

EDUCATION

U.S. tensions with China are fraying long-cultivated academic ties

Will the chill hurt U.S. interests?

By Didi Tang
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » In the 1980s, Fu Xiangdong was a young Chinese virology student who came to the United States to study biochemistry. More than three decades later, he had a prestigious professorship in California and was conducting promising research on Parkinson's disease.

But now Fu is doing his research at a Chinese university. His American career was derailed as U.S.-China relations unraveled, putting his collaborations with a Chinese university

under scrutiny. He ended up resigning.

Fu's story mirrors the rise and fall of U.S.-China academic engagement.

Beginning in 1978, such cooperation expanded for decades, largely insulated from the fluctuations in relations between the two countries. Today, it's in decline, with Washington viewing Beijing as a strategic rival and there are growing fears about Chinese spying. The number of Chinese students in the United States is down, and U.S.-Chinese research collaboration is shrinking. Academics are shying away from potential China projects over fears that seemingly minor missteps could end their careers.



ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

American flags are displayed together with Chinese flags on top of a trishaw on Sept. 16, 2018, in Beijing.

This decline isn't hurting just students and researchers. Analysts say it will undercut American competitiveness and weaken global efforts to address health is-

Previous collaborations have led to significant advances, including in influenza surveillance and vaccine development.

"That's been really harm-

ful to U.S. science," said Deborah Seligsohn, a former U.S. diplomat in Beijing and now a political scientist at Villanova University. "We are producing less science because of this falloff."

For some, given the heightened U.S.-China tensions, the prospect for scientific advances needs to take a back seat to security concerns. In their view, such cooperation aids China by giving it access to sensitive commercial, defense and technological information. They also fear the Chinese government is using its presence in American universities to monitor and harass dissidents.

Those concerns were at the core of the China Initiative, a program begun

in 2018 by the Justice Department under the Trump administration to uncover acts of economic espionage. While it failed to catch any spies, the effort did have an impact on researchers in American schools.

Under the initiative, Gang Chen, a professor of mechanical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was charged in 2021 with hiding links with the Chinese government. Prosecutors eventually dropped all charges, but Chen lost his research group. He said his family went through a hard time and has yet to recover.

Chen said investigations and wrongful prosecutions like his "are pushing out talents."

TRAVEL

Busiest season in years off to smooth start with few airport delays

By Alexandra Olson
The Associated Press

NEW YORK » The holiday travel rush hit its peak Friday as mild weather and lower flight cancellation rates raised hopes for merrier drivers and airline passengers than last year.

U.S. airlines are predicting a blockbuster holiday season and have projected confidence they can handle the crowds after hiring thousands of pilots, flight attendants and other workers, seeking to avoid the delays and suspensions that marred travel last year and culminated with the Southwest Airline debacle that stranded more than 2 million people.

Airlines have canceled just 1.2% of U.S. flights so far this year, the lowest in five years, but bad weather is always a threat. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg has warned the government will be holding the airlines accountable to operate smoothly and treat passengers well if there are disruptions. Earlier this week, Transportation Department announced a settlement in which Southwest



ALASTAIR GRANT — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Travellers queue for the Eurostar trains at St Pancras Station in London, Friday.

will pay \$140 million for its meltdown last year. Some 70 flights had been cancelled in the U.S. by early Friday evening and about 3,480 had been delayed, according to FlightAware.

The Transportation Security Administration screened more than 2.6 million passengers on Thursday, which had been projected to be one of the busiest travel days, along with Friday and New Year's Day. That's short of the record 2.9 million that agents screened on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, since travel tends to be more

packed in the wee hours. "It was very hectic. I got to my boarding area, like, maybe just minutes before the plane took off," Lake said after arriving in Tampa to go to a cruise for the holidays. "I cut it way too close."

Other travelers said they were pleasantly surprised at the ease of their trips despite the crowds.

"Super easy. We had a great flight. No issues so far," said Kendall Black, who flew from Houston to Chicago O'Hare International Airport with her spouse and 3-year-old daughter to visit her sister.

Auto club AAA forecasts that 115 million people in the U.S. will go 50 miles or more from home between Saturday and New Year's Day. That's up 2% over last year. The busiest days on the road will be Saturday and next Thursday, Dec. 28, according to transportation data provider INRIX.

Inflation has cooled off a bit, and travelers were helped by lower average gas prices and air fares.

