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China, Mekong countries to have more pragmatic cooperation

Senior foreign affairs officials from China, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam agreed to deepen pragmatic cooperation to benefit their people on December 15th.

At the third Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) foreign ministers' meeting held in Dali, southwest China's Yunnan Province, they decided to implement the consensus reached by their leaders to promote more cooperative projects and build a community with a shared future of peace and prosperity among Lancang-Mekong countries.

The Lancang-Mekong River is a natural link between the six countries.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Cambodian Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn co-chaired the meeting. Lao Foreign Minister Saleumxay Kommasith, Union Minister for International Cooperation of Myanmar U Kyaw Tin, Thai Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai and Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh attended the meeting.

The foreign affairs officials congratulated on the progress made in some key areas including connec-

tivity, industry capacity, cross-border economic cooperation, water resources, agriculture and poverty reduction.

They agreed that LMC has evolved from its nurturing period into the growing period, and all member countries should make greater efforts to advance economic and social development, and narrow development gap.

They agreed to synergize LMC with the development strategies of each member country, the Belt and Road Initiative and the relevant development programs of ASEAN.

(Xinhua)



Senior foreign affairs officials from China, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam attended the meeting (Photo by Huang Zhechun)

Expert: China-ASEAN free trade area being upgraded

The 6th session of the Cambodian Builders Association Summit and the 2017 Cambodian Construction Expo was held recently in Phnom Penh.

Xu Ningning, the executive director of the China-ASEAN Business Council, said at the meeting that China and relevant countries are advancing the major cooperation of Belt and Road. The ASEAN Economic Community has been built and is actively promoting infrastructure development and urbanization. The China-ASEAN Free Trade Area is being upgraded and the two sides are opening up the market to promote development. Cambodia's economy is showing rapid development momentum.

All of these have brought many business opportunities, especially in construction and related industries such as building materials and engineering machinery. The convening of the Summit and the holding of the Expo will help enterprises in related countries to improve understanding, exchanges and cooperation and to seize the new development of business opportunities.

At the meeting of the China-ASEAN leaders in the middle of November, the Interconnection of China-ASEAN Infrastructure Construction Joint Statement was launched, bringing construction industry cooperation into a new phase.

(website of the China-ASEAN Business Council)

CAEF: Innovation leads to new economic era in Asia

On December 8th, the second China-ASEAN Entrepreneur Forum (CAEF) opened in Kunming with the theme of "Innovation-driven, join hands to meet the new economic era in Asia". Nearly a thousand entrepreneurs seized the trend of world economic development focusing on innovation and sustainable development of intellectual power and strived to find new strength to promote the regional enterprises

growing together in the new era.

Cai Esheng, chairman of the Finance Center for South-South Cooperation and the former vice chairman of the China Banking Regulatory Commission, made it clear at the opening ceremony of the China-ASEAN Entrepreneur Forum that China-ASEAN enterprises need to continuously innovate. He believes that innovation drives the development of each country, addresses

the needs of the country and focuses on problems; the drive for innovation should persist in reform, breaking the ideological barrier of restricting innovation; insisting on the essence of innovation is the driving force of talent, strengthens the cultivation of talent and creates a group of innovative people of excellent quality. The innovation drive must have an open mentality and global vision, impel innovation by using good

global resources. Innovation drives the developing world to make more voices available for the benefit of the general public. This view was widely recognized by experts, scholars and entrepreneurs who attended the Forum.

Mr. Shah, chairman of the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand, also mentioned innovation in his keynote speech. "The innovative spirit of China-ASEAN entrepreneurs is one of the many

key factors for the success of the Belt and Road Initiative." He also said "The high-level forum is a very important measure, and through joint research on major projects, China-ASEAN entrepreneurs will play a significant role in the construction of the new economic era in Asia."

Entrepreneurs talked about current policy innovation vigor in China and ASEAN, attempts at financial innovations, and the

changing role of service innovation. The Forum made special reference to innovative talent, which is the vitality of national innovation and is the hope of social development.

Participants witnessed the signing of an agreement between the organizing committee of the China-ASEAN Entrepreneur Forum and the China-ASEAN Business Council.

(Chen Chuangye, Wu Qingquan)

Australian expert, Yunnan enterprises exchange views

Zhu Hai

The "Market Outlook and Risk Control Analysis Tool" seminar was recently held in Kunming. It is a concrete action to strengthen friendly exchanges and cooperation between Yunnan Province and Northern Territory of Australia.

One of the top ten technical analysts in the global financial markets and chairman of the North Austrian branch of Australian-China Industry and Commerce Commission served as a key speaker for more than 100 people

from Yunnan Provincial economic and financial sectors state-owned enterprises, securities companies, insurance companies and related private enterprises. He explained the 2018 financial market risk management process by providing tools to help solve the dynamics of the financial market, Belt and Road, and Yunnan economic development issues. Around sovereignty, foreign exchange, market, business and other key factors, he also gave Yunnan some suggestions for reducing risk to achieve a win-win in.

Expats hooked on the Taobao way of life

Meline Khachmanukyan from Armenia, who has been in China for more than five years, can't imagine her life without e-commerce site Taobao.

"I can find everything on Taobao, from food to books, bags, jewelry, clothes and household items — anything you can imagine," says the 25-year-old student. "It saves my time and money. And more importantly, it offers a lot of goods that I cannot find in physical stores!"

Taobao, launched in 2003 by Alibaba Group, has arguably turned into the No. 1 marketplace in China with over 500 million registered users and a great variety of choices. It has become an essential part of life for not only Chinese people but also expatriates like Khachmanukyan.

