

## ▶ To co-chair regular meeting with Russian PM Mishustin Li to visit Russia, Belarus to 'boost exchange, cooperation'

By Wang Qi

At the invitation of Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and Belarusian Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko, from August 20 to 23, Chinese Premier Li Qiang will travel to Russia to chair the 29th regular meeting between Chinese and Russian heads of government and visit Russia and Belarus.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said at a press briefing on Monday that the regular meeting between Chinese and Russian heads of government is an important mechanism for delivering on the common understandings between the two presidents and coordinating practical cooperation in areas such as people-to-people and cultural exchanges.

During the visit to Russia, Premier Li and Russian Prime Minister Mishustin will co-chair the 29th regular meeting of the mechanism and have

in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations, practical cooperation and important issues of mutual interest, Mao said, noting that China-Russia relations have overcome external disturbances and maintained sound and stable growth, under the strategic guidance of the two presidents.

As for Li's visit to Belarus, Mao said Premier Li and Belarusian Prime Minister Golovchenko will have talks together with in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations and cooperation in various fields.

In recent years, under the personal guidance and with the commitment of both presidents, the China-Belarus relations have maintained sound momentum of growth. Our political mutual trust has been consolidated and Belt and Road cooperation has borne fruitful results, Mao said.

The latest round of interactions between China and Russia is a concrete action to implement a series of consensus reached by the two coun-

tries' heads of state during Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to China in May, said Wan Qingsong, an expert at the Center for Russian Studies at East China Normal University.

According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, the meeting between the Chinese and Russian heads of government has been held annually since its launch in 1996. Cui Heng, a scholar from the Shanghai-based China National Institute for SCO International Exchange and Judicial Cooperation, said the mechanism is a constructive complement to the leaders' summit.

The heads of government of China and Russia are more in charge of economic affairs and the implementation of practical cooperation projects, Cui said.

Premier Li's visit is expected to cover a wide range of topics and a full agenda, which will further push bilateral cooperation to a more in-depth and comprehensive level, Cui said.

## India, Japan to hold '2+2' meeting; 'differences in ties difficult to overcome'

By Liu Xin

India and Japan are set to hold a 2+2 ministerial meeting in India on Tuesday, bringing together the foreign and defense ministers from both countries to focus on strengthening their security cooperation. Analysts note that India and Japan have been deepening their relations in recent years, focusing on aligning their efforts to counterbalance China's influence and to enhance their respective roles in the Asia-Pacific region.

Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar and Defense Minister Rajnath Singh will hold the "2+2" meeting with Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa and Defense Minister Minoru Kihara on Tuesday.

At the meeting, the two sides "will hold full-fledged discussions" on the revision of a joint declaration on security cooperation, "taking China's increasing maritime expansion into account," Japanese media outlet Yomiuri Shimbun reported on Saturday.

The meeting will be the third of its kind since the first one in 2019. Japan and India have been enhancing their bilateral cooperation in recent years, and the latest meeting will focus on strategic coordination to increase their regional influence and counter China, said analysts.

It will also address maritime issues, particularly in the South China Sea, Qian Feng, director of the research department at the National Strategy Institute at Tsinghua University, told the Global Times.

Qian said that India and Japan both have distinct needs for strengthening their relationship. For India, deepening cooperation with Japan will help it diversify its arms imports, while Japan also benefits from an improved defense cooperation network with other countries.

Moreover, while US-India relations have been strained due to various factors, including India's ties with Russia and US criticism of India's human rights record, Japan, which has been maintaining strong ties with both India and the US, can play a role in mediating US-India relations and enhancing the development of the Quad mechanism, Qian told the Global Times on Monday.

However, discrepancies in their relations with Russia and the US reflect a significant gap in their fundamental ideals and principles in foreign relations, analysts said, noting that unlike Japan – a firm ally of the US – India consistently holds a stance of non-alignment.

India and Japan have different starting points on regional and global security issues, and more obstacles will emerge when they try to deepen their bilateral and multilateral cooperation, said analysts.

## ▶ Train derailment



**Dongdaegu Station in South Korea is crowded with passengers waiting for trains as an electronic board displays delays caused by a train derailment on August 18, 2024. A Korea Train Express train bound for Busan had one of its wheels derail while traveling from Dongdaegu Station to Gyeongju Station, media reported.** Photo: VCG

## Abbas reportedly plans to visit Gaza Strip as Palestinian officials seek international support

By Deng Xiaoci

Preparations reportedly are taking place for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's planned visit to the Gaza Strip as the Palestinian officials have reached out to countries worldwide for support.

According to a statement published by Palestinian official news Agency WAFA on Sunday, the visit aims to demonstrate solidarity with Gaza's residents, assert that the State

of Palestine and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) are the legitimate authorities over all Palestinian territories, and promote national unity, the Xinhua News Agency reported on Monday.

The statement noted that "the Palestinian leadership" is engaging with UN agencies, UN Security Council members, Arab and Islamic countries, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the EU, the African Union, and other

global powers to garner support and ensure the initiative's success.

Israel has also been informed, the Xinhua's report added.

In a speech delivered at a Turkish parliamentary assembly, Abbas said he decided to travel to Gaza with all members of the Palestinian leadership, emphasizing his commitment to stand with the Palestinian people, WAFA reported.

Abbas also called on the

leaders of Arab, Islamic, and friendly countries as well as the UN secretary-general to join his planned visit to help "stop the Israeli aggression on Gaza," while stressing that "our next destination will be the holy city of Jerusalem, our eternal capital," according to media reports.

Abbas plans to visit Gaza and is emphasizing the significance of a visit to Jerusalem, while also calling for the involvement of Arab and Islamic countries, the Organization of

Islamic Cooperation, and even the UN in this initiative. One of the aims of this visit is to assert the presence of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict, Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times on Monday.