The nationwide gas price average Friday was \$3.13 a gallon, down 15 cents from

a month ago and about 3 cents more than this time last year, according to AAA. Average fares in October were 13% lower than a year earlier, according to the government's latest data.

Internationally, air travel has also rebounded, though it remains below pre-pandemic levels.

Airlines have sold 31% more tickets for international arrivals to global destinations between Dec. 21 and Dec. 31 compared to the similar period last year, according to travel data firm ForwardKeys.

Some travelers in northern Europe had a run of bad luck with bad weather and labor unrest.

A storm brought heavy rain and strong winds across northern Europe overnight and into Friday, bringing down trees and prompting warnings of flooding on the North Sea coast.

Workers at the undersea tunnel between Britain and France held a surprise strike on Thursday, forcing the cancellation of passenger and vehicle-carrying service before an agreement with unions was reached.

CLIMATE

Alaska may be best bet for a White Christmas as ski resorts see rain

By Nick Perry
The Associated Press

GILFORD, N.H. » For most Americans dreaming of a white Christmas, this year's prospects aren't good.

Although parts of the Rockies and Midwest already have snow or could get a fresh dusting by Monday, other parts of the country that are normally coated in white this time of year are still sporting their drab late-fall look.

"Some people will get their dream, their wish, and get a white Christmas right at the last minute," said Judah Cohen, the director of seasonal forecasting at Verisk Atmospheric and Environmental Research. "But most of the country will have a brown Christmas."

Among the areas more accustomed to snowy Decembers is the Northeast, where a powerful storm blew in this week and dumped heavy rain on the region's ski areas, wreaking havoc on the snowpack.

"It didn't wash out our trails. But it was crazy rain," said Tom Day, the general manager of Gunstock

Mountain Resort in Gilford, New Hampshire.

He hiked the ski area Monday, when it was closed, as 3.5 inches (8.8 centimeters) of warm rain fell and the wind howled.

"That's a four-letter word, rain, in our business," Day said.

The snow cover across the U.S. is at near-record lows for this time of year, said Cohen, who doesn't expect much change by Christmas Day.

"There is a storm that is supposed to come out of the Rockies and head toward Canada, so it looks like some fresh snow in the western Plains, from Kansas to North Dakota," he said, adding that snow could fall as far west as Denver and as far east as Minnesota.

The National Weather Service also doesn't foresee a white Christmas for much of the country. But on the bright side, "At least the weather is favorable for most people who have plans to travel this year," the service wrote in its holiday forecast.

So where should snow

lovers turn?

"The best chance for a white Christmas by far is in Alaska," the service wrote. "Anchorage's record snow depth on Christmas Day is 30 inches, which was set back in 1994, and this year's snow depth could be close to the record."

Climate change is playing a role in diminishing Christmas snow, Cohen said, although he noted it remains a complicated picture, with extreme cold snaps and unusual weather events occurring.

"Certainly, the globe is warming. Winters are getting shorter. Overall, they're getting warmer," Cohen said. "December, I've seen the strongest warming. So I feel like December really no longer qualifies as a winter month. The early-season skiing is becoming more and more challenging."

Despite the challenges, Northeastern snow lovers aren't giving up. After closing for rain on Monday, Gunstock reopened Tuesday, while many other ski areas took a day or two longer to rebuild trails.

Ryan Sloan, who drove



ROBERT F. BUKATY — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Man-made snow is blown from snowmaking equipment near the summit of Pleasant Mountain ski resort, Thursday, in Bridgton, Maine.

five hours from New York through "intense" rain on Monday to go snowboarding, said Gunstock's trails on Tuesday weren't as washed out as he feared they would be.

"The conditions are actually pretty good," Sloan said. "When you get up to the top, the trails are pretty decent. There are some rocky spots, some icy spots, but overall, pretty good."

Sprague

FROM PAGE 1

at home and heard the dirt bikes, and something that sounded like "things hitting the house," according to court records.

After Andras and Treloar left and returned to the latter's home on West Stevenson Lake Road, they continued to ride the bikes until Treloar spotted Sprague's truck at the Brinton Road intersection and motioned to Andras that the truck was headed their way when he looked back and saw Sprague running over Andras, according to court records.

Sprague allegedly continued following Treloar, who fled to a friend's house and returned home to find Sprague and police officers there, according to court records.

Sprague told police he followed the bike tracks after the two men left his property, and that Andras' bike "whipped around" in front of him and he was unable to avoid a collision, according to court records.

