



# TWO SESSIONS

## Overhaul of Chinese teaching abroad urged

By CHENG YU and HU DONGMEI

As global demand for learning the Chinese language grows alongside China's expanding economic ties, Zhang Shirong, a deputy to the 14th National People's Congress, is calling for an overhaul of how the language is promoted abroad, adding that the next phase of international Chinese education must "move faster, become more localized and make better use of technology."

Zhang, who is also the co-founder of Wisdom House, a cultural communications group, said the rapid growth in demand — particularly in countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative — is exposing structural gaps in teaching resources, coordination mechanisms and teacher training.

"Chinese carries thousands of years of civilization and is an important cultural product that China shares with the world," Zhang said on the sidelines of the recently concluded two sessions. "As international exchanges deepen, we need a more effective system to support Chinese education globally."

Technology, he said, should play a larger role.



Zhang Shirong

Artificial intelligence and digital learning tools are rapidly transforming global education, allowing students to access interactive lessons, personalized exercises and immersive language environments.

The NPC deputy from the Ningxia Hui autonomous region said international Chinese education should accelerate the use of such technologies to create more engaging learning experiences.

"AI and digital platforms can redesign teaching scenarios and provide personalized learning paths," he said. "This is especially important for attracting younger learners."

Currently, many government scholarships are granted before students arrive in China. Zhang suggested shifting part of the funding to a performance-based system, with financial support distributed according to students' academic results, language proficiency and practical achievements during their studies.

"The goal is to encourage continuous effort and improve learning outcomes," Zhang said.

He also proposed linking major international competitions with scholarships or internship opportunities to create stronger incentives for talented students to pursue Chinese studies.

Localization of teaching materials will also be essential, Zhang said.

He called for the development of country-specific textbooks and digital content tailored to different cultural contexts, incorporating elements of contemporary Chinese culture alongside local themes.

Supporting resources could include digital courseware, gamified classrooms, virtual language environments and graded reading materials.

"Different countries have different learning habits," Zhang said. "Teaching materials should reflect those differences."

China's international Chinese education sector is undergoing a transition from rapid expansion to higher-quality development, policymakers say. While interest in the language continues to grow, Zhang said existing systems have struggled to keep pace with demand in many parts of the world.

Ultimately, Zhang said, international Chinese education should be seen not only as a cultural project but also as a strategic component of China's global engagement.

"As China's cooperation with the world deepens, language becomes an important channel for mutual understanding," he said.

Through learning language, Zhang added, students from foreign countries can gain a clearer understanding of contemporary China and develop a deeper appreciation of other cultures.

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## Concluding meeting



The 14th National People's Congress, China's national legislature, holds the closing meeting of its fourth session at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Thursday. WANG JING / CHINA DAILY

## Deliveries in Xizang are now faster and cheaper

### Subsidies and infrastructure upgrades enhance the region's postal services

By CUI JIA  
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Seeing high courier delivery charges — and sometimes no shipping options at all — when shopping online has long troubled people in the Xizang autonomous region, especially those in rural communities. As a deputy to the 14th National People's Congress, Norbu Yangzom proposed a solution.

The deputy from Metog county in Nyingchi, Xizang, said she believed the issue greatly affects people's daily lives and their sense of happiness. To remedy this, she submitted a suggestion during the annual session of the 14th NPC last year. Soon afterward, her proposal led to the introduction of a series of policies and concrete actions aimed at improving the situation.

"Within a month, I got a reply from the State Post Bureau saying that, in consultation with the Ministry of Finance, the State Taxation Administration and the Ministry of Commerce, joint actions would be carried out to promote the high-quality development of the logistics and delivery industry in Xizang," she said.

Previously, only postal services could reach rural and pastoral areas in Xizang due to the region's remote location and its vast, sparsely populated landscape, combined with relatively underdeveloped logistics infrastructure. For other courier services, residents had to travel to the county seat to pick up their parcels, which was particularly inconvenient, Norbu Yangzom said.

"Delivery times were also relative-



Norbu Yangzom

ly long. Very often, people would see delivery fees to Xizang costing tens of yuan. Many items were even marked with a shipping fee of 999 yuan, which essentially meant the online shops wouldn't ship," she said. "Updating logistics infrastructure and reducing logistics costs have become common aspirations for people of all ethnic groups in the region."

