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CHINA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

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China-Iran Science and Technology Cooperation

At the 6th Joint Meeting between the National Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the Iran National Science Foundation (INSF), both parties agreed to support the implementation of 15 research projects for at least three years. According to INSF, the total fund includes 50 billion Rials, which will support research projects on water and energy.

Meanwhile, on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Health Ministerial Meeting held in Chandigarh, India from 21-25 July, China and Iran agreed to cooperate in the health sector, particularly in supplying pharmaceuticals and medical equipment. Ali Jafarian, advisor to the Iranian health minister, called upon his Chinese counterpart, Zeng Yixin, Deputy Director of the China National Health Commission, to expand and integrate Persian medicine with Chinese traditional medicine. In the meeting, both sides agreed to share knowledge, expertise, and technology.

Under the Iran-China Talented Young Scientist Program (TYSP), which started in 2017, both countries have laid down the groundwork for expanding scientific research between the two countries, in terms of joint funding, project collaboration and academic exchange with top-notch universities and research institutions in China, i.e., the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Nanjing University of Science and Technology and China Agricultural University. So far, 190 research projects have been implemented between Iran and China.

China Hosts World AI Conference

The 8th edition of the World Artificial Intelligence Conference (WAIC) was held in Shanghai from 17-20 July 2026. More than 100 countries and international organisations as well as industry and research institutions participated in the conference and showcased more than 180 startup projects. Chinese President Xi Jinping, in his keynote address, called for "all countries to take a people-centric approach and develop AI for the positive and for good." Also, he stressed the need to adhere to the principles of openness and win-win to boost innovation-driven development and "build a just and equitable system for global AI governance."

During the four-day conference, several significant agreements and roadmaps were released. A roadmap called 'AI for ADANES' was released, which is considered the foremost major science and technology infrastructure under construction, dedicated to AI for nuclear energy, zero-carbon computing, and energy security. Also, an agreement was signed to establish the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation, with its headquarters in Shanghai. Under this agreement, 32 key AI projects worth more than 40.9 billion yuan ($6.06 billion) will be initiated.

Scientific Collaboration Projects

The 2026 China–ASEAN Education Cooperation Week (CAECW) opened in Guiyang, Guizhou Province, on July 29, marking a significant milestone as it evolved from bilateral educational exchanges into a multifaceted, regionally influential framework for international cooperation between China and ASEAN member states, bringing together education officials and representatives from all ten ASEAN member states as well as university leaders and education experts.

During a week-long event, the China-ASEAN Smart Education Capacity Building Project was launched, aiming to leverage artificial intelligence to enhance educational equity and quality across the region, aligning with China's national 'AI + Education Action Plan.' Also, two major institutions, i.e., the China-ASEAN Vocational Education Digital Competency Centre and the Guiyang-Guian International Talent Entrepreneurship Park, were inaugurated, hosting 15 startups founded by ASEAN students, serving as a hub for innovation in Southwest China.

In the 'Guizhou Vision for Regional Integration', it underscored collaboration in AI to broaden cooperation channels in digital education technology, vocational training, and scientific research; consolidating people-to-people bonds through expanded youth sports tournaments, cultural study tours, and social exchanges; and enriching the CAECW's mandate beyond education into key sectors including trade, industrial development, high-level exchanges, ecological conservation, and cultural tourism.

Scientific Research Breakthroughs and Discoveries

Chinese scientists from the Institute of Chemistry of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) achieved a new world record for solar cell efficiency by developing lightweight, flexible, and highly efficient perovskite-organic tandem solar cells. One of the key roadblocks in hybrid solar cells has been internal chemical separation within the perovskite layer, particularly the migration of halide components (iodide and bromide). As a result, it leads to microscopic defects and rapid degradation under sunlight. To overcome this challenge, researchers from the Institute of Chemistry developed a smart, photo-transformable additive molecule called TDB, which regulates crystallisation dynamics and promotes homogeneous halide mixing during film formation. Moreover, during operation under sunlight, TDB molecules at microscopic boundaries transform and bind tightly to the surface, suppressing halide migration and preventing defect formation. This breakthrough brings advanced solar power closer to everyday applications, from wearable devices to space stations.

China Science Diplomacy

At a meeting between the Chinese Minister of Science and Technology, Yin Hejun and the Saudi Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Abdullah Alswaha, on 13 July in Beijing, a consensus was reached on deepening cooperation in science and technology. In the meeting, both sides agreed to expand joint research programmes, academic exchanges, and joint funding**.** Also, on 13 July, a Saudi Space Commission (SSC) delegation held several bilateral meetings with China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation and China National Space Administration to enhance cooperation and build strategic partnerships in space technologies and industry. It is noted that in 2018, China launched two Saudi remote satellites into low Earth orbit and provided technical assistance during the Chang'e 4 mission launched in December 2018 by providing a camera to one of its secondary satellites.

Meanwhile, the China-Saudi International Summer Training Programme on Nuclear Science and Technology was held at Harbin Engineering University (HEU), China. During the training programme, Vice President Yin Hang of HEU underscored the broad prospects for China-Saudi nuclear energy cooperation, practical capabilities and advancing the sustainable development of global nuclear energy.

In the election of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), 27 international scientists were appointed to foreign membership, including scientists from Australia, France, Germany, Russia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. At the induction ceremony held on 7 July in Beijing, the President of CAS, Hou Jianguo, lauded the foreign members for their significant contribution to China's scientific development and global academic exchange. Also, he reiterated CAS's dedication to an open-door policy and to actively pursuing international collaboration with research institutions and universities. Similarly, the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) inducted 21 foreign scholars on 9 July as its international members. Addressing the induction ceremony, Zhang Yuzhuo, CAE Party secretary, stated that their election recognises both their distinguished achievements in engineering science and technology and expressed hope "that international members will continue to contribute academic leadership, innovation and strategic advice for China's engineering development."