

OPINION: HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE BRI P.20 | FEATURES: DESERT PRODUCE P.36

# BEIJING REVIEW

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## Innovation First

After launching reform and opening up in 1978, China saw its manufacturing sector expand rapidly, soon becoming a major global supplier of diverse consumer products ranging from clothes and furniture to home appliances.

Now, the world's factory is moving up the industrial ladder. Driven by innovation, China's manufacturing industry has been transitioning from producing labor-intensive products to high value-added ones. This transformation is an indication that the Chinese economy is entering a new stage of high-quality development, a shift toward a more efficient and sustainable mode of economic growth.

A new philosophy calling for innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development was introduced during the Fifth Plenum of the 18th Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee in 2015. As the country's governing Party, the CPC sets out policy priorities based on extensive research and consultations at its national congress every five years and central committee plenary sessions, usually held once a year.

Innovation has since been placed at the top of the national agenda. From the "new trio" of electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and photovoltaic products, to artificial

intelligence (AI), China is a key player in the ongoing wave of technological revolution. It has built the world's largest 5G, or fifth-generation telecommunication, network. It has the potential not only to support data transfer at ultrafast speeds, but also to transform people's lives with conveniences such as autonomous driving. Flying cars, electric vehicles capable of vertical take-off and landing that once existed only in science fiction, are becoming a reality. General-purpose humanoid robots with AI brains are close to being mass produced, and can be used in an array of scenarios including industrial production and household service. And the list goes on...

In recent years, China's research and development spending has maintained steady growth. By 2023, the proportion of this expenditure to GDP had risen to 2.64 percent, up from 1.91 percent in 2012. According to the World Intellectual Property Organization, China ranked 12th on the Global Innovation Index 2023, the highest among middle-income countries.

As it breaks new ground in the industries of tomorrow, China will use its technological prowess for the benefit of humanity and share opportunities that emerge with the rest of the world. **BR**



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PHOTO

# CRUISING IN STYLE

Interior view of the cruise ship *Adora Magic City*, China's first domestically built large cruise ship, after it docked at the Shanghai Wusongkou International Cruise Terminal in Shanghai on May 26.

Since its maiden voyage earlier this year, the ship has completed 34 journeys and received nearly 150,000 tourists. It can accommodate up to 5,246 passengers across 2,125 guest rooms.

China is the fifth country in the world able to design and build large cruise ships domestically.





## Peak Season

The Mount Qomolangma base camp for tourists in Zhaxizom Township of Tingri County in Xigaze City, Xizang Autonomous Region, on May 24. Mount Qomolangma National Park is now in peak tourism season. In 2023, the scenic spot received about 464,000 tourists, with ticket revenue totaling 110 million yuan (\$15.2 million).

## Carbon Reduction Plan

China's State Council has released an action plan for energy conservation and carbon reduction for 2024-25, aiming to reduce energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions per unit of GDP by approximately 2.5 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively, this year.

Both in 2024 and 2025, energy conservation and carbon reduction transformations in key sectors and industries are expected to result in a reduction of some 50 million tons of standard coal and a decrease in carbon dioxide emissions by around 130 million tons. The proportion of non-fossil energy consumption will reach around 18.9 percent in 2024 and 20 percent in 2025.

China has committed to peaking the country's carbon emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality before 2060.

## Public Welfare

The Chinese Red Cross Foundation (CRCF) spent 689 million yuan (\$95.1 million) on public welfare programs in 2023, the CRCF said on May 28.

The foundation released its annual report that day, giving the public an overview of the foundation's work over the past year, including humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and first aid services.

According to the report, 11,603 children with leukemia and congenital heart disease received subsidies through a special assistance program, while 1,286 children with leukemia received financial support via humanitarian funds.

In 2023, vision screenings were conducted for 340,000 people nationwide as part of an eye health project, and over 31,000 grassroots medical workers, including rural doctors, school doctors and primary-level healthcare providers, received

professional training.

In the field of disaster relief, the CRCF initiated nine emergency responses last year. Following a 6.2-magnitude earthquake that struck Jishishan County in Gansu Province last December, the foundation raised 79.55 million yuan (\$11 million) in funds and supplies to support the relief efforts, according to the report.

## Skills Competition

Skilled workers from around the world are set to gather in Chongqing Municipality for the second Belt and Road International Skills Competition, an opportunity to showcase their professional capabilities and boost exchanges among peers. The Belt and Road Initiative was proposed by China in 2013 to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes.

