



China-developed LLM helps quake rescue

A large language model developed by researchers from China was applied in rescue efforts following the devastating earthquake in Myanmar in March: conference 4

China extends probe into imported beef

MOFCOM announced Wed a three-month extension of ongoing safeguard probe into beef imports, a move that experts affirm as both lawful and responsible 10

A timeless anthem of Chinese resilience and patriotism

The Yellow River Cantata echoes China's unyielding spirit from the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. From Yan'an's caves to global stages, its powerful notes unite hearts in patriotism and peace 14-15

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VOLUME 17 • NO. 4689 • THURSDAY AUGUST 7, 2025 • PRICE 2 YUAN

人民日报社主管 《环球时报》社有限公司主办、出版



Algerian Ambassador to the UN Amar Bendjama holds up an image of a starving child in Gaza during a UN Security Council meeting on the conflict in the Middle East on August 5, 2025 at UN headquarters in New York. Photo: VCG

Israeli PM's plan of full occupation in Gaza sparks opposition, worry

By Zhao Yusha and Bai Yunyi

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met senior security officials to finalize a new strategy for the nearly two-year war in the Gaza Strip, his office said on Tuesday, with media reporting he favored a complete military takeover of the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territory, Reuters reported.

In response to such reports, China's deputy permanent representative to the UN Geng Shuang urged Israel to immediately halt what he called dangerous actions and called on all parties to swiftly reach a binding and sustainable ceasefire agreement.

The Israeli cabinet is set to convene on Thursday as Israel considers a full Gaza takeover, Israeli media reported Tuesday. It was unclear, however, whether Netanyahu was foreseeing a prolonged takeover or a short-term operation aimed at dismantling Hamas and freeing Israeli hostages. The prime minis-

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Plan

► Frequent exchanges help enhance mutual understanding: Chinese envoy SK to waive visas for Chinese tour groups

By GT staff reporters

South Korea will grant visa-free entry to Chinese group tourists for nine months beginning in late September as part of efforts to boost local tourism, the prime minister's office said Wednesday.

Prime Minister Kim Min-seok presided over a meeting to revitalize domestic tourism, deciding to allow Chinese group tourists to be exempted from visas from Sept. 29 this year to June 30 next year.

The prime minister's office expected the visa-free policy to bolster domestic

demand by boosting additional demand to visit the Asian country, with the local tourism market recovering rapidly.

Chinese Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Dai Bing said on social media on Wednesday that the decision is good news for Chinese travelers visiting South Korea. China has unilaterally granted visa-free entry to South Korean citizens since November last year, and data showed that people-to-people exchanges between China and South Korea have since grown rapidly.

"As close neighbors, frequent exchanges between the two peoples help

enhance mutual understanding and deepen friendship," Dai said.

Effective from November 8, 2024 to December 31, 2025, China allows people from nine countries – Slovakia, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Andorra, Monaco, Liechtenstein and South Korea – to visit China visa-free for tourism, business, family visits and transit, Xinhua reported in November 2024.

South Korea's decision to introduce the measure ahead of China's National Day holidays in October will help boost the domestic economy amid a recovery in foreign visits, the South Korean tour-

ism ministry said, Reuters reported.

Travel searches surge

Following South Korea's announcement of the visa-free policy, a travel index on Chinese travel platform Qunar.com showed that within half an hour after the news was released, the search volume for destinations in Seoul on the Qunar platform surged by 70 percent, peaking at a 1.2-fold increase, the platform told the Global Times on Wednesday.

Based on international flight and hotel booking vol-

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Move



Chinese tourists shop at a store in the Shilla Duty Free Shop in Jeju, South Korea on July 9, 2025. Photo: Liu Yang/GT

Move creates opportunities for 'improving bilateral relations'

►SK, from Page 1

umes for this summer, South Korea has consistently been among the top three most popular destinations for Chinese travelers. With the support of the group visa-free policy, South Korea's popularity is expected to rise steadily in the second half of the year, the platform said.

Data from Tongcheng Travel shows that as of 3 pm on Wednesday, the search volume for group tour products to South Korea during the National Day holidays on the platform increased by more than 60 percent compared with the previous day.

Data from Trip.com Group shows that as of Wednesday, the number of outbound travel orders from Chinese mainland tourists to South Korea has increased by 31 percent year-on-year since the start of this year. South Korea ranks the third among outbound travel destination countries, after Japan and Thailand.

South Korea's introduction of the visa-free policy at this time is a reciprocal move and an important mutually beneficial measure. This initiative is likely to further promote in-depth tourism cooperation between China and South Korea, and it is crucial for South Korea to boost its tourism market as China remains the primary source of foreign tourists for South Korea, Lü Chao, a Korean Peninsula affairs expert at the Liaoning Academy of Social Sciences, told the Global Times on Wednesday.

