

# MOU to jointly promote Global Security Initiative cooperation signed Chinese, Lao FMs meet, pledge stronger ties

By Liu Caiyu and Shen Sheng

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR Thongsavanh Phommihane in Beijing on Thursday, with both pledging to push forward the building of a China-Laos community with a shared future.

Chinese analysts described the meeting as highly productive, instilling greater confidence and laying a promising foundation for future collaboration between the two countries.

Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Com-

munist Party of China Central Committee, said that the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries has become ever more robust and resilient.

Thongsavanh praised China's leapfrog development amid a complex external environment. He also said that Laos firmly adheres to the one-China policy and stands ready to work with China to make greater progress in building a Laos-China community with a shared future.

Phommihane is visiting China from March 12 to 15.

"The talks between the two

sides were highly productive, as it not only reaffirmed their past experiences of bilateral cooperation but also established a promising foundation for future collaboration in the coming years," Zhou Shixin, director of the Institute for Foreign Policy Studies at the Shanghai Institute for International Studies, told the Global Times.

In their meeting, Wang said China is willing to work with Laos to further deepen and expand practical cooperation, advance the construction of the China-Laos Economic Corridor, enhance the China-Laos Railway's operational capacity,

accelerate comprehensive development along the railway line, and expand collaboration in energy, artificial intelligence, the digital economy, and other fields.

"The areas of deepening cooperation with China align with Laos' national vision and need for more robust economic development," Ge Hongliang, vice dean of the ASEAN College at the Guangxi Minzu University, told the Global Times on Thursday.

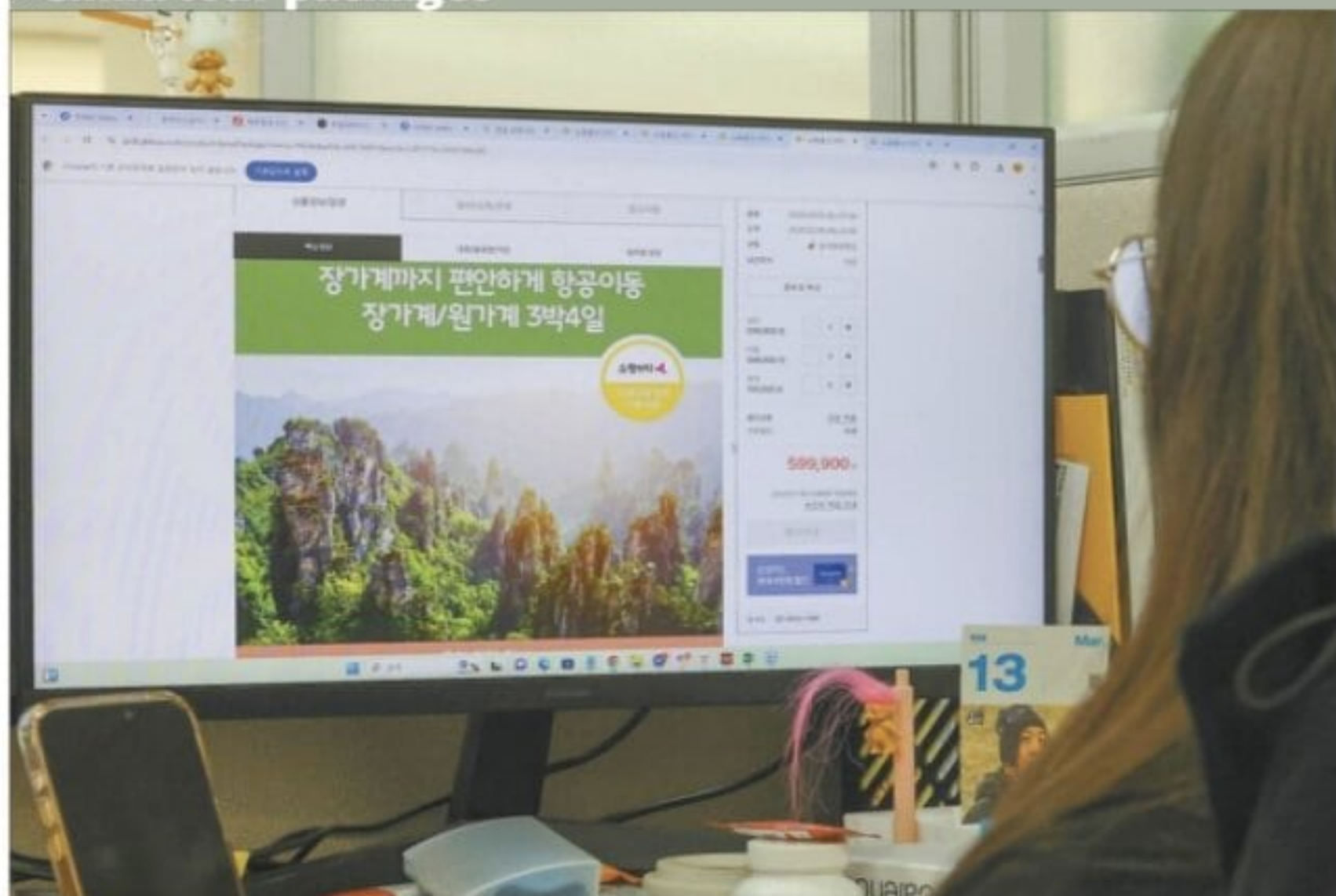
Zhou emphasized the development of the flagship project between the two countries, the China-Laos Economic Corridor

