



### Aircraft carrier *Fujian* set for far-sea drills

The *Fujian* will undergo a full transition from initial to full operational capability in 2026, moving from construction to launch to commissioning **4**

### Half marathon for humanoid robots to start

This weekend, a group of humanoid robots took to the course for adaptive training ahead of next week's half marathon event held in Beijing **13**

### Beijing Intl Kite Festival blends technology with tradition

The two-day event at Beijing Garden Expo Park brought together 15 teams from home and abroad competing across eight categories. Kite-making has long been a traditional folk handicraft in North China **14**



Vessels sail at the Strait of Hormuz, off the coast of Oman's Musandam Province on April 12, 2026. Photo: IC

## US-Iran Islamabad negotiations end without a deal

By Deng Xiaoci

After 21 hours of intense negotiations in Islamabad, the US-Iran talks, which multiple news outlets said to be the highest-level face-to-face meeting between US and Iranian officials since 1979, ended on Sunday without an agreement to halt the monthlong war.

The historic talks, held under a fragile ceasefire, collapsed as delegations from both nations departed Pakistan on Sunday. According to media reports, negotiators traded accusations upon leaving, with each side blaming the other's unreasonable demands for the diplomatic breakdown.

Despite the lengthy talks, deep-seated mistrust – shaped by decades of hostilities and sharpened by the latest conflict – continues to weigh heavily on both sides. Disputes over critical issues, including the Strait of Hormuz and Iran's nuclear program, have further com-

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Gap

► Move aims to enhance kinship, deliver tangible benefits to Taiwan compatriots: experts

# Mainland unveils 10 measures to boost cross-Straits exchanges, co-op

By Zhang Wanshi

Authorities on the Chinese mainland unveiled a package of 10 policies and measures to boost exchanges and cooperation across the Taiwan Straits, including pushing for resuming regular direct flights and facilitating the entry of Taiwan's agricultural and fishery products. The announcement came as Kuomintang (KMT) Chairwoman Cheng Li-wun concluded a six-day visit to mainland and returned to the island of

Taiwan on Sunday.

The package, unveiled by the Taiwan Work Office of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on Sunday, aims to advance the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations and enhance the kinship and well-being of compatriots across the Straits, the office said, according to Xinhua.

Mainland experts described the measures as among the most substantive in recent years for advancing cross-Straits en-

gagement, saying they build on the momentum of Cheng's visit and are designed to deliver tangible benefits through expanded exchanges and closer cooperation on both sides.

### Shared Gains

Among the measures, the mainland will fast-track full resumption of regular direct flights across Taiwan Straits, including flights to and from mainland cities of Urumqi, Xi'an, Harbin, Kunming and Lanzhou, Xinhua reported.

Kinmen will be supported to use the new airport built in its adjacent city of Xiamen, Fujian Province.

Zhang Wensheng, deputy dean and a professor at the Taiwan Research Institute at Xiamen University in Fujian Province, noted that the measure regarding direct flights would resonate strongly with the Taiwan public. Previously, the Chinese mainland announced in February the resumption of tourism by Shanghai residents to Kinmen and Matsu islands

to normalize cross-Straits exchanges and to respond to the strong expectations of Taiwan residents and the tourism industry.

Regarding the policies that were unveiled on Sunday, Taiwan's United Daily News (UDN) quoted a travel industry insider in the region as saying it is hoped that Taiwan authorities will respond positively to the mainland's signals and goodwill, and take concrete actions that benefit the Tai-

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Measures





Kuomintang Chairwoman Cheng Li-wun visits Xiaomi Auto in Beijing on April 12, 2026 before returning to Taipei.

Photo: VCG

## Measures announced as KMT leader Cheng wraps up mainland visit

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wan people rather than engaging in constant political struggles.

"The Taiwan authorities should seize the moment this time to build on this positive momentum, so that people in Taiwan and the local tourism industry can benefit from the policies," Zhang said.

According to the office cited by Xinhua, efforts will also be made to explore the establishment of a regular communication mechanism between the CPC and the KMT, and an institutionalized platform will be set up to promote two-way exchanges between young people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits.

Such institutionalized and regularized exchanges between the two sides can resolve many long-standing issues and potential risks in cross-Straits relations, serving as a crucial measure to stabilize the Taiwan Straits and uphold peace across it, said Li Zhenguang, director at the Institute of Taiwan Studies at Beijing Union University.

In addition, a communication mechanism will be set up on the common political foundation of adhering to the 1992 Consensus and opposing "Taiwan independence" to facilitate the entry of Taiwan's agricultural and fishery products that meet the quarantine standards into the mainland, per Xinhua.

If the mainland allows Taiwan's deep-sea fishing vessels to dock, provides wharves and berths for landing catches and facilitates their sales, it will significantly cut operating costs and generate strong demand for high-value fish such as tuna, squid and saury, Taiwan legislator and

KMT Kaohsiung mayoral candidate Ko Chih-en said in response to the new measures, Taiwan-based media outlet Economic Daily News reported on Sunday.

