



US ups provocations after calls for ‘guardrails’

The US has approved new arms sales to Taiwan and sent a warship close to China’s Nansha and Xisha islands, only a week after high-level meeting **3**

Arms deliveries to Ukraine heighten risks of WWII

Wars are fought with weapons, but ended by negotiations. Led by the US and UK, the West is putting its faith in a proxy war and a war of attrition **6**

Wang Jianan takes historic long jump victory for China

Wang Jianan of China snatched victory in the men’s long jump at the World Athletics championships at Hayward Field in Eugene, Oregon on Saturday with his sixth and final effort **19**

Heat warning



Rail passengers pass an electronic sign warning of ‘Extremely hot weather’ forecast for July 18 and 19, advising commuters to only travel for essential journeys, at Kings Cross station in London on July 17, 2022. The UK’s meteorological agency on Friday issued its first ever “red” warning for exceptional heat, forecasting record highs of 40 degrees Celsius next week. Photo: AFP

► ‘Ideological bias, Western centrism’ cause failed forecasts in past decade

Why Western predictions on China were mostly wrong

By Yang Sheng

When commenting on China, some in the West only see a country constantly at the cusp of crisis, ranging from predictions of a “China hard landing” or “China collapse,” to “COVID is China’s Chernobyl moment” and “the end of Communist Party of China’s (CPC) rule.” Over the past decade, whenever

China encountered difficulties and challenges, some Western politicians, scholars and so-called China experts always repeat wild prophecies about the fate of China and the CPC. Needless to say, none was even remotely right.

Far from it, China under the leadership of CPC has overcome various challenges, become stronger than ever and is

closer to the center of the global stage than ever. Even under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, China has showed a much better performance than the West in saving lives and controlling the epidemic since the beginning, and its economic growth is still faster

than most major economies, Chinese experts said.

The wrong predictions about China in the past decade have shown an interesting trend of Western understanding of China: from downplaying China’s development and exaggerating the problems that China has, to recognizing the fact of China’s rise, and now to the

Biden’s Middle East visit ‘empty-handed’ despite U-turn in stance

By GT staff reporters

US President Joe Biden concluded his four-day trip to the Middle East trying to give reassurances of Washington’s influence in the region, which was riposted by Chinese observers as this trip only showed that US influence in this region is declining, since Biden returned home empty-handed after none of his major goals - pushing regional countries to contain Iran, and persuading them to increase oil supplies to slash Russia’s oil income - were achieved.

Moreover, the US President’s repeated peddling of the so-called threat posed by China and Russia in the Middle East made the already conflict-laden region realize the increasing danger caused by the US. Experts said that making a U-turn to cozy up to Middle East countries when the US is in an oil crisis has further exposed the US’ selfishness and hypocrisy to those regional countries, while choosing the wrong time for the visit which yielded few results meant that Biden’s first Middle East trip was yet another huge and awkward diplomatic blunder.

In a speech during a summit with six Gulf states, Egypt, Jordan and Iraq in Jeddah, Biden said that the US will remain an active, engaged partner in the Middle East, and Washington will not walk away and leave a vacuum to be filled by Russia, China or Iran, he said.

“The US is invested in building a positive future for the region, in partnership with all of you — and the US is not going anywhere,” he said, according to a transcript of his speech.

Biden made the remarks after concluding his four-

CHINA IN THE SPOTLIGHT

2
Ability

2
Hard



▶ Connecting flights



Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic greets the first nonstop flight from Beijing to Belgrade on July 16, 2022 at a ceremony at Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport. Chinese carrier Hainan Airlines launched the new direct service. (See story on Page 9) Photo: Xinhua

Ability to fix problems reason behind support to CPC: observer

▶ Why, from Page 1

anxiety of how to deal with a powerful China with a unique political system and culture.

The "China collapse theory" is a typical example of wrong Western predictions about China, and there are quite a number of Western scholars who used to or still hold these opinions. A representative prediction of such kind was made by Francis Fukuyama in 2012: China's top-down political system, under pressure from a growing middle class empowered by wealth and social networks, is likely to blow up at some point.

Fukuyama told media that "China has always been a country with a big information problem where the emperor cannot figure out what is going on at a grassroots level" [...] and "this is in so many respects exactly the Communist Party's problem. Because they do not have a free media, they do not have local elections, they cannot really judge what their people are thinking."

Fukuyama is not alone in this regard. There were some other "famous" Western proponent of the hilarious theory that used their biased knowledge to predict China's course in the past 10 years, such as when former US secretary of state Hillary Clinton said in 2011 that the "Chinese system is doomed."

Why are they wrong

At the background of Fukuyama's prediction was the Wenzhou high-speed train accident in 2011, which sparked a massive discussion by the Chinese public on social media platforms, with many voices expressing safety concerns about public trans-

portation as well as questioning the credibility of the government over the crash investigation.

