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Chinese robotics leader has global vision

Wang meets Russia, India foreign ministers

China, Russia and India agreed to maintain regional security and economic architecture in Asia Pacific, according to a joint statement issued on Dec 11 after the 15th trilateral meeting of the foreign ministers of the three countries.

Maintaining regional security and economic architecture that is "open, inclusive and based on multilateralism and universally recognized principles of international law" is imperative for lasting peace and stability in the region, the statement said.

The three countries emphasized the need for coordination and cooperation in various regional forums and organizations such as the East Asia Summit to maintain regional peace and stability, and to promote regional development and prosperity.

During the one-day meeting, Foreign Minister Wang Yi, his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov and Indian counterpart Sushma Swaraj discussed a wide range of global and regional issues of common concern, according to the statement.



Foreign Minister Wang Yi (right), Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Indian Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj pictured on Dec 11 in New Delhi before the 15th China-Russia-India trilateral meeting. ADNAN ABIDI / REUTERS

Google opens first Asia AI lab in Beijing

Global technology giant Google announced on Dec 12 the opening of its artificial intelligence (AI) center in China.

Li Feifei, chief scientist of AI and machine learning at Google Cloud, announced the launch of the AI center during the Google Developer Day in Shanghai. Based in Beijing, the center will host a group of researchers supported by hundreds of engineers in the country.

The China AI center is the first of its kind in Asia. It joins similar centers operating in New York, Toronto, London and Zurich.

"The talents (in China) are also top class if put in an international context," said Li.

According to global market consultancy Roland Berger, China ranks second globally in the quantity of AI enterprises, patent applications and the scale of financing across the world, next only to the United States.

US military, govt ties with Taiwan opposed

The Chinese mainland resolutely opposes any exchanges between militaries or government officials of the

United States and Taiwan, a Chinese mainland spokesman said on Dec 13.

An Fengshan, spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, was speaking in response to a recent speech by a Chinese diplomat reiterating that matters involving Taiwan are internal Chinese affairs.

"The day that a US Navy vessel arrives in Kaohsiung is the day that our People's Liberation Army unifies Taiwan with military force," Li Kexin, minister counselor at the Chinese embassy in the US, said at an embassy event in Washington on Dec 12.

He also said that China would activate its Anti-Secession Law if the US sent warships to Taiwan.

Li's speech stirred heated discussion on the island, with Taiwan media describing it as the "red line" of unification by force.

Bombers patrol over strategic waterways

The bombers and fighters of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Air Force conducted a regular patrol exercise over two strategic channels near Taiwan on Dec 11 in an effort to further strengthen maneuverability and combat capability during far sea missions.

The formation consisted of H-6K bombers, Su-30 and J-11 fighter jets and reconnaissance, early warning and tanker aircraft, Senior Colonel Shen Jinke, spokesman for the PLA Air Force, said at a meeting of senior air force officers.

The planes flew through the Bashi Channel between the southern tip of Taiwan and the northern islands of the Philippines and the Miyako Strait between northern Taiwan and Japan, Shen said.

"Multiple bombers and reconnaissance planes have flown routes that circled the island of Taiwan, further improving their ability to protect national sovereignty and territorial integrity," he said.

Gas pipeline to be ready in three years

China is expected to complete the China-Russia East-Route Natural Gas Pipeline by the end of 2020, which will send up to 38 billion cubic meters of gas annually from Russia to China, according to China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC).

The first phase of the pipeline linking Heihe in Heilongjiang province and Changling in Jilin province, Northeast China, will be completed by October 2019, with the rest

of the domestic pipelines linking Changling to Shanghai completed by the end of 2020, CNPC, the country's largest oil and gas producer by annual output, said on Dec 13.

Li Li, energy research director at ICIS China, a consulting company providing energy market analysis, said the step will further guarantee China's energy diversification.

"Completion of the natural gas pipeline will massively help ease China's shortage of natural gas while further diversifying China's energy supply," said Li.

Tokyo Trial memorial hall set for Shanghai

A memorial hall for the Tokyo Trial, the tribunal for accused Japanese war criminals, will be built in Shanghai, a leading expert in the field said ahead of the National Memorial Day for Nanjing Massacre Victims.

Official planning for the memorial hall started early last year and preparatory work is steadily advancing, said Cheng Zhaoqi, director of Shanghai Jiao Tong University's Center for the Tokyo Trial Studies.

This year's annual memorial day on Dec 13 marked the 80th anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre, in which more than 300,000 Chi-

nese were killed by Japanese invaders when Nanjing, in East China's Jiangsu province, was occupied in December 1937.

"The government has been selecting a site for the memorial hall for months. Such a hall will be of major significance for the country, and we all understand that it's difficult to find a spot in downtown Shanghai," Cheng said. "I believe it will come into being soon."

Punish migrant wage defaulters: Minister

Employers who default on paying migrant workers' wages this year should be placed on a national blacklist, the head of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security said.

Yin Weimin, the minister, said that governments at all levels should "thoroughly check" on any wages that may be in arrears as the Chinese New Year approaches, and set a deadline for companies and employers to resolve the situation.

The checks should focus on sectors where migrant workers are frequently hired, such as the construction industry, labor-intensive manufacturing industries and restaurants, Yin said.

The ministry issued a regulation in September for the creation of a national blacklist to punish employers that fail to pay migrant workers.

Joint drill sharpens anti-terrorism fight

A joint counterterrorism drill by China and Russia concluded on Dec 13 in Yinchuan, Northwest China's Ningxia Hui autonomous region.

The drill, featuring cooperation between China's Armed Police Force and the Russian National Guard, began on Dec 2 and included training activities at APF bases in Yinchuan.

Thirty-two members of the APF's Desert Fox commando unit, an anti-terrorist assault force, and 32 of their Russian peers from the Vityaz and Rys units of the country's National Guard, took part in a host of exercises. The Chinese side also sent helicopters and armed assault vehicles.

During the drill, Chinese and Russian officers practiced a wide range of exercises including hand-to-hand combat, firearms, defusing explosives, speed-rappelling from helicopters, rescuing hostages, raiding buildings and tracking terrorists.

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