The record-breaking figures of the Double 11 shopping spree on November 11, also known as Singles Day in China, was an epitome of how the Tao-

obao way of life has caught on among expats. Statistics showed that this year 225 countries and regions participated in the 24-hour shopping festival, which was initiated in 2009. According to Alibaba, its sales totaled 168.2 billion yuan (US\$24.4 billion).

BBC reported that Taobao's one-day sales could easily beat the entire US Thanksgiving period which includes Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

Kirill Kholodenko, 23, a master's degree student from Russia, admits that the Double 11 did affect him and, as a result, he bought more than he'd planned to.

"I'd made a list of necessities before that day but ended up buying much more stuff and spending much more money!" Says Kholodenko.

Although Taobao is in Chinese, expatriates are finding ways to join the trend.

(Shanghai Daily, Tatiana Gordeeva)

Yunnan couple's story in Colombo

Zu Hongbing
Wang Weiyun
Chu Donghua

Colombo to learn about the love story of a Yunnan couple.

Editor's note: Belt and Road themed interviews were launched in Colombo, Sri Lanka recently, sponsored by the Yunnan Provincial People's Government News Office and undertaken by the Yunnan Daily Press Group. A group of Chinese media representatives interviewed people in Sri Lanka on the theme of the Belt and Road and contacted Sri Lankan tourism administration, tea industry administration and other authorities, as well as the Chinese Embassy in Sri Lanka and Chinese enterprises, to explore Sri Lanka's involvement in Belt and Road construction and learn about the cooperation between China and Sri Lanka, and specifically Yunnan and Sri Lanka, in trade and development. In this edition, the interview group entered Xinzhi Books Chinese Bookstore in

Colombo Chinese Bookstore. In four years of "slow" life in Sri Lanka, Luo Zhiping and his wife not only witnessed the rapid rise of "Chinese language craze" in Sri Lanka, but also witnessed dramatic changes in its local life through rapid economic and social development. "In 2013, there was no street light in front of our bookstore, and now it's brightly lit at night," said Luo Zhiping.

"Chinese culture can go abroad, the root lies in the country's formidable strength," said Luo. With the acceleration of Belt and Road construction, more and more Chinese are doing business, investing in and travelling to Sri Lanka. In order to welcome the Chinese, many people in Sri Lanka began to learn Chinese language. With Chinese language becoming so popular, the number of people buying books from the Chinese Bookstore in Colombo has increased rapidly."

Colombo Chinese Bookstore.

"In Sri Lanka, speaking Chinese affects the level of income. In general, locals who speak Chinese can get two to three times' higher wages than those who don't," said Luo Zhiping. The current best-selling books are on Chinese learning, followed by economics and social science. For political books, *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* is well sold, and the second volume of Chinese and English editions already has more than 400 orders. Last week, we just signed a contract to translate this book into Sinhalese, which will be available next May or June," said Luo Zhiping happily. To better develop copyright trade, Xinzhi Books registered in the local publishing house in Sri Lanka.

"I hope that Chinese cultural enterprises will produce more bilingual cultural products, and promote the export of copyrights and cultural exchanges," said Luo.

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Brian Dale Linden spread Chinese culture in a distant land

Under his direction, a primitive Dali Bai house was turned into Xilinyuan Hostel, loved by people from all over the world. Living in Dali Xizhou for over ten years, he incorporated the culture, folklore and handicrafts of Bai nationality in protection and cultivation and has developed various ethnic folk custom experience activities with local residents. Brian Linden, a PHD in history of Stanford University, has bonded indissolubly with Yunnan since he came to China as a journalist for CBS in 1985.



Brian Dale Linden enjoys his tie-dye life in Dali (File Photo)

He has brought in all kinds of outstanding young talent, in total more than 40 top-end people from well-known universities in China and abroad. He cooperated with the Swed-

ish government and held a corporate social responsibility forum. 65 business leaders from Sweden and international enterprises in China were invited to Dali to discuss environmental

protection with representatives from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and the US government. He met Mr. Max Baucus, the former ambassador of the United States to China, on his exchange visits several times and set up a platform for education and cultural cooperation between China and the United States.

Brian Linden has many titles. For instance, he had been awarded one of the "10 most influential foreigners in China" jointly awarded by the State Council of China and UNESCO and so on.

(Yunnan Daily)

Tea trade volume exceeded 10 million yuan



Workers pick up the tea for trade

(Photo by Shuang Chuntian)

In November this year, the tea trade volume exceeded 10 million yuan in a single month, which is a miracle in the tea industry for an e-commerce B2B business platform which has only been in operation four months.

In the third quarter of this year, based on the "implementation of rural revitalization strategy", the Yunnan Provincial Government made a general deployment of agricultural modernization in Yunnan, and proposed a favorable policy to speed up the construction of the Yunnan International Tea Trade Center to expand service function and enlarge trade volume. While actively responding to the policy, Yunnan International Tea Trade

Center uses the industry advantages of the e-commerce platform and "Yunnan tea going upward" and "users move downward" as strategy, accurately positioning and serving the industry on both upper and lower reaches, and strives to change the status of lack of quality standards, lack of smooth circulation and lack of price transparency.

The center will provide value-added services supporting a whole industry chain. In the future, the Center will unite the tea businesses in the industry chain with small and medium-sized tea enterprises and consumers to form a healthy ecological chain for Yunnan tea's revitalization.

(Shi Kuijun)