China's Development Blueprint Provides Global Opportunities

Voice of the World

By QI Liming

The display of flying car Voyager X2 of XPeng Huitian. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

Chinese President Xi Jinping stressed during this year's Two Sessions that high- quality development is the first and foremost task in building a modern socialist country in all respects. Speeding up efforts to achieve greater self- reliance and strength in science and technology is the path China must take to advance high-quality development.

China's high- quality economic development blueprint has attracted attention globally. The people from all over the world are optimistic about its innovation ability and the dividends of opening- up, while looking forward to win-win cooperation between China and other countries.

Anchor of stability: China's high-quality economic development boosts global confidence

George Barcelon, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that in recent years, China has stepped up scientific and technological innovation in the electronic information industry, new energy vehicles and space exploration, and accelerated the exploration of overseas markets. "All these more competitive innovative products and technologies from China will benefit the global market, promoting win-win development," he said.

Argentine economist Jorge Marchini, professor at the University of Buenos Aires, said that in the past five years, China has made significant contributions and played an irreplaceable role in ensuring the stability of industrial and supply chains, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source of vitality: China's high-level opening- up shares development opportunities

Costantinos Bt. Costantinos, professor of public policy at the Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, said that China's high-level opening-up, and in particular its steady expansion of institutional opening- up, has enabled the world to share more of its development opportunities. This has been a major boon to both the Chinese economy and the world economy.

Chilean Fruit Exporters Association president, Iván Marambio said that this year's export season will be another record for Chilean cherry exports, nearly 90 percent of which will be purchased by the Chinese market. "In today's highly globalized and interconnected world, China's economic growth and foreign trade development are crucial to maintaining the vitality of the world economy."

An open world economy: China's win- win approach enhanced cooperation and access

High- quality development is indispensable to the sound development of the world economy. Belgian- Chinese Chamber of Commerce Chairman Bernard Dewit said that the Belt and Road Initiative is the world's largest and most popular platform for international cooperation at present. It is a powerful demonstration of policy communication, infrastructure connectivity, smooth trade and financing, and people- to- people exchanges.

Marcos Cordeiro Pires, a professor at Brazil's Sao Paulo State University, said that few Western countries are willing to support railway construction in Kenya or Laos because they only consider short-term investment returns. "China has shown itself to be the mode for major countries by creating future demand through infrastructure investment."

Comment

'Altasia' Can't Replace Chinese Supply Chain

By TANG Zhexiao

What are the alternatives to "Made in China"? Amid the current growing geopolitical rift globally, an article published in *The Economist* recently coined a new term - Altasia, a short word for the alternative Asian supply chain.

Altasia stretches from Japan's Hokkaido to northwest India's Gujarat, passing through South Korea, China's Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Bangladesh.

Data from the World Bank shows Altasia and China are evenly matched in exports, with Altasia's exports to the U.S. totaling 634 billion USD from October 2021 to September 2022, slightly higher than China's 614 billion USD.

The two are also close in skilled workers. Among the 25 to 54- year- old population, 145 million in China have received higher education, compared with 155 million in Altasia.

According to *The Economist* Intelligence Unit and Haver Analytics, manufacturing labor cost in certain areas in South and Southeast Asia such as India, Thailand and Vietnam is as low as three USD per hour, compared with 8.31 USD in China.

The appeal of moving factories to Vietnam was in large part driven by cheaper labor costs, said Bloomberg.

Meanwhile, China is ascending the value chain by implementing a policy of high-quality development.

According to China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the manufacturing value- added output of the country had expanded from 16.98 trillion RMB (about 2.5 trillion USD) in 2012 to 31.4 trillion RMB in 2021, accounting for 30 percent of the global manufacturing output in 2021.

The complete replacement of China is still challenging, and *The Economist* admits that no country in the region can match the importance of China as an export center.

Altaisa doesn't work as a separate entity like China, because China has a complete industrial system and huge manufacturing capacity.

Indeed, the proposal of Altasia goes against Asian economic integration and globalization.