The competition, scheduled to take place from June 24 to 26, will feature 18 events that cover

industries including digital construction, electrical installation, hairdressing, industrial robot system operation and online marketing, according to a press conference on May 27.

Other activities, including skills demonstrations and themed seminars, will also be held alongside the competition.

So far, over 300 participants, including contestants and referees, have registered to attend the event. The contestants come from more than 60 countries and regions participating in Belt and Road cooperation or which are affiliated with WorldSkills International, an association dedicated to promoting vocational education and training.

The skills competition is jointly organized by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, the National Development and Reform Commission, the China International Development Cooperation Agency and the Chongqing Municipal People's Government.

The competition's first edition was held in Chongqing in 2019, and featured contestants from 44 countries and regions.

## Archaeological Institutions

China's National Cultural Heritage Administration (NCHA) has issued trial guidelines for the development of world-class archaeological institutions, setting phased goals through 2035 to enhance the overall capabilities and global standing of these institutions, Xinhua News Agency reported on May 27.

The document stated that by 2030, China will cultivate 10 to 15 world-class archaeological institutions and its international status in archaeology will increase considerably. By 2035, more world-class

archaeological institutions will be established and the comprehensive capabilities of the country's archaeological institutions will be enhanced significantly.

Per the document, efforts will focus on improving academic research, international cooperation, management innovation and team-building within archaeological institutions.

The NCHA will conduct an evaluation of China's archaeological institutions every three years and adjust its list of world-class institutions based on the results.

## Rectifying Misconduct

The Chinese Government has launched this year's campaign to rectify misconduct in the country's medical services, as well as in the purchasing and sale of medical products, the National Health Commission (NHC) said on May 27.

The campaign aims to regulate the production and distribution of medical products, eliminate corruption and other misbehavior, and safeguard the security of the national medical insurance fund, according to a document released by 14 government departments, including the NHC.

The crackdown campaign targets such acts as accepting kickbacks, and requesting and

accepting money and valuables, the document stated.

The illegal recycling of medicines should be prevented, and shills and scalpers should be banned in the field of medicine. The supervision of livestreaming sales of medical products and services should be intensified, per the document.

The crackdown will also focus on illegal acts in fields such as assisted reproduction, health checks, medical cosmetology and online healthcare.

## Criminal Cases

The number of criminal cases filed by Chinese police in 2023 dropped by 12.9 percent from 2019, according to the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) on May 27.

Police across the country also handled 9.7 percent fewer public security cases last year compared to 2019, the ministry said at a press conference.

Over the past five years, Chinese police busted over 5,200 criminal gangs and captured more than 1,600 fugitives overseas linked to criminal gangs, making headway in the campaign to combat organized crime and root out local aggressors, according to the ministry.

Nearly 400,000 economic criminal cases were cracked by



## Catch the Sun!

An aquaculture-photovoltaic power integration project in Changxin Township of Helan County, Yinchuan City, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on May 25. Arrays of photovoltaic modules are set up on fishponds to soak up the sunlight while providing shade for the fish below. These projects have generated extra income for local fishpond operators.

the police throughout the period, with over 230 billion yuan (\$31.7 billion) of direct economic losses recovered, the ministry said.

Consistent efforts were made in cleaning and preserving cyberspace, as public security organs investigated 453,000 cybercrime cases in five years, according to the MPS.

## Nuclear Power Unit

A new nuclear power unit using Hualong One, a domestically

designed third-generation nuclear reactor, has commenced power generation in the southern Chinese port city of Fangchenggang, paving the way for upcoming commercial operations.

Guangxi Fangchenggang Nuclear Power Co. Ltd., under the China General Nuclear Power Corp., announced that the No. 4 unit at the Fangchenggang nuclear power station had successfully completed its 168-hour trial operation as of 8 a.m. on May 25.



## Journey to Birth

Tibetan antelopes cross a road in the Wudaoliang area of Hoh Xil, Qinghai Province, on May 27. Every year, tens of thousands of pregnant Tibetan antelopes migrate to the Hoh Xil National Nature Reserve between May and July to give birth. They usually leave the area together with their offspring in August.

## Express Delivery Growth

Amid a consumption boom in the country, the courier sector saw double-digit growth in both business volume and revenue during the first four months of this year, official data showed.