with the China-Laos Railway as an important part, has already laid a solid foundation. The meeting has instilled confidence that further practical cooperation regarding the railway's expansion can be anticipated.

After the meeting, both sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Jointly Promoting Cooperation on the Global Security Initiative.

This collaboration sets an example, potentially encouraging more ASEAN nations to join China to promote and cooperate on the Global Security Initiative, Zhou believed.

## China tour packages



Staff at a travel agency formulate China tour packages on March 13, 2025, in Seoul, South Korea. Travel companies in South Korea are strengthening their China-focused package tour offerings in response to the growing number of travelers attracted by China's visa-free policy. Photo: VCG

## Meeting between China, Russia, Iran on Iranian nuclear issue set to start

By Li Yawei

China will hold the Beijing meeting between China, Russia and Iran on the Iranian nuclear issue on Friday, which Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning described on Thursday as "China's latest diplomatic effort with the aim of enhancing communication and coordination."

A Chinese expert said that the meeting is a step signaling the three nations' pursuit of expanded strategic synergies. Almost at the same time, Iran rejected a US' move that proposed nuclear talks. Expert noted that the stalemate in US-Iran talks persists due to a deep lack of mutual trust.

Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu will chair the meeting and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Ryabkov Sergey Alexeevich and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi will attend the meeting in Beijing. The three parties will exchange views on the Iranian nuclear issue and other issues of mutual interest, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on Wednesday.

In response to a media question about China's expectations for the meeting, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning stated on Thursday that as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and a party to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), China calls for an appropriate resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue through political and diplomatic means, and efforts of safeguarding the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and promoting peace and stability in the Middle East. Under current circumstances, we believe that relevant parties need to remain calm, exercise restraint, and prevent the situation surrounding the Iranian nuclear issue from escalating or even descending to confrontation and conflict, Mao noted.

With the Iran nuclear deal in stalemate, the Beijing meeting between China, Russia and Iran seeks to explore new possibilities and might discuss the establishment of a new negotiation platform for resolving the Iranian nuclear issue in the future, Liu Zhongmin, a professor from the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, said.

## Senators eye renaming Taipei rep office; may for own gains: expert

By Fan Anqi

Some US senators have introduced a bipartisan legislation, attempting to change the name of "Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office" to "the Taiwan Representative Office." They claimed the move is to "underscore the US' commitment" to the island's democracy and enhances clarity in their relationship, US media reported on Wednesday. Experts said the legislation essentially aims to create "one China, one Taiwan," and support "Taiwan independence." They pointed out some US senators are exploiting China hawks and pro-Taiwan island factions in the new US administration to further their own political goals.

Senators John Curtis and Jeff Merkley introduced the Taiwan Representative Office Act to rename "Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office", National Review

reported on Wednesday. In a press release issued by senator Curtis, the legislation does not alter the US position on Taiwan's international status, it said.

Similar legislations were introduced twice, in 2023 and 2024, in both the US House of Representatives and the Senate, but did not gain enough traction to pass in either chamber. But the senators said there is "high hopes" for it this time around, as Secretary of State Marco Rubio co-authored the 2023 iteration of the bill, media report said.

In September 2021, China lodged solemn representation with the US over media reports that said the US is "seriously considering changing the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office's name to the 'Taiwan Representative Office,'" the Chinese Foreign Ministry slammed the move of causing serious deterioration of the China-US relationship

and peace in the Taiwan Straits.

Wu Xinbo, director of the Center for American Studies at Fudan University, said that internationally, the island of Taiwan is usually referred to as "Chinese Taipei" or as an economic entity, while the direct use of "Taiwan" is rare.

Therefore, the latest legislation essentially aims to create "one China, one Taiwan," supporting "Taiwan independence," Wu said. As for the timing of the legislation, the expert said with China hawks and pro-Taiwan forces in the new US government, the senators may be seeking to leverage these forces to advance their own political agenda, driven by personal interests.

US Congress has consistently taken a high-profile stance on Taiwan question and some of the congressmen may have received substantial financial support from Taiwan island, experts said.

