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The Chinese Language on the Global Stage

Observed on April 20, is the UN Chinese Language Day. The exact date comes in tribute to Cangjie, the legendary figure credited with having invented Chinese characters. The theme of this year's UN Chinese Language Day is "Highlighting Pictographs," as pictographs are the origin of Chinese characters.

In 2010, the UN Department of Global Communications instituted language days for each of the organization's six official languages. The goal was two-fold: to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote the equal use of all six tongues.

Language is the carrier of communication, the bridge of interaction between states and the bond of mutual learning among civilizations. At the same time, a language and its individual written forms make up the "soul" of a nation's cultural heritage. Every language is worthy of respect and should be treated equally. The UN Chinese Language Day not only provides a unique platform for the world to better understand China, but also promotes the exchange of worldwide

languages and cultures.

As one of the six official UN languages, Chinese is the most widely spoken language in the world. Today, the Chinese language is increasingly learned and used in the international community as it has become a necessary language skill for international professionals in many countries.

Additionally, more than 70 countries have thus far incorporated the Chinese language into their education systems. Chinese plays an important role in the elevation of communication and cooperation between China and the world, as well as the advancement of exchange between nations worldwide.

As more and more foreigners start to study the Chinese language and experience Chinese culture, the world will have a better understanding of China and its rich history, its hard-working people, its development through innovation, and its inclusiveness. China, on its part, will also embrace the world with greater openness and make new, dynamic contributions to the international community. **BR**



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HAPPY 110TH BIRTHDAY

An alumni art troupe performs at the 110th anniversary gala of Tsinghua University on April 25. As one of China's most esteemed institutions of higher learning, the university has cultivated pioneers in diverse fields ranging from politics to art. Tsinghua is the only Asian institution listed in the top 20 of the *Times* Higher Education World University Rankings 2021.



Ecological Preservation

Photo taken on April 20 shows Tibetan antelopes in Hoh Xil, in the Sanjiangyuan region of Qinghai Province. The name Sanjiangyuan means the source of three rivers, namely the Yangtze River, Yellow River, and Lancang (Mekong) River. In recent years, Qinghai Province has been promoting ecological protection in the region, resulting in an increasing number of wild animals.

Big Bone Disease

China has seen no new child cases of Kashin-Beck disease, also known as “big bone disease,” for two consecutive years, according to the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Kashin-Beck disease is a bone and joint disorder endemic to China that causes pain and can lead to disabilities.

During the conference, Li Bin, deputy head of China’s National Health Commission, said that China still has 179,000 patients with symptoms of Kashin-Beck disease, and that between 2019 and 2020, patients suffering from the disease had received over 130,000 treatments through medication and 802 had undergone surgeries.

“All 379 infected regions across China have met the

criteria necessary to qualify as having eliminated the disease,” Li said, adding that the cause of the disease is still unknown and that the commission will further prioritize disease-stricken areas with policies, funds and personnel to support treatment.

Lin Jianhao, an orthopedics expert with the Peking University Arthritis Institute, called for efforts to revise diagnostic criteria, stipulate guidelines for clinical treatment and carry out scientific research with cutting-edge technologies.

Live-Streaming Regulation

Chinese authorities have rolled out a trial guideline to regulate the country’s booming live-streaming marketing industry, according to the Cyberspace

Administration of China (CAC).

The guideline, jointly issued by the CAC and six other authorities, aims to protect the rights and interests of consumers and minors, and prevent risks including false advertising, selling counterfeit items and selling substandard goods.

The guideline sets the minimum age for live-streaming operators and salespersons at 16, with minors above 16 required to obtain a guardian’s consent to enter the industry.

Live-streaming platforms are required to handle complaints from consumers in a timely manner and provide necessary evidence when disputes occur.

The guideline will take effect on May 25.

China has been the world’s largest online retail market for eight consecutive years and,

according to official data, had more than 24 million live-streaming marketing activities take place in 2020. A legion of leading online influencers have become household names through their sales success.

Tibet Tourism

To celebrate the 70th anniversary of its peaceful liberation, China’s Tibet Autonomous Region has launched seven “red tourism” routes, covering historical sites of revolutionary significance.

The first tours following the new routes will be launched on China Tourism Day, which falls on May 19 each year.

“Against the backdrop of rural vitalization, promoting the integrated development of red tourism and rural tourism will provide support for consolidating the achievements of poverty alleviation and provide more platforms for people to increase their income,” said Wang Songping, Director of the regional department of tourism development.