The first move to address the issue occurred during a meeting on May 25 to discuss the construction of a logistics and delivery system for agricultural and pastoral areas in Xizang, she said. During the meeting, relevant departments and enterprises held open and candid discussions on accelerating the development of a smooth delivery network for these areas, taking into account not only economic factors but also people's livelihoods and public needs.

By August, the regional government introduced a subsidy mechanism for parcel delivery services in farming and herding communities.

"Very quickly, people, including me, saw a significant drop in delivery fees," she said. "A logistics service station was also set up in my village, which means villagers no longer need to go to the county seat to pick up their parcels."

Lhakpa, an official with the regional postal administration's market supervision department, said in February that more than 2,400 village-level postal and logistics service stations had been

upgraded or transformed across Xizang. The expanded network now allows farmers and herders to access postal services within their own villages, offering service levels comparable to those in urban areas.

The number of online products eligible for free shipping to Xizang has also risen to nearly 1.7 billion items, up 119 percent year-on-year, Lhakpa said.

Delivery efficiency has improved noticeably as well, Norbu Yangzom said.

"In the past, goods shipped to my village from Southeast China took at least three weeks to arrive. Last year, the average time was cut to about 10 days, and it's getting faster," she said.

She then pulled out her cellphone to look up an order of green beans she had placed on an e-commerce platform for her family on March 3. Dispatched from Guangdong province in South China, the order arrived in her village in Metog — long known as the "isolated island" of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau because of its challenging terrain — in just four days.

Until 2013, when a national road was completed, Metog was the last county in China without road access.

"The speedy delivery is even a surprise for me — but a very good one," she said. "Meanwhile, improved postal and logistics services have also made it easier for villagers to sell local specialties, boosting their incomes."

According to a regional government report, Xizang plans to upgrade and renovate 60 county-level logistics and delivery centers and 4,000 village-level service stations this year, further expanding the coverage of the "Free Shipping to Xizang" service.

## 'Happiness economy' can drive growth, adviser says

By ZHENG ZHENG in Shanghai  
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As China seeks fresh momentum to boost domestic demand, the burgeoning happiness-driven consumption sector could emerge as a trillion-yuan engine for high-quality economic growth, according to a national political adviser.

Zhang Yi, a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, focused on the "happiness economy" — a consumption model centered on emotional fulfillment and spiritual value — during this year's two sessions.

"Following extensive field research, I've discovered that the shift from functional utility to subjective experience represents a vital transformation in China's consumer landscape," Zhang said.

Though not an official economic term, Zhang describes the happiness economy as a new cultural consumption pattern that embeds happiness, fulfillment and personal value into products and services.

Unlike traditional models, this approach prioritizes spiritual gains and emotional resonance, creating a sustainable cycle of repeat purchases driven by how a product makes consumers feel rather than simply what it does, particularly among younger generations.

Data underscores the sector's potential. According to iiMedia Research, China's emotional economy market expanded from 1.63 trillion yuan (\$235.4 billion) in 2022 to 2.31 trillion yuan in 2024, and is projected to exceed 4.5 trillion yuan by 2029. More than 90 percent of young consumers recognize emotional value, with nearly 60 percent willing to spend money on it.

Zhang said once basic functional needs are met, the pursuit of achievement and happiness becomes a primary driver of spending. In that context, he said, the happiness economy is not a fleeting trend but a structural shift in the market sustained by ongoing emotional engagement.

However, Zhang said several bottlenecks are preventing the sector from reaching its full potential, with a key challenge being the mismatch between supply and demand.

"Many domestic industries remain trapped in pricing wars or functional competition, failing to address consumers' growing desire for identity and emotional connection," he said.

He added that even when China produces major cultural hits — such as the animated film *Ne Zha 2*



Zhang Yi

and the popular video game *Black Myth: Wukong* — their industrial chains remain fragmented. These successes often fail to translate into robust long-term ecosystems involving derivative products or integrated tourism, leaving significant revenue potential untapped.

To address these gaps, Zhang proposed a stronger government role, beginning with high-level industrial research.

"Efforts by enterprises and cross-industry associations alone are insufficient," he said. He suggested that the government lead research using social media analytics and search engine data to map consumer sentiment. These efforts would help policymakers align industrial planning with the public's emotional and cultural preferences, ensuring that the happiness being produced matches the happiness consumers seek.

