

Peddling 'Fake Tiangong Experiment' Claim Backfires

Clear Voice

By LIANG Yilian & HU Dingkun

Recently, a cluster of overseas social media accounts have been circulating a screenshot taken from a video showing the interior of China's Tiangong Space Station. The image shows a cup of water on a table in front of a Chinese astronaut.

Because the water does not appear to float in microgravity, these accounts are accusing China of staging or faking the footage. Some posts have received millions of views, fueling yet another round of misinformation.

Germany's Deutsche Welle (DW) interviewed the national aerospace agency and experts, who dismissed the allegation.

A spokesperson for the German Aerospace Center said: "We have reviewed the footage involving the water and found no indication of fakery."

A scientist at the University of Bremen explained that the cup was specially designed so that the water would stay in the position and shape seen in the image.

A closer look at several of the influential rumor-spreading accounts cited by DW reveals that many regularly post anti-China content. This suggests that certain actors with ulterior motives are simply exploiting the public attention focused on the Shenzhou-20 mission.

In fact, the screenshot originates from the December 2021 livestream of the first "Tiangong classroom" by Shenzhou-13 astronauts Wang Yaping, Zhai



Real-time footage of the communication between the Shenzhou-20 astronaut crew and the Shenzhou-21 astronaut crew on November 1, 2025. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

Zhigang, and Ye Guangfu. From 2022 to the present, the same rumor has resurfaced at least four times internationally.

The first major resurgence came in June 2022, when posts on Facebook and other platforms suddenly circulated images and text accusing China of faking its space station environment.

According to an investigation by Factcheck Lab, the rumor likely originated within communities of conspiracy theorists who subscribe to the "flat Earth" belief, with several anti-China accounts amplifying the narrative.

On June 30, the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation and the media platform "Our Space" quickly clarified that the cup was fixed to the table to facilitate experiments, and that surface tension kept the water from floating away.

Several international outlets report-

ed these explanations accurately, helping dispel the rumor. Both Chinese institutions and domestic and international media have repeatedly debunked the allegations with clear scientific explanations.

In June 2023, another video — this time deliberately circling the cup to spotlight it — spread widely on overseas platforms, accompanied by the question: "Why doesn't the water spill out of the cup?"

The Associated Press (AP) responded with a detailed fact-check, citing University of Chicago postdoctoral researcher Jordan Bimm. Bimm said "Water molecules like to stick to glass and also to other water molecules more than they like to disperse in the air."

He added that surface tension "also works to help maintain the static shape and presents the illusion of how water

would act on the ground."

The rumor resurfaced yet again this June, pushed by conspiracy theorists recycling the same claim. Media outlets including the BBC and *The Sun* cited the AP's 2023 report to clarify the science and dismiss the accusation.

The cyclical reappearance of the "China faked its space station" rumor, despite repeated and authoritative debunkings, reflects several underlying factors. Conspiracy theorists unfamiliar with the physics of space flight actively search for "evidence" to validate their beliefs. Anti-China accounts eager for attention willingly spread falsehoods without regard for facts.

While public enthusiasm for space exploration creates high traffic for related content, advanced scientific knowledge about microgravity is relatively limited, making some viewers uncertain when confronted with misleading images.

But today, after multiple rounds of fact-checking and scientific outreach by Chinese and international media, fewer people appear willing to believe such claims. In the comment sections of the recent rumor-spreading posts, the overwhelming majority of users expressed skepticism or disapproval.

Some patiently explained the scientific principles involved. Others urged the posters to "read more."

China's progress in space station construction, lunar exploration, and other aerospace technologies — and its significant contributions to exploration of space — are recognized across the world. Spreading absurd claims like "China faked its space station" wins no support and only brings ridicule upon those who make them.

China's Trillion-RMB Ice-snow Economy

Voice of the World

By QI Liming

The scale of China's ice and snow industry will exceed one trillion RMB this year, a sure sign that the ice and snow economy has become an emerging force in China's economic development.

That's according to the Snow Industry Development Research Report (2025), released recently at the main forum of the World Winter Sports Expo (WWSE). Many heads of international sports organizations have praised the sustainable development of China's winter sports, expressing their willingness to deepen cooperation with China, promote the projects and strengthen the cultivation of young talent.

