

INSIGHTS

Beijing Winter Olympics' Valuable Legacies

Voice of the World

Edited by TANG Zhexiao

One year after the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games, people are still enjoying the social and economic benefits created by the Games.

"All the Beijing 2022 venues are being enjoyed by the public and local athletes, and the winter sports industry in the country is booming," said a report published on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) official website on February 1, 2023.

"China can look back with great pride into the past and with even greater confidence in the future," said IOC President Thomas Bach in a statement on February 5, adding the Beijing spectacle is a "great chapter in Olympic history".

Sustainable venues

Most of the Beijing 2022 competition venues adopted energy-saving construction standards to reduce emissions and ensure long-lasting use. They have been opened to the public and hosted top-level sports events after the Games.

Beijing 2022 concentrated its efforts on carbon avoidance and reduction. This meant that for the first time in Olympic Games history, all the competition venues were powered with renewable energy, especially, with solar and wind as primary energy resources.

The Zhangbei flexible direct current grid project used in Beijing 2022, one of the largest of its kind in the world, uses wind and solar energy resources to transfer electricity from Zhangjiakou to Beijing, boosting the city's use of clean energy.

The venues are incredible and they will serve the purpose of training Chinese athletes, and hosting community sport as well, said Christophe Dubi, the IOC's executive director.

To date, all the competition venues of Beijing 2022 have finished the transi-



Tourists experience cross-country skiing at the Shougang Big Air in Beijing, the venue for Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games, on January 15, 2023. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

tion from Games-time to post-Games use, fully opening to the public, according to the *Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 Legacy Report (post-Games)*.

Furthermore, by demonstrating new ideas and technologies, these Olympic venues illustrate solutions for cutting energy consumption and greenhouse gases.

"Using renewable energy to power all the venues, and implementing innovative technology, such as the CO₂ refrigeration systems, make winter sports more sustainable," said Dubi.

Post-Games legacies

From encouraging people to enjoy winter sports to alleviating poverty, and boosting the ice and snow industry which in turn improves livelihoods, Beijing 2022 has created a lasting and wide variety of social and economic benefits

for its hosts.

It promoted the regional coordinated development in transport infrastructure, environmental protection, industrial growth and public services.

The Olympic Games may make no economic sense for many cities, according to an article in *The New York Times*, but China has an enthusiasm for building transportation infrastructure and providing millions of jobs to its citizens.

"It also hopes to nurture an abiding interest in skiing, curling, ice hockey and other winter sports that could increase consumer spending, particularly in the country's chilly and economically struggling northeast," said the article.

It is true that the winter sports fever is on the rise across the country. By June 2022, the number of winter sports instructors had reached 29,000 in Bei-

jing, and the number of ice rinks in China had increased by 317 percent by 2021 compared with 2015, said the Legacy report.

High-quality urban development has been promoted as well. Beijing 2022 has created some 81,000 new job opportunities for those living in areas surrounding the venues.

Data from Shougang Group showed that the number of visitors to Shougang Industrial Park, which hosted the big air events of snowboarding and freestyle skiing during the Games, have reached 206,000 during 2023's Spring Festival, with 9.6 million RMB revenue generated.

The Games' lasting legacy will go down in history as a magnificent demonstration of the Olympic values, said Juan Antonio Samaranch, vice president of the IOC.

U.S. Media Double Standards for Chinese, American Universities

Opinion

By ZHANG Ruojia

Recently, a number of prestigious medical schools in the U.S. have announced their withdrawal from the U.S. News & World Report's World University and Professional Rankings.

In response to this phenomenon, on January 27, some American media published an article named "Revolt against educational rankings" to criticize university rankings. It pointed out that "U.S. News & World Report" rankings have been suppressing U.S. higher education. More U.S. colleges and universities are called upon to change this situation by withdrawing from the rankings.

For years, there have been scandals involving misrepresentation of data and financial transactions by U.S. colleges and universities to improve their rank-

ings. The article argues that universities can provide their own data of the rankings, which cannot guarantee their accuracy and reliability. The market competition and interests behind the rankings are certainly against the original purpose of education.