But was the incident proving Fukuyama's assumption that the CPC has failed to grasp what Chinese people are thinking? Has the growing access of the Chinese middle class to the internet weakened the authority of the government? Analysts say the answer is clear: Fukuyama was wrong.

In terms of social media, today China has more than 1 billion web users, compared with about 560 million in 2012. "Why didn't the expansion of web users weaken the political system of China? The reason is that China has successfully developed online public opinion platforms that allow people to express their opinions, reflect on the problems of Chinese society and effectively warn the government to fix them," said Zhang Yiwu, a professor at Peking University.

Zhang Weiwei, director of the China Institute of Fudan University, said that there are two main problems with the failure of the West to make correct predictions about China, Zhang said. "First is that they have ideological bias, as they believe China or any other non-Western country will eventually be Westernized as long as it wants to be modernized. Another problem is that Western political science is based on the experience of Western history, so when Western scholars used such 'science' to analyze China, a country with an entirely different civilization, they will come to unreliable conclusions most of the time."

Of course, not all predictions from other countries about China are pessimistic but the problem is that Western media and society does not

pay enough attention to these predictions.

Martin Jacques, a former senior fellow at the Department of Politics and International Studies at Cambridge University, made some correct predictions in his work published in 2009, *When China Rules the World*. Jacques said China's history and its culture is so different that you cannot make sense of it using a Western template. Jacques holds an entirely different opinion compare to many other Western scholars who always demonize the Chinese political system or the governance of the CPC in China. "Far from being in crisis, in fact, support for the Chinese political system had increased and would continue to increase as long as China was successful," he said.

Because the people can see that it has "worked extremely well for China, and therefore would strengthen the political system in China. China would not only remain very different, but globally, as China rose, there would be an increasing process of 'sinification' of the world," Jacques said.

On how to analyze China correctly, Zhang Weiwei has some suggestions to the Western scholars. "They should observe polls from creditable and authoritative institutes like Pew and Ipsos, as they conduct surveys on large samples of people on topics like government satisfaction in successive years, and you will get a cautious conclusion via comprehensive comparison of that data; second, to do the field research rather than only staying in the house to focusing on data and second-hand sources, otherwise your conclusions will be far from the facts."

Hard for US to win over allies as Middle East moves to multilateralism: expert

▶ Biden's, from Page 1

day trip to the region, his first after more than a year and a half since taking office. Israel was the first leg of his four-day trip, followed by the West Bank and Saudi Arabia.

But in the eyes of Chinese experts, Biden's Middle Eastern trip was both "fruitless" and "embarrassing," as the two major goals of his administration are to coordinate regional countries to form an effective deterrence against Iran, and to push oil supply increases from Saudi Arabia in order to slash Russia's earnings from oil, a professor from the Institute of International Relations at the China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing, who requested anonymity, told the Global Times, noting that so far, none of those goals were achieved.

After Biden repeatedly chided China and Russia before and during his trip, Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Adel al-Jubeir, said in an interview with CNBC on Saturday that Riyadh will continue to bolster its partnerships with both Washington and Beijing. "We build bridges with people; we don't see one as exclusive of the other," said the minister.

Zhu Weilie, director of the Middle East Studies Institute at Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times on Sunday that Biden's Middle Eastern trip sends alarming signs to regional countries, as they see clearly that the US is not trying to solve problems, but seeking to lead the already conflict-stricken region to greater discord.

The US will find it as hard to win over allies to contain China as it does in the Asia Pacific, said the Beijing-based expert, noting that China has no enemy country in the Middle East, only solid, mutual beneficial cooperation. "Plus, China won't preach to Middle Eastern countries what to do and what values they should adopt, and won't slap sanctions on them," he told the Global Times.

Embarrassing moments

Biden's administration has already been at odds with key Middle East allies such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt over a range of issues, including human rights.

Experts also pointed out that the US advocacy of human rights and its ideology are insurmountable obstacles that have caused deep-rooted suspicion and distrust between US and Middle Eastern countries, which are also growing more suspicious of Washington's "self-interest first" diplomacy.

Biden's photo with the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia also gained widespread international media attention, as he made a U-turn from calling the country a "pariah" over human rights issues to bumping fists and posing for pictures with him. "This shows how hypocritical US diplomatic policy is. Once there are interests, they can immediately stamp on their so-called values right under their feet," the Beijing-based expert told the Global Times.

When bringing up the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi during his meeting with Prince Mohammed, the latter, apart from confirming that "what happened is regrettable and we have taken all legal measures to prevent a recurrence," also hit back by saying that "such an incident occurs anywhere in the world", highlighting "a number of mistakes" made by Washington such as torturing detainees at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, Al-Arabiya reported.