*Contributions to global winter sports*

More than 500 internationally renowned and domestic brands from countries such as Austria, Italy, Canada, Finland, and Slovenia took part in the WWSE. The participants said that the successful hosting of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games and the effective utilization of the Winter Olympics'

legacy have made significant contributions to the development of global winter sports.

Giovanni Malago, president of the Italian Olympic Committee, said the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics and Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games have left significant Olympic legacies, bringing the younger generation closer to sports activities.

The cooperation between China and Finland in the field of winter sports is very close. From the construction of facilities for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics Games, to coach training and the utilization of post-event legacies, both sides have completed many successful exchanges. Lauri Kangasniemi, the Embassy of Finland, Beijing Counselor, said winter sports have become a bond for cooperation between China and Finland.

Johan Eliasch, president of the International Ski and Snowboard Federation was deeply impressed by the high-standard snowfield facilities in China. "More and more teenagers are stepping onto the ski slopes, not only promoting the popularization of winter sports, but also [helping] the [whole of] Asia play a more significant role in the winter sports landscape."

*Expanding into a multi-sectoral economy*

The Chinese ice and snow industry is undergoing a transformation from a "game-driven" model to a "consumption-oriented" one. Ice and snow sports are evolving into a diversified and multifaceted experience known as "ice and snow plus".

In 2024, an iiMedia Research report on the winter sports industry's prospects for the coming winter in 2025, said the market was worth just under 1.05 trillion RMB, and could surpass 1.5 trillion RMB by 2029.

The report said more than half of the participants are aged between 24 and 30, and over 70 percent are women. Meanwhile, more than 60 percent buy equipment each season, typically budgeting 1,000 to 2,000 RMB, which has fueled growth in domestic supply chains for snow suits and goggles, along with

those for the ice- and snow-making machines demanded by the expanding winter sports industry.

Samuel Ventura, manager of the Asian Region of Italy's TechnoAlpin, said that the Chinese market has become one of the most dynamic and promising regions in the global snow and ice equipment sector. "We hope that through technology and cooperation, the snow and ice economy can become more environmentally friendly and sustainable," he said.



The Lianhuashan Ski Resort in Changchun province of northeastern China opened for visitors. (PHOTO: VCG)

15th FYP Underscores Sci-tech Innovation

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To implement the national blueprint and promote full integration between technological and industrial innovation, the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) will guide the construction of a modern industrial system, and strengthen the coordination of all entities, promoting in-depth integration of industry, university and research institutions, with enterprises playing a leading role.

Efforts will be made to deepen reform and allow more application scenarios to be developed and opened to accelerate the transformation and application of major sci-tech achievements.

The allocation efficiency of resources will be improved and policy guarantees strengthened to create a favorable ecosystem for deep integration of sci-tech and industrial innovation, as well as building an open and

innovative ecosystem with global competitiveness.

In terms of promoting integrated development of education, science and technology and talents, MOST will improve the coherence of planning, coordination of policies, management of resources and evaluation.

Yin underlined the guidance of sci-tech innovation in talent cultivation to build a leading innovation team during the implementation of major national

sci-tech tasks and the construction and operation of high-level sci-tech infrastructure.

In addition, the prediction of supply and demand for sci-tech personnel and feedback would be improved.

Scientists would be given greater autonomy in scientific research and the use of funds, and the establishment of a classified evaluation system for personnel would be accelerated.

Comment

Int'l Community Rebukes Japan for Damaging Post-war Order

Eighty-two years ago, in a hotel perched near the Giza pyramids outside Cairo, the leaders of China, the United States and Britain issued the Cairo Declaration, laying down not only an Allied consensus but a legal foundation for the post-war order that followed Japan's surrender.

That history has taken on new urgency recently. China's Foreign Ministry repeatedly invoked the Cairo Declaration to rebut comments by Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, whose recent erroneous remarks on Taiwan, alongside Tokyo's plans to expand its military capabilities, have drawn sharp criticism.

Observers say Takaichi's statements cross a "historical red line" set in the 1940s — a challenge to the documents that shaped Asia's post-war settlement and remain embedded in international law.