Zhang also proposed expanding consumption subsidies beyond tangible products to include experiences linked to happiness consumption. Incentives for cultural experiences and performances could help broaden the consumer base, he said.

Financial and structural support should also shift toward light-asset operations, Zhang said. He called for financial instruments designed to support intellectual property development, ensuring that resources — including land, specialized talent and data — are directed toward creative and emotional industries.

He said the core competitiveness of the happiness economy should be built on strong intellectual property, anchor enterprises and a comprehensive ecosystem that supports small and medium-sized creative businesses.

Zhang also recommended integrating traditional industries with the happiness economy, developing compelling narratives for cultural tourism projects that can drive consumption across sectors, and incorporating these concepts into urban renewal efforts.

"The happiness economy represents a promising frontier that could reshape consumption patterns by tapping emotional connections and value identification, potentially unlocking significant economic value while improving quality of life," Zhang said.



A fresh leaf market in Ya'an, Sichuan province, teems with spring tea harvest crowds on Wednesday. Key hubs like this market provide fair trade platforms that raise farmers' incomes and happiness while driving high-quality tea industry growth. ZHANG LANG / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

## 'Fan' transforming farming in Sanya

By MA SI  
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In the sun-drenched experimental fields of Yazhouwan in Sanya, Hainan province, the future of farming is being coded one algorithm at a time. Here, the ancient practice of crop breeding — traditionally a decade-long pursuit reliant on a breeder's intuition — is being rewritten as a precision-driven science.

At the heart of this transformation is the "Future Agriculture Nexus", or Fan, an artificial intelligence-powered platform jointly launched by the Yazhouwan National Laboratory and Chinese tech company Huawei in November 2025. Designed to act as a "central nervous system" for agricultural data, Fan aims to address one of the biggest bottlenecks in seed development — fragmented data.

Chen Fan, a deputy to the Nation-



Chen Fan

al People's Congress and deputy director of the Yazhouwan National Laboratory, said in an interview with China Daily that the lab's mission is to develop major strategic crop varieties that meet real demand.

"As the only national-level laboratory in China's agricultural sector, our lab's mission is to develop major strategic crop varieties to meet real demand," Chen said.

Traditional breeding work relies heavily on experience, he said. Moving to precision breeding requires analyzing correlations within massive amounts of data — including both public and private datasets — on crop traits and genotypes.

The Fan platform addresses this challenge by aggregating and stan-

dardizing disparate data on genotype, phenotype and environment — often referred to by experts as "data silos" — into a unified system. Powered by Huawei's AI data lake solution, the platform uses artificial intelligence to screen information and automate complex analytical workflows.

The results are significant. According to Yuan Yuan, president of Huawei's data storage product line, the system can shorten the breeding cycle for crops such as rice from the traditional eight to 10 years to just three to four years — a 50 percent reduction in time and a 30 percent improvement in overall efficiency.

"The impact is transformative," Yuan said.

"We are leveraging AI to boost productivity across the entire breeding process. It is a systematic approach," Chen said. "The Fan project is like building an underly-

ing platform on which we can develop various vertical models and AI agents to solve different problems."

Such efforts align with China's strategic priorities, with seeds often described as the "chips" of global agriculture.

"Our laboratory is establishing the largest and most extensive innovation platform for biological breeding in China, with the most comprehensive system in terms of scale, scope and infrastructure," Chen said.

"We want to advance the construction of the 'Nanfan Silicon Valley' and establish a leading hub for future agriculture," he added.

While AI is sharpening research tools inside the lab, international cooperation is expanding the laboratory's reach. Recognizing that food security is a shared priority among Global South nations, the lab is strengthening ties with Latin America.

In August 2025, the China-LAC Sustainable Food Innovation Center, established with support from

the Yazhouwan National Laboratory, inaugurated key branch centers in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. The Brazil branch serves as a key hub for collaboration.

"China and Brazil share common priorities in agricultural technology, climate resilience and sustainable development," Chen said.

The cooperation extends beyond diplomacy into practical science. Researchers are leveraging a unique geographical symmetry: Hainan's location at 18 degrees north latitude mirrors Brazil's position at 18 degrees south, providing similar sunshine and temperature conditions that are ideal for collaborative crop research, Chen said.

This allows the joint development of soybean varieties in Sanya that can be directly applicable to Brazilian farms.

Meanwhile, the favorable policies of the Hainan Free Trade Port could also facilitate the future import of such soybeans into China, Chen added.