However, other American media had a totally different attitude when it came to the withdrawal of Chinese universities from the world rankings in 2022. In the article of June 7, 2022, a magazine described the withdrawal of schools such as the Renmin University of China from the rankings as an attempt to "education with Chinese characteristics," and even said that China was closing its doors in the field of science and education.

In the same act of withdrawing from the ranking, the U.S. media expressed positive comments about American universities but made distorted comments about Chinese universities. Obviously, this reflects the long-standing

practice of Western countries to judge themselves and other countries by "double standards," which can even be published in the same media outlet in the same column.

The U.S. views the rise of China with a Cold War mentality. Even if China does something reasonable and pragmatic, it will be manipulated and distorted by U.S. public opinion.

In fact, the decision of Chinese universities to withdraw from the world university rankings was made in accordance with the direction of China's educational development. The original intention of Chinese universities to participate in the world ranking was to connect with the world and enhance the strength of education.

However, some of the ranking criteria of the world university ranking are not suitable for Chinese universities, such as their requirements on the proportion of international teachers and students and the history of the school,

which do not accurately reflect the strength and position of Chinese universities.

In recent years, many universities have found that rankings are not the best way to achieve educational ideals. If universities are bent on rushing to the top position of the ranking, they will be lost in the path of making up indicators.

The act of withdrawal of Chinese universities is a challenge to the irrationality of the education system in the Western world. Nowadays, Chinese universities have enough self-confidence to run schools pragmatically and nurture talented young people for the country's benefit.

Nevertheless, the American media made one-sided and limited "double standard" statements as a shock to the rise of China. Its "double standard" behavior of clinging to prejudice and even deliberately denigrating China is not only futile, but also ridiculous.

Comment

No Safety in Isolation

By GONG Qian

It is a dark financial time for Intel, the U.S. semiconductor giant. On January 26, Intel released its dismal financial results: a 32 percent year-on-year revenue decline for Q4, and a 20 percent decline in annual revenue. The company later saw the hardest hit, with its operating profit plummeted in Q4, down 69 percent from a year ago, the worst result since the third quarter of 2014. The chip unit was the hardest hit, with its operating profit plunging 97 percent.

"No words can portray or explain the historic collapse of Intel," Hans Mossmann, senior research analyst from Rosenblatt Securities, told Reuters.

A few days later, South Korean tech giant Samsung published a statement to reveal its earning results for 2022. Its fiscal revenue fell eight percent and operating profit plummeted in Q4, down 69 percent from a year ago, the worst result since the third quarter of 2014. The chip unit was the hardest hit, with its operating profit plunging 97 percent.

The two leading chipmakers explained that such a decrease was largely attributed to a significantly deteriorated business environment with a growing weak demand amid a global economic slowdown.

In reality, Intel's bleak earnings may have something to do with its loss in the Chinese market.

In a phone interview with *Barron's*, Intel CFO David Zinsner confirmed its business in China was the weakest region relative to initial expectations for the fourth quarter.

According to tech research and consulting company Gartner, Intel's fourth-quarter global PC shipments declined at a rate of 28.5 percent, making it the biggest decline the company ever recorded since it tracked device shipments in the mid-1990s. As a result, its revenue from Client Computing Group, the pillar service, was crushed.

China overtook the U.S. to become the largest PC market in the world in 2011. The country has also been Intel's biggest market for years. Revenue from billings to China (not including China's Taiwan) contributes 27 percent of its total revenue, Intel said in its 2022 annual report. But its net revenue from China saw a 25 percent decrease from a year ago.

In particular, Intel admitted it was subject to

trade tensions between the U.S. and China. The company said, those restrictions on the export of U.S.-regulated products and technology to certain Chinese technology companies imposed by the U.S. have reduced their sales. Continuing or future restrictions could adversely affect their financial performance, resulting in reputational harm to them, or lead such companies to develop or adopt technologies that compete with their products.

Samsung attributed its sharp decline in chips to "overall memory chips demand weakened as customers continued to adjust their inventories amid deepening uncertainties in the external environment."