Data showed that during the 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-20), Tibet received more than 157.6 million tourists from home and abroad, generating nearly 212.6 billion yuan (\$32.7 billion) in tourism revenue.

Survey of Parents

More than 92 percent of Chinese parents expect schools to organize safe and rewarding after-school programs for their children, Xinhua News Agency reported on April 24. The finding was the result of a survey conducted by *China Youth Daily*.

The survey polled 1,605 parents and found that after-school tutoring and on-site Q&A activities were favored by approximately 73 percent of the respondents.

Specifically, about 70 percent of the parents hoped that teachers could help students with their homework, 56.2 percent expected their children to pursue their hobbies and 50.8 percent preferred that sports activities would be offered.

The after-school programs are expected to better suit the needs of working parents who are not able to collect their children immediately after school.

Doping Tests

China carried out over 14,000 doping tests on athletes in 2020 despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Xinhua reported on April 22.

Although the cancellation of a large number of sporting events has led to a decrease in the overall number of the tests, the China Anti-Doping Agency (CHINADA) managed to complete 14,072 tests, of which 12,026 were urine tests and 2,046 were blood tests. In 2019, CHINADA conducted 20,314 tests.

According to a report released by CHINADA on April 20, a total of 25 cases of doping rule violations were found during domestic doping control activities, with an overall violation rate of 0.18 percent.

CHINADA said it was able to

find a number of solutions to the problems posed by the pandemic in the past year, in addition to formulating its own pandemic prevention measures.

Instead of using the usual practice of sending doping control officers (DCOs) from Beijing to locations around China to complete the necessary doping control activities, CHINADA stationed its DCOs in sports training bases around China.

Permafrost Thaw

Chinese researchers have recently completed an assessment of potential thaw settlement hazards in the permafrost regions of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, known as “the roof of the world,” Xinhua reported on April 21.

Thaw settlement is a phenomenon that occurs when newly liquefied water drains from the recently thawed permafrost, reducing its volume and leading to settling and potential instability of the land. “The results of the study provide valuable references for engineering, construction and maintenance,” said Wu Tonghua, a researcher at the Northwest Institute of Eco-environment and Resources under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The study also provides an



Technological Innovation

Workers assemble engines on an assembly line at a workshop of the Weichai Group in Weifang, Shandong Province, on April 22. Weichai Power Co. Ltd., a state-owned enterprise founded in 1946, has developed China's first high-speed and high-power engine with independent intellectual property rights, ending China's long-term reliance on foreign technologies for heavy commercial vehicles.

insight for early warning systems and ways to adapt to permafrost thaw settlement on the plateau, Wu added.

The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is the world's highest and largest low-and-middle-latitude permafrost region. The permafrost on the plateau is characterized by its relatively high temperature, high ice content and environmental vulnerability.

More than 40 percent

of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau permafrost faces medium-high settlement risks.

The warming climate exacerbates thaw settlement hazards in the permafrost regions of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and threatens the stability of engineering infrastructure there. However, the risks associated with permafrost thaw settlement have rarely been assessed until now.



Experiencing TCM

International students from the China University of Petroleum in Qingdao, Shandong Province, learn to weigh traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) under the guidance of doctors at the TCM hospital in Huangdao District, Qingdao, on April 23. The hospital has collaborated with local universities to establish a base to enable international students to experience TCM culture.

Coal Cuts

The share of coal in China's energy mix will drop to less than 56 percent this year, a guideline released by the National Energy Administration (NEA) on April 22 read.

The proportion was 56.8 percent in 2020, and 57.7 percent in 2019.

In 2021, China plans to further replace coal in final energy consumption with the electricity equivalent of 200 billion kWh, the document said.

Meanwhile, its energy production is expected to reach the equivalent of 4.2 billion tons of standard coal this year, while the outputs of oil and natural gas are projected to stand at around 196 million tons and 202.5 billion cubic meters, respectively.

The country will also strive to bring the installed capacity of non-fossil energy to 1.1 billion kW and cut energy consumption per 10,000 yuan (\$1,540) of GDP

by around 3 percent in 2021.

China will further strengthen its control of the total coal consumption, drive forward the efficient and clean use of coal, encourage the use of comprehensive energy services and enhance energy-efficiency management, according to the NEA.

Aviation Recovery

The civil aviation industry in the first quarter (Q1) of the year saw continuous recovery across major indices, according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China.

The total transport turnover was 20.3 billion ton-km, a 22.8-percent year-on-year increase.

It handled 102 million passenger trips and 1.78 million tons of freight, up 37.5 percent and 28.7 percent, respectively.