Yet a certain DPP member deliberately hyped up criticism against these favorable measures. Legislator Lin Chun-hsien issued a warning, per media outlet SETN, urging the public not to mistake the incentives for genuine goodwill. He said any economic benefits would ultimately be contingent on conditions set by the mainland.

"The mainland's stance is above-board and unambiguous, grounded in the one-China principle and committed to China's complete reunification," Zhang said. Maliciously distorting the mainland's policies that benefit Taiwan and its people will only undermine cross-Straits relations and harm the vital interests of the Taiwan public, Zhang added.

Li noted that precisely because these measures boost cross-Straits exchanges and benefit people on both sides, the DPP authorities feel threatened. "They worry their misleading narrative toward the Taiwan public will collapse amid real cross-Straits interactions, so they have resorted to wantonly smearing and attacking the policies," the expert said.

### Tangible results

On Sunday, KMT Chairwoman Cheng and her delegation returned to Taipei after concluding the mainland visit. At the airport, Cheng delivered a speech, where she appreciated the mainland's 10 measures for Taiwan, saying they would benefit multiple sectors including aquaculture and tourism, and allow Taiwan people

to enjoy the dividend of cross-Straits peace and development.

Before departing from Beijing, Cheng on Sunday morning made a more-than-an-hour tour to Xiaomi Auto's facilities, where she listened to introduction to the Xiaomi YU7 Max SUV and tried it in the driver's seat.

When reporters on the scene asked whether she would consider bringing one vehicle back to the Taiwan region, she replied, "Of course I'd love to take one home," Taiwan's TVBS reported.

Cheng added that there are many Xiaomi smart home appliances and products in her home, it reported.

During the mainland visit, Cheng was also gifted a robot hand at the Zhongguancun Science Park, per video clips released by Zhi News affiliated with Shenzhen Satellite TV. Cheng has mentioned multiple times the potential for cross-Straits technological cooperation, learning from mainland innovation experience and creating opportunities for Taiwan youth, per the outlet.

From showing strong interest in an "intelligent bionic hand" and viewing student-developed innovations including robotic dogs and robotic arm in Beijing, to experiencing drone-delivered milk tea from Meituan in Shanghai, the delegation has witnessed firsthand the remarkable progress the mainland has made, Li Zhenguang said.

"The mainland extends goodwill to the Taiwan region and safeguards peace across the Taiwan Straits, laying clear an option for the Taiwan people. Only by adhering to the 1992 Consensus and recognizing their Chinese identity can there be a way forward," Zhang added.

## Gap in negotiation terms, mistrust among major obstacles: observers

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plated the path forward, making any breakthrough far from swift or straightforward, Chinese analysts said.

US Vice President JD Vance, who led the US delegation, left negotiations with Iranian delegation with an "understanding that is our final and best offer," per NBC News.

Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the speaker of Iran's Parliament, said his delegation raised "forward-looking" initiatives during ceasefire negotiations in Pakistan, but the US failed to gain the trust of the delegation in the talks, per Al Jazeera.

The strategic mutual distrust between the US and Iran is an important factor affecting the negotiation process. Besides, the more fundamental issue lies in the fact that the negotiating leverage and demands of the two sides are severely asymmetrical, with a huge gap in their opening positions, Qin Tian, a deputy director of the Institute of Middle East Studies of China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), told the Global Times on Sunday.

A strained diplomatic history also casts a shadow over the talks. Twice in the past year, Iran was deep in indirect negotiations with the US when talks fell apart, and the US and Israel attacked, the NYT wrote on April 9.

### Ball in court

Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency on Sunday cited an informed source as saying that "Iran has put forward reasonable initiatives and proposals in the negotiations. The ball is in America's court to look at the issues realistically."

"It would be unrealistic to expect a single round of negotiations to resolve the more than 40 years of accumulated contradictions between the US and Iran – especially after the recent conflict. The mere fact that the two sides were able to sit down for face-to-face talks represents a significant breakthrough in itself. We cannot expect one negotiation to solve all the problems at once," Ding Long, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times on Sunday.

Ding listed several key sticking points: the safe navigation through the Strait, Iran's nuclear program, the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel, and the unfreezing of Iran's overseas assets.

Although the US and Iran are technically in a Pakistan-brokered two-week ceasefire, the situation remains fragile, Qin Tian from CICIR said on Sunday, amid reports from Al Jazeera that Israel has launched air raids against several towns in southern Lebanon and Hezbollah claims of two attacks on Israeli forces.

However, once the "two-week" deadline expires, the risk of the US and Iran resuming hostilities will rise sharply, Qin said.

"If the thorny issues cannot be resolved at the negotiating table, it is very likely they will return to the battlefield to settle it, with the Hormuz Strait being a possible flashpoint as the US could seek to open the key channel with force," Qin warned.

Trump posted on Sunday that the US forces will immediately "begin the process of BLOCKADING any and all Ships trying to enter, or leave, the Strait of Hormuz."

According to Al Jazeera, none of the US delegation stayed behind in Pakistan following talks with Iran, a US official says, leaving nobody in the Pakistani capital Islamabad to pursue back-channel discussions.