Similarly, another memory chipmaker, SK Hynix, also reported its biggest quarterly loss on record, hammered by a historic chip industry slump, said Bloomberg.

Micron Technology, the largest U.S. maker of memory chips, said the worst industry glut in more than a decade will make it difficult to return to profitability in 2023, Bloomberg reported.

The situation, then, becomes ironic. For one thing, these semiconductor giants blame their disappointing performance on a large imbalance between supply and demand. For another, the U.S. has been putting pressure on both domestic companies and its allies to impose export restrictions on chips to China - the largest semiconductor chips importer in the world.

So who is to be blamed for the shattering of the global semiconductor industry chain? The answer to the question is obvious.

Amid the global economic downturn due to the pandemic, no one can stay safe on their own. Only through full cooperation can countries tackle the common challenge.



Intel attends the fifth China International Import Expo in Shanghai, on November 9, 2022. (PHOTO: VCG)

Don't Politicize Space Exploration

By QI Liming

The European Space Agency (ESA) won't be sending astronauts to China's Tiangong space station. That's according to ESA Director General Josef Aschbacher, speaking at a press briefing held in Paris lately.

Aschbacher claimed that the agency does not have the budgetary capacity to send its astronauts to China's space station. Meanwhile the BBC reported that Aschbacher said on January 16 that he has had a two billion Euro increase in funding.

For now, let's not question the lack of funds, but look deeper at this issue: can humanity's exploration into space succeed? What is the blueprint for the vast universe? And what should we, as Earth natives, do to bring more possibilities to humankind when making new journeys to the stars?

Perhaps the answers are varied, but we all know a simple truth and have benefited from it countless times: Many hands make light work.

According to Space website, there are many exchanges and projects between ESA's astronauts and Chinese Taikonauts. For example, in order to prepare its astronauts for possible missions

to China's three-module Tiangong space station, ESA's Samantha Cristoforetti and Matthias Maurer conducted nine days of survival training with 16 of their Chinese counterparts in the Yellow Sea in August 2017. And, in the previous year, Chinese astronaut Ye Guangfu took part in ESA's caving course on the Italian island of Sardinia.

"Both activities stem from the 2015 agreement to boost collaboration between ESA and the China Manned Space Agency, with the goal of flying European astronauts on the Chinese space station from 2022," ESA officials wrote in a 2017 press release. In light of this, ESA should not now go back on its word.

According to *Astronomy* magazine, a new era in space is unfolding. The Tiangong station is beginning its life, while the International Space Station is set to be decommissioned by 2030 after more than 30 years in orbit.

No matter how ESA decides, human exploration of space won't be suspended and it's unwise to politicize science, which is vital to the destiny of humankind. China has reiterated on many occasions that it is open to space exchanges and cooperation, and to make better use of space technology for the interests of all people around the world.

Satellite TV Project Benefits African Villages

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Satellite TV has also helped improve local educational conditions. Students can receive the latest information from around the world, and become more interested in learning.

The project has not only connected African villages with the world, but also trained local specialists who can master the technology's operation, installation and after-sales services. The project has trained more than 20,000 local technicians in Africa and increased their income, while laying a solid foundation for the development of related industries.

People-Centered Natural Forest Conservation

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By 2016, over 600,000 forest workers were retrained to work in forest protection, resource management, or silviculture including seedling production, and planting. The rest were resettled with a payout sum of three times their annual salary, according to the State Forestry Administration.

Many of them later accepted non-forest employment like mining and tourism. And some became self-

employed in cultivating non-timber forests.

The total revenue from forest parks in China increased from 6.9 billion RMB in 2004 to 70.6 billion RMB in 2015, creating nearly 300,000 jobs, mostly in the natural forest areas.

The average annual salary in the regions with state-owned forests increased from 5,200 RMB to more than 40,000 RMB from 2001 to 2016.

China has been implementing cooperation projects with the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Development Programme and many other international organizations, providing Chinese solutions for global ecological protection and governance, and making forward-looking and strategic contributions to the global response to climate change, said Zhang Liming from NFCA.