Express delivery firms nationwide handled 50.81 billion parcels during the period, with that figure soaring 24.5 percent year on year, according to the State Post Bureau.

China's courier companies had handled 50 billion parcels this year as of April 29, hitting the milestone figure 32 days quicker than in 2023, earlier bureau data showed.

The sector also raked in an operating revenue of 421.13 billion yuan (\$58.1 billion) in the period, up 16.9 percent year on year.

## Freight Train Trips

Headed for Malaszewicze,

Poland, a train carrying a wide variety of goods departed from Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi Province, on May 25. Its departure marked a milestone as the total number of China-Europe freight train trips has surpassed 90,000.

To date, China-Europe freight trains have transported more than 8.7 million twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) containers of goods, valued at \$380 billion in total, according to China State Railway Group Co. Ltd. TEU is an exact unit of measurement for cargo capacity.

From 2016 to 2023, the annual number of China-Europe freight train trips surged from 1,702 to over 17,000. The value of goods transported by this service skyrocketed from \$8 billion to \$56.7 billion in the same period.

The types of goods transported onboard the China-Europe freight trains have expanded from IT products

such as laptops and printers at the beginning to over 50,000 different categories of products, including clothing and footwear, automobiles and related parts, daily necessities, food, timber, furniture, chemicals and machinery.

Since 2023, an increasing number of China-made "tech-intensive green trio" products—lithium-ion batteries, photovoltaic products and new-energy vehicles—have been transported through the China-Europe freight trains, reflecting strong market demand, said China State Railway Group Co. Ltd. New-energy vehicles refer to vehicles completely or mainly driven by new-energy sources, including plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (EVs), fuel-cell EVs and battery EVs.

So far, the China-Europe freight trains have reached 223 cities in 25 European countries and over 100 cities in 11 Asian countries, with the service

network covering almost the entire Eurasian continent.

## Power Generation Capacity

China's total installed power generation capacity had reached around 3.01 billion kilowatts (kW) as of late April, up 14.1 percent from a year earlier, data from the National Energy Administration showed on May 23.

Amid the country's efforts to accelerate the development of wind power and solar power, the combined power generation capacity of these two hit some 460 million kW and 670 million kW at the end of April, up 20.6 percent and 52.4 percent year on year, respectively.

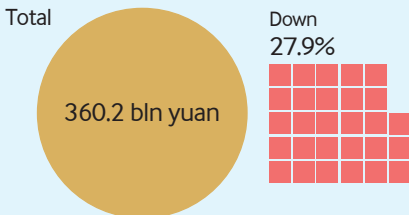
From January to April, the country's major power generation enterprises completed power supply project investments totaling 191.2 billion yuan (\$26.4 billion), a year-on-year increase of 5.2 percent.

## NUMBERS

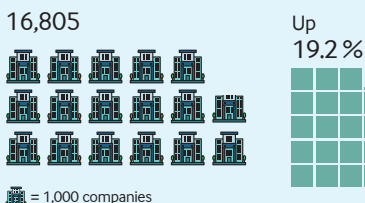
### Foreign direct investment (FDI) in January-April

(All growth rates are y.o.y.; \$1=7.11 yuan as of May 30)

#### FDI in the Chinese mainland in actual use



#### New foreign-invested companies



#### FDI in

##### Hi-tech manufacturing sector



12.7% of the total

##### Manufacturing sector

103.69 billion yuan



28.8% of the total



China's investment in power grid projects was 122.9 billion yuan (\$17 billion) during the four-month period, up 24.9 percent year on year.

## Overseas Investment

China's non-financial outbound direct investment (ODI) came in at 343.47 billion yuan (47.4 billion) from January to April, up 18.7 percent year on year, according to the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM).

That growth rate was higher than the 12.5-percent increase recorded in the first quarter of this year.

Cooperation under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) framework gained steam as China's ODI in BRI partners surged 20.4 percent in the January-April period to total 77.77 billion yuan (\$10.7 billion). The BRI, first put forward by China in 2013, aims to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes.

The turnover of contracted overseas projects amounted to 313.42 billion yuan (\$43.2 billion),

an increase of 8.8 percent, and the value of new contracts rose 9.3 percent to 444.39 billion yuan (\$61.3 billion).

To facilitate Chinese investment in foreign countries and regions, the MOFCOM issued a regulation on the contracting of overseas projects, which will take effect on July 1. It will streamline procedures and ensure government support for related businesses.

