team's effort to introduce more quality programmes to Laos for the benefit of local youngsters.

(Xinhua News Agency)



Motor trains connect Kunming Station and Kunming South Station

At 9:25 in the morning of September 4, motor train units operating between Kunming Station, Kunming South Station and Yuxi Station went into operation after five years of construction. The line also connects to the China-Laos and China-Vietnam high-speed railway systems.

Photo by Hu Xiaorong

CONNECTIVITY

Laos officials praise China-Laos Railway

Zhang Jianhua

According to the China-Laos Railway project manager from China Railway Number 5 Engineering Group Co., Ltd., the Lao Minister of Public Works and Transport was pleased with the progress of the railway during a visit to the company's office. "I see the real 'China speed' here. The management is highly stan-

dardized," said the minister.

The Lao government attaches great importance to the project and will provide all the support necessary to facilitate smooth progress. Early completion of the railway will be conducive to promoting connectivity and realizing a mutual vision for the two countries.

With a total investment of 40 billion yuan, the 400-kilometre international railway

between Mohan-Boten and Vientiane is designed to reach 160 kilometres per hour between 32 stops. Construction began in December 2016 and is expected to be completed in five years. Using Chinese technical standards and equipment, and connecting to China's existing railway network, the Lao line is funded by Chinese enterprises and will be jointly operated by the two countries.

TOURISM

Scenic area quality alliance set up in Yunnan

Wang Jing

On August 31, the conference on the establishment of the Yunnan Scenic Spot Quality Alliance was held in Kunming. It was the first such cooperative jointly founded by tourist attractions and tourism enterprises in Yunnan Province, and will work to standardize the tourism market and shape the tourism industry's reputation in Yunnan.

At present, the alliance has 79 members, including 52 4A scenic areas. These include the Stone Forest, Shangri-La Pudacuo National Park, Tengchong Volcanic Hot Spring Resort and

many others. Members of the alliance are all stand-out scenic spots and enterprises within Yunnan, and all are without major service quality problems over the past three years.

It is reported that the alliance will set up a 100 million yuan special service fund to ensure the integrity of scenic services while also protecting the legitimate rights and interests of tourists. At the same time, the alliance aims at building an integrated tourism marketing platform in a bid to achieve win-win development and improve the overall service quality of all its members.



Tengchong Volcanic Hot Spring Resort.

Photo by Liu Jianhua



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TOURISM

A new way to explore Western Mountain

Shu Wen

“Departing the provincial capital, I headed southwest for two miles. Traveling on a boat, I saw the vast expanse of fields on both sides of the lake.” This the beginning of *A Trip to Taihua Mountain* by the great traveler Xu Xiake of the Ming Dynasty, who visited Kunming three times and Western Mountain four times during his one year and nine months stay in Yunnan.

The Taishi Memorial Temple he visited is now the memorial hall for him, where the routes he took during his expedition in Yunnan. Also available are the life style and customs of local ethnic groups along the routes, as well as his day-to-day life in Yunnan.

The Western Mountain Scenic Area, like a beautiful lady lying covered with verdant forests, now offers tourists a new way to explore the mountain. “The anecdotes Xu Xiake left and the places he visited are of great cultural values,” said Li Zhongli, the deputy director of the scenic area management. In recent years, the management has made a lot of research on Xu in relation to the mountain and added new road marks that Xu visited, so that visitors can have a new way to discover the mountain.

CHINA STORY

A new look for Hani mountain communities

Yue Xiaoqiong

Golden grains of rice in the terraces, free-range chickens in the valleys and brand-new yellow Hani-style houses lining both sides of the roads. These sights amazed us during our trip to Mazong Village, Daxing Township, Lüchun County in Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture this autumn.

The Hani account for around 90 percent of the total population of Lüchun County. The rice terraces there date back more than 1,000 years. “In the past,

we planted rice for food. Now it brings us much more than that,” said villager Li Changgui with a smile.

During a pilot programme targeting poverty alleviation, Mazong Village created a number of local brand names using the model of “company + association + farmers” based on local conditions.

To revive traditional red rice farming is one of the goals. Based on the success and profit of last year’s red rice crop, Li Changgui decided to double the size of his fields. Every year, he can make 12,000 yuan from planting red rice. So

far, the village has a total of 86 hectares of the grain, a



“In the past, we planted rice for food. Now it brings us much more than that.”

Li Changgui, villager

number that is expected to bring in 2.7 million yuan to 443 households.