The attempt to lure manufacturing away from China and decouple economies from international systems has seriously affected the security and stability of the global supply chains and hindered the recovery of the global economy.

Deepen supply chain cooperation counts more than reshaping the global division of labor through political maneuvers.

As Bloomberg said, there won't be one new factory floor of the world to replace China, the others just need to get used to a new model of globalization.

Ban on TikTok An Abuse of State Power

By GONG Qian

"How unsure of itself can the world's top superpower be to fear a young people's favorite app like that?" said Mao Ning, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, when asked about decision by the White House on February 27 that gave government agencies 30 days to delete TikTok, a short- video social media App, from all federal devices.

Shortly after that, the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) voted on March 1 to approve the measure to grant President Joe Biden new power to ban TikTok, Reuters reported. Recently, Europe and Canada also banned TikTok on staff phones and government devices.

This brings TikTok, a widely popular App whose parent company ByteDance is based in China, into the spotlight again. TikTok is used by more than 100 million monthly active users in the U.S. alone, and its ability to create instant viral hits has put it at the forefront of internet culture, said National Public Radio (NPR).

These Western governments and regulators claimed that the ban on TikTok is due to concern over security and privacy. Michael McCaul, the chairman of the HFAC, said TikTok is being used by China to "manipulate and monitor its users, while it gobbles up Americans' data to be used for their malign activities."

The truth is that no evidence has been presented to support these allegations. Mona Fortier, the President of Canada's Treasury Board, who issued a statement to ban TikTok on February 27, also said that no evidence at this point showed that government information has been compromised. The ban is a precautionary measure to keep national secrets secure.

It is unfair for TikTok to pay the price for theoretical concerns based on fundamental misconceptions, while the company has been taking actions to address those concerns.

For example, it reached an agreement with Oracle Bone Inscriptions, an American technology company, to store the information of its American users without ByteDance having access to it in June 2022. TikTok currently stores European user data in the U.S. and Singapore.

But not all are on board with such a ban. Fight for the Future, a digital rights group, launched a campaign opposing U.S. lawmakers' proposal to ban TikTok. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) are also strongly opposed, while Jenna Leventoff, senior policy counsel at ACLU, said it is in violation of Americans' First Amendment rights and urged legislators to vote no on this "vague, overbroad, and unconstitutional bill."

If the Western governments are really so concerned about cybersecurity, then they should ban all social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, which also "collect extreme levels of information about users," said Bruce Schneier, a security technologist and lecturer at the Harvard Kennedy School, along with Barath Raghavan, a professor of computer science at University of Southern California, in an essay for the *Foreign Policy*.

"If we want to address the real problem, we need to enact serious privacy laws, not security theater, to stop our data from being collected, analyzed, and sold-by anyone," the two authors said.

Now, TikTok has unveiled a new plan, known as Project Clover, to protect user information across Europe. According to the plan, user data will be stored on servers in Ireland and Norway at an annual cost of 1.1 billion USD. All data transmission outside Europe will be monitored by a third-party European IT company.

"Its back against the wall, TikTok is fighting hard to prove it is no national-security threat," said BBC.

If this can't earn trust and ease worries from Western governments, to some extent, then it has to say that they don't really care about what TikTok has done, but just over- stretch the concept of national security and abusing state power to suppress foreign companies, as China's Foreign Minister Spokesperson Mao Ning said.

Research Box

Limiting China Brings No Rewards

The U.S. won't be able to limit China's microchip industry and the U.S. hawkish "lose-lose mentality" toward China won't help.

The U.S. will never be successful at preventing China from having great chips. The U.S. would not be able to achieve the desired result and limit Beijing's ambitions through procurement restrictions which include a recent attempt to get the chip industry back under U.S. control.

It does not see much sense in restricting chip sales to China, as the Asian nation will be able to catch up with the U.S. rather quickly at this scale. The U.S.-China cooperation has great potential, because the U.S.-China relationship is the most important relationship in the world.