## Invention Patents

The number of invention patents granted in China in the first four months of this year witnessed a year-on-year increase of 43.42 percent, the China National Intellectual Property Administration, the country's top intellectual property regulator, said.

The latest patent data report by the administration revealed that over 362,000 invention patents were granted in China between January and April. Enterprise patents constituted the majority and exhibited the highest year-on-year growth rate

when compared to those obtained by universities, research institutions and individuals.

China owned about 4.02 million domestic valid invention patents at the end of 2023, making it the first country in the world to hold over 4 million valid domestic invention patents.

## RMB International Status

The international status of the Chinese renminbi (RMB) has further improved and the currency's share in global cross-border settlements and different foreign exchange reserves has risen, said a report released on May 27.

Data from the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) showed that the RMB share in global payments had reached 4.6 percent as of November 2023, a record high, surpassing the Japanese yen to become the fourth most-used payment currency worldwide,

according to the China Financial Policy Report 2024. SWIFT is a global provider of financial messaging services.

The report was jointly released by the Tsinghua University PBC School of Finance and the Financial Policy Research Center of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang Province.

Beyond activities involving Chinese economic entities, the RMB has started to be used as a third-party currency, said Ding Zhijie, head of the Foreign Exchange Research Center of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, at the report's release.

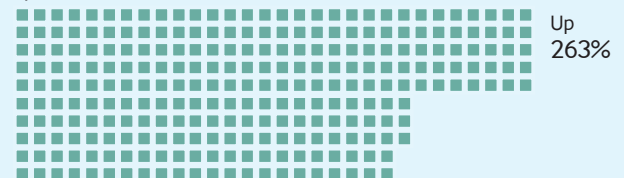
At present, foreign investors hold about 10 trillion yuan (\$1.4 trillion) in domestic assets, Ding added.

With the continuous deepening of financial reform, China's financial system, markets and regulation have been further improved, making China a major global financial player, the report noted.



### FDI in the Chinese mainland from

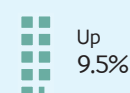
Spain



Germany



The Netherlands



(Source: Ministry of Commerce)

# THIS WEEK **WORLD**



## FRANCE

Yan Ning (third right), a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and other winners receive the 2024 L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science International Award for the Asia-Pacific region at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris on May 28



## EQUATORIAL GUINEEA

A view of the country's capital Malabo, located on the northern edge of Bioko Island, on May 18. The city is also a major aviation hub and an important seaport



## SOUTH AFRICA

A man casts his ballot in the country's 2024 general elections at a polling station in Soweto, Johannesburg, on May 29







## PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Local residents search for survivors in Mulitaka Village, Enga Province, on May 29. The country's disaster center confirmed that more than 2,000 people had been buried alive after a massive landslide occurred on May 24



## EGYPT

A dancer performs at the opening of the 11th International Festival for Drums and Traditional Arts in Cairo on May 26



## SWITZERLAND

The 77th World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization in session at the United Nations Office at Geneva on May 27. The six-day event was themed All for Health, Health for All





# THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

## NEW VICE FOREIGN MINISTER

Veteran diplomat **Hua Chunying** was appointed China's vice foreign minister, the State Council, the country's highest state administrative organ, announced on May 27. Hua is the third woman to hold the position.

Born in 1970, Hua is the youngest of the five current vice foreign ministers. She began working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after graduating from Nanjing University in 1992. From 2012 to 2019, she served as deputy director general of the ministry's Department of Press, Communication and Public Diplomacy. In July 2019, she became the department's director general. In October 2021, she was appointed assistant minister of foreign affairs.



Hua has been serving in the official role of Foreign Ministry spokesperson since 2012.

## Reining in Wealth Flaunting

**Rednet.cn**  
**May 24**

Several online influencers bent on flaunting their wealth have had their accounts suspended recently. Showing off wealth is itself a matter of personal morality, but once it is used as form of online marketing, it's a much more complex issue. By masquerading as the ultra-rich to promote goods or services, online influencers violate the Anti-Unfair Competition Law and the Advertising Law.

Some influencers tend to use any

means to attract traffic, regardless of being right or wrong. Netizens are easily misled into purchasing goods and services to emulate wealthy personas, which not only makes the cyber environment toxic and messy, but also has a negative impact on social values in real life.