Approximately 1.05 million flight movements were recorded, up 23.7 percent.

In March, the number of domestic air passenger trips hit 47.68 million, exceeding the level during the same period of 2019.

Growing Profit

The software and information technology (IT) service industry collected 237.1 billion yuan (\$36.51 billion) in profit during Q1 of the year, surging 25.9 percent year on year, data from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) showed.

Revenue of the software sector came in at 1.9 trillion yuan (\$292 billion), up 26.5 percent. The growth rate accelerated from the 21.3-percent increase registered in the first two months.

Thanks to the rising demand stemming from the digitalization of the manufacturing industry, revenue of industrial software products expanded 20.9 percent, to 47.9 billion yuan (\$7.3 billion),

up 2.5 percentage points over the January-February period.

The application of new information technologies such as cloud computing and big data continued to speed up in Q1, generating a revenue of 170.6 billion yuan (\$26.2 billion), up 26.6 percent.

MIIT data also showed revenue from e-commerce platform technology services climbed 33.2 percent to 159.9 billion yuan (\$24.6 billion), while that from integrated circuit design rose 38.5 percent from January to March.

Software exports remained fast expansion, rising 15.4 percent year on year to \$11.1 billion.

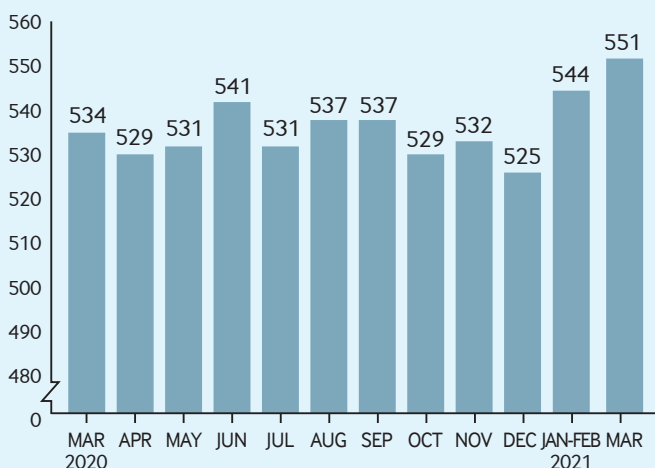
Fintech Growth

Financial technology (fintech) has experienced rapid growth in China due to a favorable environment fostered by the wide use of mobile devices and the Internet, a strong digital payment ecosystem, and the

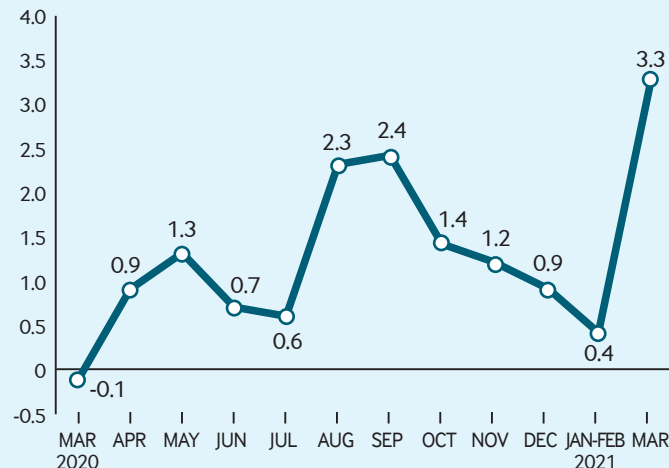
NUMBERS

(\$1=6.5 yuan)

Crude Oil Production
Daily Output (1,000 tons)



Growth Rate of Crude Oil Production
(% y.o.y.)



government's promotion of technological and financial innovation to support economic growth, according to a report from credit rating firm Fitch Ratings on April 20.

Financial institutions have actively embraced fintech to protect their franchises and broaden business opportunities, enhance credit risk management, and improve efficiency.

"The trend has been accelerated by the COVID-19 epidemic as consumers today still increase their use of online services and purchases," the report said.

However, the risks associated with the rapid growth prompted regulators to step up their inspections, aiming to ensure a more sustainable development of the sector.

Fitch Ratings believes tightened regulations might pose short-term challenges to several industry participants while protecting a number of industry

incumbents. Nevertheless, the trend of rising fintech investment and innovation should swell given the benefits it entails.

Rural Loan

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and CD Finance Management Co. Ltd. (CD Finance), a Chinese rural micro-finance service provider, signed a loan deal on April 23, for a total sum in yuan equivalent to \$40 million, in a bid to support China's rural development.

