

► Visit vital for China-Italy ties, expansion of trade: experts

Wang Yi kicks off crucial Europe trip

► ECONOMY

By GT staff reporters

Chinese State Councilor Wang Yi kicked off a week-long visit to Europe on Tuesday, his first overseas trip since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, with Italy as his first stop. Experts said that the high-level exchange will strengthen bilateral political trust.

Wang said on Tuesday that China's support for Italy amid the pandemic had nothing to do with politics and there was no self-interest involved, according to China's state broadcaster.

Wang made the remarks at a media briefing in Rome with Italian Minister of Foreign Af-

fairs Luigi Di Maio.

China was "an indispensable partner" in the world, Di Maio told reporters, vowing to enhance cooperation with China in the fight against the pandemic and beyond in the future.

Analysts said the timely tour could be vital for both China and Italy, especially when the US' unilateralist approach has become a major barrier to the global economic recovery.

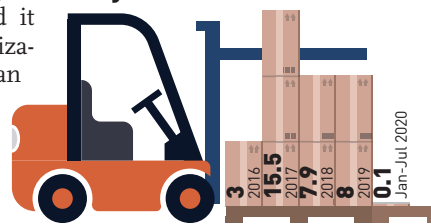
The visit of Wang to Italy is very significant and a concrete sign of the importance of relations between China and Italy, Paolo Bazzoni, chairman of the China-Italy Chamber of Commerce (CICC), told the Global Times on Tuesday.

Established in 1991, the CICC had more than 500 members as of 2020, and it is the only business organization representing the Italian business community that is both recognized by the Italian Government and China.

"This visit also marks the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations in a year that saw all forecast events canceled or postponed. The Italian Government and Embassy of Italy in China worked to facilitate and organize this trip at a moment that sees China leading toward a steady recovery," Bazzoni said.

Bilateral trade hit a record high of \$54.2 billion in 2018.

► China-EU trade growth in yuan terms (%)



Source: Chinese customs
Graphics: GT

China is Italy's largest trading partner in Asia, while Italy is China's fifth-largest within the EU, according to a report by the Xinhua News Agency.

Bazzoni added that even though bilateral trade faced great difficulty during the lockdown, business never stopped

this year. He expected the visit to enhance the conditions of bilateral trade in areas that could develop much faster, such as Italian mechanical engineering and machinery products, pharmaceutical goods, and quality retail items.

Wang, who is also the foreign minister, will also visit the Netherlands, Norway, France and Germany during his tour.

The week-long visit has been welcomed by the relevant countries and demonstrates that both sides attach great importance to China-Europe relations, Zhao Lijian, spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, told a regular press briefing on Monday.

► Powerful achievement



Workers assemble a tower foundation for a new power transmission line in Huangjing town, East China's Jiangsu Province on Tuesday. The line requires the building of 66 tower foundations, and it will ease power shortages in the town.
Photo: cnsphoto

TikTok 'takes risk with US lawsuit' but may still win

► TECHNOLOGY

By GT staff reporters

The move by TikTok to take the Trump administration to court reflects the Chinese company's all-out efforts to defend itself against the US government's extreme bullying, and the move is risky but worth a try, a Chinese lawyer and industry observers said.

TikTok, the short-video platform owned by Chinese start-up ByteDance, said on Monday that it is filing a lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's attempt to ban the company in the US, giving seven reasons that the presidential executive order violates the Constitution of the US and is ultra vires.

"By banning TikTok with no notice or opportunity to be heard [whether before or after the fact], the executive order violates the due process protections of the Fifth Amendment," read the TikTok complaint.

TikTok also pointed to the fact that the executive order issued on August 6 was a misuse of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, which gives the US president broad authority to regulate a variety of economic transactions following a declaration of a national emergency.

US President Donald Trump issued the executive order on August 6 giving ByteDance 45 days to sell its stake or else face US restrictions, and he later added a 90-day deadline in a new order issued on August 14.

Each of the seven points listed in the TikTok complaint will have to be supported by much evidence and many facts, which will be quite a challenging process, or else the suit might be rejected by the court, Liu Xinze, senior partner at Beijing Polywell Law Firm, told the Global Times. Although the US government seems to have the upper hand in the case, there is a possibility that TikTok could win. "That can represent success for the Chinese firm to some extent," said Liu.

Tariff battle with China will backfire on India

► INVESTMENT

By Chi Jingyi and Zhang Dan

India's overconfidence in its economic strength and its many challenges against Chinese enterprises will hurt itself more in the longer term amid bilateral tensions and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, analysts warned, adding that a tit-for-tat tariff war was unlikely.

Such comments came after a report by the Hindustan Times, which said that the Indian government was considering remedial duties on the import of single-mode optical fiber.

A manager of a Beijing-based optical fiber cable producer and exporter told the Global Times that sales to India account for a small part of the company's total exports, and Chinese fiber products offer better quality and lower prices than Indian ones, because mass production in China leads to low costs.

"It is hard to say if India will in-

crease tariffs on such products, for which it relies on imports. But honestly speaking, Chinese products are the most cost-effective choices for India," the manager noted.

China's Commerce Ministry imposed anti-dumping measures on single-mode optical fiber imported from India starting from August 14. The fiber is usually used as a medium in telecommunications, transportation and smart industries.

It is almost impossible for trade friction between China and India to escalate to the level of the US-China trade war, or for there to be a tariff war, but the possibility of some extreme events cannot be ruled out, said Bao Jianyun, professor of the School of International Studies and director of the Center for International Political Economy Studies at Renmin University of China, adding it is possible that trade friction between China and India will escalate in the short term.

"In the long run, a good trade re-

lationship between China and India is beneficial for both countries, especially India, as China is an important trading partner of India. Long-term trade friction will damage India more," Bao told the Global Times.

"India has overestimated its economic and trade power, and misjudged China's position in global trade, making it overconfident. Indian ruling elites even regard China's restraint and love for peace as weakness. If India continues to take extreme protectionist measures, China will definitely take countermeasures," Bao added.

More importantly, such thinking may result in a widening economic gap between the two countries as the South Asian nation's economy is still affected by the COVID-19, said Xiao Xu, a research fellow of the College of Business Administration at the Capital University of Economics and Business, told the Global Times on Tuesday.