Sprague said he called 911 "right after" he hit Andras' bike, according to court records.

Another witness told police Sprague continued chasing Treloar after hitting Andras, then returned to the scene to call police, according to court records.

Pol

FROM PAGE 1

in that quest.

In Wisconsin, for example, the Mother Earth

News Fair attracts those who want to live closer to the land, Jan said.

"People want to raise their own food," he said. "You'd be surprised how many people now have chickens."



Maury S Irwin, Agent
1011 N McEwan, Clare
Business: 989-386-4141
maury.irwin.l8gz@statefarm.com

Holiday wishes.

May the magic of the season bring you peace, love and joy. Happy Holidays to an incredible community!

Here to help life go right.®



1708156

State Farm
Bloomington, IL

Morning Sun

Rick Mills
Local news editor
rimills@medianewsgroup.com
989-779-6003

Jim Lahde
Sports editor
jlahde@medianewsgroup.com
989-779-6061

Sarah Wright
Staff reporter
swright@medianewsgroup.com
734-474-3767

Greg Nelson
Staff reporter
989-285-8507
gnelson@medianewsgroup.com

Sue Knickerbocker Field
Staff reporter
989-309-9324
sfield@medianewsgroup.com

For more ways to contact us, please visit us online at:
www.TheMorningSun.com/Contact

Central Eavestroughing, LLC

LICENSED & INSURED • FREE ESTIMATES

Manufacturers of...

- 5" Seamless Gutter
- 6" Commercial Seamless Gutter
- Leaf Protectors

Quality & Service Are #1!

It's Gutter Cleaning Time!

.032 Gauge Aluminum Hidden Screw Hangers

QUALITY WORKMANSHIP FAST FRIENDLY SERVICE

Jeb Gilbert • (989) 828-6279 • Shepherd, MI

Morning Sun

Volume 46, Issue 295
6250 Metropolitan Parkway
Sterling Heights, MI 48312
989-463-6071
themorningsun.com

CONTACT US
Home Delivery Customer Service:
888-349-4042, customer-service@
michigannews.com

ADVERTISING
989-463-6071

STAFF
Publisher, Michigan Region:
Greg Mazanec, mpublisher@
medianewsgroup.com
Vice President of News,
Don Wyatt: 248-285-9652,
dwyatt@medianewsgroup.com
Local News: Rick Mills,
989-779-6003, rmills@
medianewsgroup.com
Sports: Jim Lahde, 989-779-6061,
jlahde@medianewsgroup.com
Director of Circulation
Operations:
Danny Mogollon,
dmogollon@medianewsgroup.com

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS AND CONDITIONS
This subscription is a CONTINUOUS SUBSCRIPTION, which means it will automatically renew at the end of this initial term. Notice of cancellation must be provided before the end of this SUBSCRIPTION TERM to avoid charges for an additional term. You may cancel or modify your subscription at any time by calling Customer Service. You will be billed at the interval you have selected, which shall be your SUBSCRIPTION TERM. Future SUBSCRIPTION TERM prices are subject to change. This subscription grants you a FULLY PREPAID, NON-REFUNDABLE license to receive and access the subscription materials for the duration of the subscription term. No credit is offered for vacation interruptions. All home delivery subscriptions will automatically include up to 12 Special Editions plus the Thanksgiving Edition annually at an additional cost of up to \$26. The cost of these Special Editions will be subtracted from the amount you paid for your subscription and will shorten the length of its term. If you prefer not to receive these Special Editions and Thanksgiving Edition, you must call Customer Service to OPT OUT. If you do not OPT OUT, your account will be billed automatically and your term will be shortened. Future SUBSCRIPTION TERM prices are subject to change.

Credit is offered for vacation interruptions after 14 days. You must call customer service to request an adjustment or refund. For information regarding our arbitration terms please visit <http://medianewsgroup.com/common/dfm/arbitration.pdf>. The Morning Sun strives for accuracy and fairness and will correct inaccuracies or clarify confusing information. Contact Local News Editor Rick Mills at 989-779-6003 or rmills@medianewsgroup.com to report any concerns about today's edition.

MI LOTTERY
Saturday
Midday Daily 3: 1-7-1
Midday Daily 4: 8-6-3-6
Mega Millions: Estimated jackpot: \$620 million
Powerball: Estimated jackpot: \$73 million
Results of Saturday evening's drawings were not available at press time.

The lottery numbers are not official. Check www.michiganlottery.com for confirmation.