Plantation and livestock husbandry initiatives rolled out at the same time. At the beginning of last year, the

government and Yunnan Tin Group helped build coops for 55 homes and signed agreements with local cooperatives to provide subsequent support. The leader of the village took the lead in raising 400 chickens himself, and also provided technical assistance to fellow villagers for free. As of August this year, the village had sold 60,000 chickens in two batches, bringing in some 10,000 yuan.

What’s taking place in Mazong Village is also happening across Lüchun County.

At Li Xiuwen’s corral in

Luoma Village, we learned that he had successfully sold 120 big-eared goats. Starting from scratch, Li is now leading a prosperous life and has convinced another four households to join him. All such changes wouldn’t have been possible without training workshops provided by the township government.

So far, the county has cultivated 262 poverty alleviation models such as Li Xiuwen’s. Another 800 villagers are also doing well.

The once-remote mountain villages are now filled with the pursuit of wealth.



Lijiang and Chengjiang rock Venice Film Festival

During the 74th Venice Film Festival, held August 30 to September 9, the cities of Lijiang and Chengjiang exhibited their beautiful scenic spots and unique tourist and cultural resources in a short film entitled “China in the Limelight - the Most Beautiful Filming Locations in the World.”

Lijiang City is located at the junction of Yunnan, Sichuan and Tibet. It is often referred to as “one of the world’s top 100 small cities to visit.” Chengjiang County is located southeast of Kunming. During the Venice Film Festival, Chengjiang County promoted Fuxian Lake and Maotian Mountain -- the site of the province’s ancient Dian culture. The picture shows the Yulong Snow Mountain of Lijiang.

Photo by Zhang Tong

INDUSTRY

A prosperous life built on walnuts



The musical event “Walnut Tree”.

Photo by Huang Zhechun

Liu Rong

September is walnut harvest season in Yangbi Yi Autonomous County, Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture.

During the area’s Walnut Festival, we had the good fortune to witness the harvest in Guangming Village, Yangli County. A musical event called “Walnut Tree”

was also staged at The People’s Art Centre of Dali.

Located in the east of Yangbi County, the people of Guangming Village cultivate 667 hectares of walnuts. On average, each villager owns more than 100 trees. Walnuts have become a main source of income in the village. By the end of 2016, the total combined revenue of the village stood at 37.57 million yuan, with a per capita share of 11,250 yuan.

In the context of advancing poverty alleviation, and promoting tourism and countryside development, the county has actively developing sustainable tourism

attractions featuring walnut plantations. “I used to grow walnuts and corn. Now the village is growing as a scenic area and I’m part of it,” said Yu Xiaohui happily.

Li Yongkang, director of the show “Walnut Tree”, is also a local. It had been his long-cherished wish to tell the stories of walnut farmers. “The reason I direct this show is to make more people know about walnuts and buy them from Yangbi,” explained the director.

According to incomplete statistics, Yangbi has sold more than 500 million walnut seedlings. Almost all the walnut trees planted in Dali are from Yangbi.

INHERITOR

Social media helps pass down silverware craftsmanship

Zhang Rui

“It will take a whole day to finish,” Meng Zhigang said while stroking the silver bracelet in his hand. The bracelet features a complex pattern unique to the Zhuang people in Guangnan, but to make it is a piece of cake for intangible heritage successor Meng Zhigang.

“I started learning to make silver jewellery when I was 12 years-old,” said Meng Zhigang. He is a fourth generation successor of the Guangnan silver-making tradition.

More than 80 households in the village are still engaged in the production of silver items, but Meng Zhigang is still worried about the future of the tradition. “Of course I can’t allow this 400 year-old handicraft to be lost after I’m gone,” he said. In order to pass on his skills to more people, Meng Zhigang is exploring a new way of his own.

“Today’s young people

may not be interested in these traditions, so I thought of making some customised objects that are of interest to them,” Meng Zhigang explained. He has established a WeChat platform through which customers can send their favourite patterns so that he can make silver pieces according to any requirement. “To make a customized bracelet like this, it will take me a week just to draw the pattern,” said Meng Zhigang. Despite the hard work, he believes it is a good way to promote this traditional craft.

Currently, four apprentices are learning from Meng Zhigang. Meng Zhigang considers the craft not just a hobby, but also a mission. No matter how difficult it is, he hopes that the traditional craft of hand-made Guangnan silver craftsmanship can be passed down to a new generation. He also hopes that more people will appreciate the traditional production process.



Meng Zhigang and his wife are showcasing the handmade silver pieces to the reporter. (Online Photo)