China's rise is a huge win for the world. China is 20 percent of the global population, which exactly matches its portion of the global economy. That compares to countries like Australia and the U.S. that have per capita GDP five times that of China, which is a "disproportionate share of the world's economy."

Washington lawmakers don't understand that the U.S. and China need to work together on issues like the global economy, the invention of cancer drugs, and the solution to climate change.

We're humans, we innovate together, and we have to change the modern industrial economy together in a pretty dramatic fashion.

Source: Bill Gates speaking to Financial Timesand Benzinga website

Decoupling of EU from China Would Reduce German Economic Output

China dominates the world market and German supplies of specific raw materials and products, particularly in the field of electronics, and could not be replaced as a supplier in the short term.

Product groups that are indispensable for the German economy and for which dependence on China is particularly high, are laptops with an import share of around 80 percent, cell phones (import share 68%), certain textile products (textile goods, 69%) computer units such as sound and graphics cards (62%), photographic elements and LEDs (61%), or printed circuit boards (printed circuits, 58%).

Germany's dependence on China is also extremely high in certain medical products, such as medical masks or painkillers, with import shares of over 90 percent in some cases.

According to model calculations, a decoupling of the EU from China, in which trade is reduced by 97 percent, would reduce German economic output by one percent in the long term-meaning that new supply structures have been found and established. Measured in terms of gross domestic product in 2021, this corresponds to lost value added of 36 billion euros every year.

Source: Kiel Institute for the World Economy

Snail Mucus Gel Helps Wound Repair

Hi! Tech

By Staff Reporters

Wound management remains a challenge in clinics because of the high incidents of traumatic injuries and refractory chronic wounds.

Though surgical sutures and staples are gold standards for the reconnection of injured tissues and closure of wounds, they may cause pain, surgical site infection, and skin scarring.

Alternative treatments include tissue adhesives, such as fibrin glue and PEG-based adhesives, which are relatively effective and painless. However, the currently available tissue adhesives still lack wet adhesion capacity and/or biocompatibility.

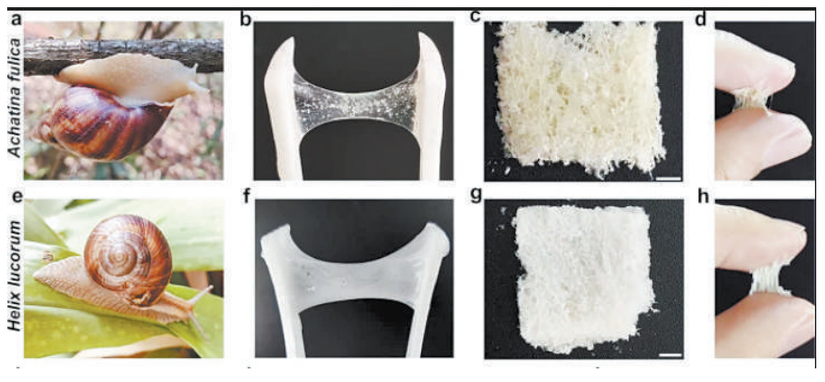
The discovery of natural adhesion phenomena and mechanisms has advanced the development of a new generation of tissue adhesives in recent decades.

Researchers from Kunming Institute of Botany (KIB), Chinese Academy of Sciences, developed a natural biological adhesive from snail mucus gel, which is made up of a network of positively charged protein and polyanionic glycosaminoglycan.

The malleable bulk adhesive matrix can adhere to wet tissue through multiple interactions. The bio-material exhibits excellent haemostatic activity, biocompatibility and biodegradability, and it is effective in accelerating the healing of full- thickness skin wounds in both normal and diabetic male rats.

Further mechanistic study shows it effectively promotes the polarization of macrophages towards the anti-inflammatory phenotype, alleviates inflammation in chronic wounds, and significantly improves epithelial regeneration and angiogenesis.

Its abundant heparin- like glycosaminoglycan component is the main active ingredient. These findings provide theoretical and material insights into bio-inspired tissue adhesives and bio-engineered scaffold designs.



The features of how snail mucus can be used as biological adhesive. (PHOTO: NATURE)