There must be effective measures to curb Internet influencers' irresponsible rhetoric and practices. Social media platforms must step up supervision over their accounts and rule-violating accounts must be banned and punished. Adolescents are major actors in cyberspace, so there should also be more effective guidance for them, lest they be misled by crooks online.



## Chinese Modernization Helps All

**Outlook**  
**May 18**

Western countries embarked on the journey of modernization in the mid-18th century. More than 250 years on, the world's modernization drive continues. A little more than 100 years ago, China was under the oppression of Western powers. Now, the country is following a new path toward modernization.

Chinese modernization is socialist modernization pursued under the leadership of the Communist Party

**"I am in favor of no tariffs. Things that inhibit freedom of exchange or distort the market are not good."**

**Elon Musk**, CEO of U.S. electric vehicle (EV) giant Tesla, during a tech conference in Paris on May 23, when answering audience questions via video link on the U.S. administration's decision to raise tariffs on imported EVs from China to 100 percent

**"Five Chinese banks are listed among the 29 global systemically important banks. Their scores have increased year by year, reflecting the rapid development of Chinese banks."**

**Ding Zhijie**, Director of the Foreign Exchange Research Center of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, on May 27, as he released the China Financial Policy Report 2024, which highlighted the growing competitiveness of China's financial institutions

of China. It contains elements that are common to the modernization processes of all countries, and it is also characterized by features that are unique to the Chinese context. It is the modernization of a huge population, of common prosperity for all, of material and cultural-ethical advancement, of harmony between humanity and nature, and of peaceful development.

China adheres to a people-centered approach to development, values independence, accelerates the development of new quality productive forces, and aims to achieve self-reliance in science and technology.

Unlike Western modernization, Chinese modernization abandons the capital-first approach and instead puts people first. It rejects the “end of history” theory and continues to innovate and improve. In terms of its road of development, China pursues all-around coordination. In its form of democracy, it believes that people are the masters of their own country, instead of democracy for the minority. It never severs tradition and persists in inheriting and innovating. It opposes unilateralism in global governance and promotes the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

## Tobacco Control for Public Health

*Beijing Youth Daily*  
May 26

To date, 254 cities across China have issued rules and regulations on tobacco control. Expanding the coverage of these regulations is protecting the health of more and more people.

Strict regulations can effectively reduce smoking-related hazards. In the 10 years since Beijing’s smoking control regulations took effect, smoking prevalence among adults has dropped from

23.4 percent to 19.9 percent.

China ratified the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2005. In order to fulfil its commitments to the convention, China has taken tougher actions to rein in smoking through tax, pricing and legal means. The goal is to reduce the prevalence of smoking among those aged over 15 to 20 percent by 2030.

Tobacco control regulations are fundamental for creating a smoke-free environment. Although tobacco is a large source of tax revenue, its contribution pales in comparison with its cost to public health.

### ↓ WRITER AWARDED FRANCE’S HIGHEST HONOR

Renowned writer **Wang Anyi** was named Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, France’s highest order of merit, on May 24 in Shanghai. Wang was presented the award by Bertrand Lortholary, French Ambassador to China, for her outstanding contributions to literature and China-France cultural exchange.

Born into a literary family in 1954, Wang has produced a vast array of outstanding literary works over the course of her career, including approximately 100 short stories and more than 20 novels.



“Literary exchange has become one of the cherished traditions fostering mutual understanding and connection between China and France,” Wang said in her address. This year is the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and France.

The Legion of Honor, established in 1802, is France’s highest distinction. It is awarded to individuals, both military and civilian, who have made contributions to France and its ideals.

“I’m fond of saying that trade is like dating, but investment is marriage. You’ve got to work to make it work.”

**Stephen Orlins**, President of the National Committee of U.S.-China Relations, at a promotional event in New York on May 23, which aimed to facilitate bilateral business cooperation

“In Western Europe and North America, jazz audiences are getting older and older, but here in China, we have new audiences. Some people think jazz music is for the trained ears, but I think it is for the open heart and open mind.”

**Balazs Bagyi**, a Hungarian jazz drummer, during the five-day 2024 Taihu Jazz Festival that began in Beijing on May 22



An assembly line of Chinese smartphone maker OPPO in Dongguan, Guangdong Province, on May 10

**COVER STORY**

# GIVING TEETH TO TECH

Technological innovation drives southern economic powerhouse By Li Xiaoyang