

# Buzzwords in Two Sessions

By LI Linxu

Each year, the Two Sessions offer a perfect portal through which to understand China's politics, as well as its social and economic agenda.

The buzzwords that emerge from the Two Sessions, particularly in the government work report, are watched closely by the international community.

Here are some of the buzzwords of particular attention:

**GDP goals**  
At the Two Sessions each year, the annual economic development goals of the world's second-largest economy are among the most-watched topics.

The development goals for 2022, unveiled on March 5 in the government work report, include the country's targets on GDP growth, inflation, the ratio of deficit to GDP, employment, consumption and foreign trade, among others.

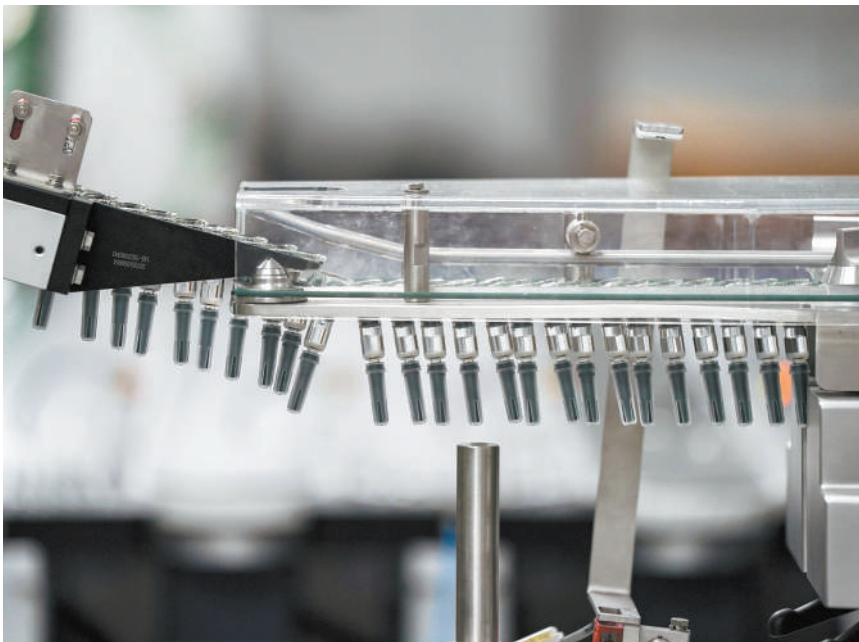
The GDP growth rate will be maintained at 5.5 percent for 2022, and economic stability is made to be top priority in the government's work, according to the government work report.

In 2021, China's GDP exceeded 114 trillion RMB, registering an increase of 8.1 percent over the previous year and an average growth of 5.1 percent over the preceding two years.

**Sci-tech innovation**  
Innovation is a big buzzword in this year's Two Sessions, particularly among those from the sci-tech sectors.

This year's government work report said China will further implement the innovation-driven development strategy and raise its capacity for sci-tech innovation.

National legislators and political advisors discussed ways to reinforce the



COVID-19 vaccine production line of Sinovac in Beijing. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

country's strength in the sci-tech field and its innovation capability.

In 2021, the country's total R&D investment reached 2.79 trillion RMB, up 14.2 percent year-on-year.

China's overall innovation capacity ranking rose to 12th in the world, with outstanding scores in hi-tech exports, patents, and industrial designs.

**Basic research**  
China will implement a 10-year action plan on basic research to ensure stable support for sci-tech innovation over the long term, according to the government work report.

In 2021, the country's spending on basic research rose 15.6 percent to 169.6 billion RMB, 1.4 percentage points more than the overall R&D spending.

The proportion of basic research to total R&D expenditure stood at 6.09 per-

cent in 2021, an increase of 0.08 percentage point over the previous year.

China vows to boost basic research spending to a record 8 percent of R&D expenditure during the 14th Five-Year Plan period.

**Rural vitalization**  
As China is at a historical juncture of moving toward its second centenary goal, rural vitalization is high on the country's list of priorities.

Agricultural production will be boosted and rural vitalization will be promoted, said the government work report.

Last year, China secured a complete victory in its fight against poverty. The country has met the poverty eradication target set out in the *United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* 10 years ahead of schedule.

Building on its victory in eradicating poverty, China is moving on to push for a comprehensive rural vitalization in its rural areas.

A number of once-impoverished counties in western regions will be chosen for rural vitalization assistance.

**Green development**  
Green development is high on the agenda of this year's Two Sessions as the country is on course to fulfilling its carbon peaking and carbon neutrality goals.

This year's government work report includes a series of policy tools to enhance the country's climate actions.

While cutting carbon emissions, efforts will be made to safeguard energy security, industrial and supply-chain security, and food security, as well as to ensure people's normal daily lives.

The proportion of the Chinese economy taken up by the green and low-carbon sector will be further increased, as high-quality growth gains momentum through expanding the hi-tech sector and promoting the digital and smart transformation of industry.

**International cooperation**  
Promoting higher standard opening up and international cooperation is also greatly emphasized at this year's Two Sessions.

In the spirit of building a community with a shared future for humankind, China's circle of friends is continuing to expand, as it pledges to do more to attract foreign investment and promote global cooperation.

It will actively take part in global governance system, and deeply integrate into the global innovation network, while collectively addressing the global challenges.