Released on December 1, 1943, the Cairo Declaration affirmed that the territories Japan had seized from China, including Taiwan and the Penghu Islands, were to be restored to China after the war.

The declaration was reinforced two years later by the Potsdam Proclamation, issued by China, the United States and Britain and later endorsed by the Soviet Union. Japan accepted those terms when it signed the Instrument of Surrender in September 1945, pledging to fulfill the obligations laid out in the Potsdam terms.

Together, these documents formed the international legal basis for China's recovery of territories taken by Japan, and, more broadly, were seen as essential elements of the post-war order in the Asia-Pacific.

The principle that Taiwan is part of China underpinned another landmark moment decades later. The United Nations General Assembly voted by an overwhelming majority in 1971 to adopt Resolution 2758, a landmark decision that affirmed the international community's clear commitment to the one-China principle.

Analysts warn that by linking a "survival-threatening situation" for Japan to the Taiwan question, hinting that Japan might intervene militarily in the Taiwan Strait, Takaichi is openly defying the one-China principle cemented in international legal documents like the Cairo Declaration.

Beyond requiring Japan to return the territories it stole from China, the Cairo Declaration, the Potsdam Proclamation, and other binding documents underscored Japan's aggressive wartime conduct and imposed clear obligations on the defeated state, including complete

disarmament and a ban on industries that could support rearmament.

Japan's right-wing politicians, however, have been chipping away at these restraints in recent years, eroding military limits and sidestepping the constitution's exclusively defense-oriented policy. Takaichi accelerated the process, aiming to revise both the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and the Three Non-nuclear Principles.

Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova said, "Eighty years have passed, and Japan still refuses to recognize the results of World War II, as enshrined in international law."

"We know, regrettably, how Japanese militarism ended — what sacrifices it cost the whole world, and Japan itself," she said. "Therefore, the politicians who come to govern the country in Japan should remember this and understand what irresponsible statements can lead to, and refrain from them."

Japanese people recently held multiple protests in front of the prime minister's official residence in Tokyo, demanding that Takaichi retract her recent erroneous remarks on Taiwan and offer an explanation and apology.

The protestors called for an end to the resurgence of militarism in Japan, holding signs with slogans such as "Retract remarks, oppose war," "This is all because of Takaichi," and "Takaichi step down."

Observers warn that Takaichi's provocative actions flout international justice and violate the fundamental principles of international relations.

South Korean National Assembly Speaker Woo Won-shik said on social platform X that Takaichi's moves revealed Japan's "irresponsible attitude" and lack of reflection on history, warning that its push to amend the constitution is "even more concerning" as it would "transform Japan into a 'country capable of waging war.'"

Richard A. Black, the Schiller Institute representative at the United Nations in New York, said Takaichi's latest moves are "gravely dangerous," noting her long history of visiting the notorious Yasukuni Shrine, a spiritual tool and symbol of Japanese militarists responsible for the war of aggression, and downplaying Japan's wartime crimes.

"So China is right to be angry, right to be upset and right to take strong actions to prevent it from getting any further," Black said.

Source: XINHUA

Automatic Watering Device for Trees

Hi-Tech

By QI Liming

Recently, a 14-year-old junior high school student Jia Mingxuan from Chifeng, Inner Mongolia, China, won the gold award at an International Exhibition of Inventions Nuremberg, Germany, with his invention of an automatic watering device for trees in arid areas.

Inspired by the phenomenon of water droplets forming on the lid of a pot and then sliding down when it's being heated for cooking, along with the condensation principle in physics, Jia came up with the idea of using the water vapor in the air to automatically water the trees.

The temperature difference between day and night in the Chifeng area is quite large during summer. The average temperature during the day is approximately 27°C, while the average temperature at night is about 14°C.

This device utilizes the temperature difference between the ground surface and underground soil, to allow air to circulate inside hollow steel pipes buried vertically in the soil. Fans are installed at the top of the pipes to direct the outside air to the bottom of the pipes. This enables the water vapor in the air to condense into small water droplets underground, which then penetrate the tree roots to provide water for the trees, achieving automatic watering and reducing the cost of afforestation.



Demonstration of the automatic watering device for trees in arid areas. (PHOTO: XINHUA)