The policy is timely, especially as South Korea's economy is facing multiple challenges, including the impact

of US tariffs. Against this backdrop, promoting service sectors such as tourism and sightseeing will help stimulate consumption and drive economic growth, so attracting Chinese tourists is an important consideration, Da Zhigang, director of the Institute of Northeast Asian Studies at the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences, told the Global Times on Wednesday.

Shares in South Korean department stores, casinos, hotels and beauty product makers rallied on hopes of a boost from Chinese demand. Hyundai Department Store shares jumped 7.1 per cent, Hotel Shilla rose 4.8 percent, casino operator Paradise climbed 2.9 percent and Hankook Cosmetics surged 9.9 percent, according to Reuters.

Chinese tourists have long occupied an important position in South Korea's tourism market. In 2024, some 4.6 million Chinese travelers visited South Korea, accounting for 28.1 percent of the 16.3 million inbound visitors, the Korea Times reported in February, citing figures from Korea Tourism Organization.

Pragmatic approach

Beyond boosting tourism, South Korea's visa-free policy for Chinese groups signals that the South Korean government hopes to improve relations with China and promote pragmatic diplomacy, experts said.

Relaxing visa requirements for Chinese tour groups is practical as well as a concrete action to develop friendly China-South Korea relations, since people-to-people exchanges can

enhance mutual understanding between countries, Lü said.

It also creates an opportunity for the warming of China-South Korea relations, especially against backdrop of South Korean politicians' recent remarks concerning bilateral relations, Da said.

In the interview with the Washington Post published on Sunday, South Korea's Foreign Minister Cho Hyun claimed that Seoul has become "rather alert to China's rise and its challenges," while also expressing the desire to maintain a good relationship with China.

In response to Cho's remarks, the South Korean's Presidential Office said on Tuesday that "even if there are disagreements on some issues between Korea and China, we will continue to strive to create a Korea-China relationship that contributes to the people's livelihood and regional stability and prosperity," according to South Korean media Chosun Biz.

The Chinese Embassy in South Korea said on Tuesday that strengthening friendly cooperation is in the best interests of China and South Korea and their peoples.

The Chinese Embassy in South Korea said in the statement that China and South Korea are important neighbors and cooperative partners, and strengthening friendly cooperation is in the best interests of the two countries and their peoples. Since the inauguration of South Korea's new administration, China and South Korea have actively engaged with each other, leading to a positive start in bilateral relations.

Plan 'hinders establishment of Palestine state, risks further crisis in region'

►Israeli, from Page 1

ter's office declined to comment, per Reuters.

Recent media reports indicate that Israel has decided to escalate its military offensive and fully occupy Gaza. China expresses its grave concern about this, said Geng Shuang.

"We urge Israel to immediately halt such dangerous actions. We urge all parties to promptly reach a binding and sustainable ceasefire agreement. We further urge countries with significant influence over the parties concerned to act in a just and responsible manner and take concrete steps to help bring about a ceasefire," he told the Security Council on Tuesday local time.

US President Donald Trump has suggested that he will not block possible Israeli plans to take over Gaza, reported Al Jazeera.

Netanyahu's decision to push for a full-scale occupation of Gaza is driven both by intense domestic public pressure and the current deadlock in ceasefire negotiations, Niu Xinchun, executive director of the China-Arab Research Institute of Ningxia University, told the Global Times.

Protesters gathered in Tel Aviv's "Hostage Square" on Saturday, urging the Israeli government to secure a ceasefire deal that would bring home the hostages held by Hamas and other militant groups in Gaza, Xinhua reported.

Recently, mounting civilian suffering and humanitarian crises in Gaza are pushing European powers toward formal recognition of the State of Palestine, exposing a widening rift between Europe and the US over the future of the Middle East peace process, Xinhua reported.

From an external perspective, the two-State solution has recently been brought back onto the agenda by Western countries, which exerted direct diplomatic pressure on Israel, Liu Zhongmin, a professor from the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times.

Liu said in response, Israel is seeking to gain control over Gaza to create obstacles to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said on July 30 that the two-State solution is the only way out of the Palestinian question. China firmly supports the Palestinian people in establishing the independent State of Palestine.

Obstacles and spillover effects

Netanyahu's plan to propose full reoccupation of Gaza faces three core challenges. First, a protracted war would lead to mounting financial, human, and political costs; second, ongoing military operations are likely to result in significant civilian casualties, drawing more international condemnation, Wang Jin, an associate professor at the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies at Northwest University in Xi'an, told the Global Times, noting that the conflict also risks triggering an even more severe humanitarian crisis.

Israel's military says it already has operational control of 75 percent of Gaza. But under the proposed plan it would occupy the entire territory — moving into areas where more than two million Palestinians are now concentrated, per BBC.

The plan would severely undermine the prospects for the establishment of a Palestinian state, which may also obstruct the normalization of ties between Arab states and Israel, thus heightening the sensitivity of the Palestine issue in the region, Liu noted, who also warned that a prolonged occupation of Gaza would likely fuel a further surge in extremism and terrorism.