## Policy Watch

# Expanding the Role and Rights of Research Institutions

By CHEN Chunyu

The scientific research and technological development institutions (research institutions) are important components of the national sci-tech force, which reflects the national will, serves the national needs, and represents the national sci-tech ability.

The role and rights of research institutions are expanded in the revised *Law on Progress of Science and Technology*, which was enacted on January 1, 2022.

According to Wen Ke, professor at the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, the improved revision related to research institutions further lays a legal foundation for the modern research institution system.

In article 56 of the law, it specifies the identity of research institutions, namely the new-type innovation agent, explicitly supporting their innovative development modes in terms of investment, management, operation and employment and granting them the legal status as agents. A clear identity removes the barriers that institutions may encounter in future development, helping them focus on scientific research and technological innovation, said Wen in an article published in *Guangming Daily*.

In the 2007 version of the law, article 44 stipulates that research institutions should carry out sci-tech R&D activities based on their stipulated articles. However, this clause ignores a fact that some research institutions don't have their own articles, said Wen.

For those institutions having articles of associations, they could abide by the regulation to conduct sci-tech R&D activities. However, for those without articles, there was no standard to abide by. Hence a disparity in the implementation of this article appeared, according to Wen.

In the revised law, it is added in article 51 that a research institution should formulate their articles of association, in which the function and business scope should be clarified. Thus, the fundamental status of articles of association in the management and operation of a research institution is legally established.

Compared with the 2007 version, the revised law has further reinforced and highlighted the strategic role of research institutions as the core carrier of national strategic sci-tech strength, empowering the research institutions with more rights, including the rights of performance appraisal, salary distribution, professional title evaluation, commercialization of sci-tech achievements and income distribution, and post setting.

The rights of cooperation between a research institution and other counterparts have also been expanded, with technical consultation and technical services added, in addition to the existing right of joint research and development.

Actually, in recent years, China has attached continuous attention to the self-reform of the research institutions and issued a series of policies and documents, which laid a solid foundation for the revision.

For example, the *Action Plan to Promote the Commercialization of Sci-tech Achievements* was rolled out by the State Council in 2016, which stipulated that the rights of using and disposing of commercialization of sci-tech achievements and the right of income earned from the commercialization, were delegated to research institutions and universities.

The revised law puts the policy documents into the articles of legislation, which is a positive response to the sci-tech voice of the times. Wen said this amendment offers legal protection for the operations of the research institutions.



Haixi Institutes of Chinese Academy of Sciences in Fuzhou, Fujian province. (PHOTO: VCG)

# Tribunal Safeguards Development of Intellectual Property

By LI Linxu

Thanks to the successful pilot running of a national level appeal hearing mechanism, China has increasingly become a preferred litigation location for international intellectual property (IP) cases.

During its 3 years pilot running period, the IP tribunal of China's Supreme People's Court has accepted 9,458 cases on appeal and concluded 7,680 of them, according to a report delivered by Zhou Qiang, president of the Supreme People's Court, on February 27.

Among the cases, more than one fifth involved strategic emerging industries, such as the new-generation information technology, bio-medicine, high-end equipment manufacturing, energy conservation and environmental protection, new materials, and new energy, as

per the report.

And, more than one tenth of the cases handled by the tribunal are foreign related cases, according to the report. In some cases, all of the interested parties are foreign entities.

Established in 2019, the tribunal is empowered to hear appeals on patents and other technology-related IP cases, as well as anti-monopoly cases, as part of the country's efforts to strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights and foster a world-class business environment.

Since establishment, the tribunal has aroused great interest both at home and abroad, making a batch of benchmark rulings with international influence.

In 2021, the tribunal accepted 4,335 new cases and closed 3,460 cases, up 36.4 percent and 24.1 percent over the

previous year respectively, according to the statistics.

The quality and efficiency of trials have been further elevated, said Zhou, citing a survey concluding that more than 80 percent of scientific and technological personnel acknowledged the country's IP protection efforts have been strengthened and the judicial environment for innovation has been improved over the past three years.

The performance of the tribunal has also won high appraisal from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), International Court of Justice, and International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property.

Of note is that China has participated in the compilation project of the WIPO International Patent Case Management Judicial Guide, and hosted the EU-China/Singapore-China Conference on

IPR Protection, injecting Chinese experience into the global IP governance system.

Chinese courts will also be strengthening the protection of sci-tech innovations and enhance the judicial protection of intellectual property rights for core technologies in key fields and emerging industries, said Zhou, adding that more concrete measures will be taken to maintain fair market competition.

Foreign-related IP cases will be lawfully and impartially handled, and both domestic and foreign right holders will be equally protected, said Zhou.

Meanwhile, he said the country will actively take part in global governance of intellectual property, so as to drive development of the global IP governance system in a more just and equitable direction.

# Foreign Trade Reports Sound Growth in First 2 Months

China's foreign trade sustained growth momentum in the first two months of the year amid unchanged fundamentals for long-term growth.

In the January-February period, China's total imports and exports expanded 13.3 percent year on year to 6.2 trillion RMB. Both exports and imports continued double-digit growth during the period, surging 13.6 percent and 12.9 percent from the same period of last year respectively, according to the General Administration of Customs on March 7.

Photo shows containers at Lianyungang Port in east China's Jiangsu province. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