Through the service provided by CD Finance, the loan will support farmers and micro businesses over the next five years, according to the deal.

"Accelerating access to rural finance, particularly for women, and bridging the gaps in financial services are key to achieving sustainable rural development," Ashok Lavasa, ADB's Vice President, said.

At least 60 percent of the

loan targets female borrowers and is expected to benefit over 30,000 women. Meanwhile, a gender action plan will support both financing and other services for women, including financial education and life skills training.

"CD Finance is delighted to work with the ADB in support of rural vitalization, facilitate productive activities of rural households, and improve their livelihoods," Liu Dongwen, CEO of the company, said.

Securities Holdings

In the first three months of the year, overseas investors' net purchases of Chinese stocks and bonds totaled around \$73.7 billion, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) said at a press conference on April 23.

Mainland investors' net purchases of Hong Kong-listed shares through stock connect programs amounted to 311.1 billion yuan (\$47.91 billion) during

the same period, according to SAFE.

The figures show that international payments and two-way cross-border investment are basically in balance, SAFE spokesperson Wang Chunying said.

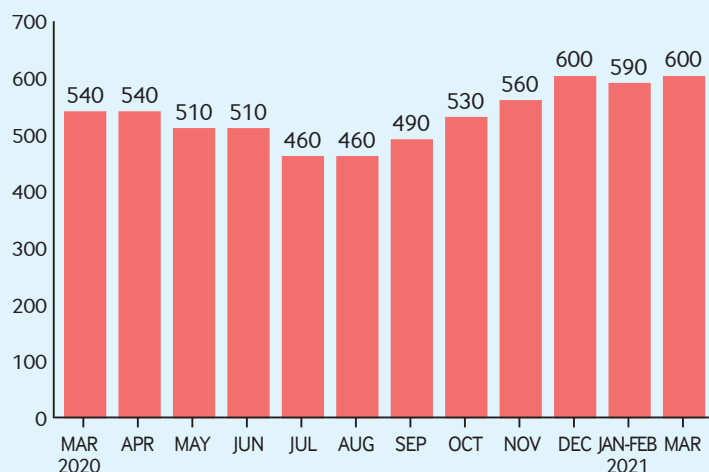
Industrial Internet

Late March saw the interconnection of a total of 73 million industrial equipment items courtesy of China's industrial Internet platforms, with more than 590,000 industrial apps in use, according to the MIIT.

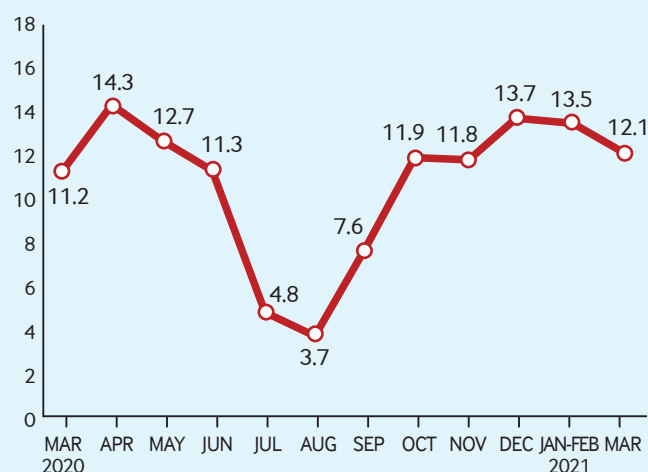
Firms witnessed a digitalization rate across key processes of 52.1 percent, and a penetration rate of digital tools for research and development of 73 percent.

China will develop its industrial Internet to help medium-sized, small and micro enterprises improve their innovative capacities, according to this year's government work report.

Industrial Natural Gas Production
Average Daily Output (mln cubic meters)



Growth Rate of Industrial Natural Gas Production
(% y.o.y.)



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)

THIS WEEK **WORLD**



ITALY

The Italian aerobatic squad Freccie Tricolori performs during a ceremony marking Italy's Liberation Day in Rome on April 25



SPAIN

Residents take their book pick on World Book and Copyright Day in Barcelona on April 23



ALBANIA

President Ilir Meta casts his ballot during the parliamentary elections at a polling station in Tirana on April 25



INDONESIA

Maritime police officers prepare for the search and rescue of submarine *KRI Nanggala-402* at Tanjung Wangi Port in Banyuwangi, East Java, on April 25. The wreckage of the missing submarine was located on the sea floor off Bali Island. All 53 crew members had died



RUSSIA

People pay tribute at Vladimir Lenin's mausoleum to mark the 151st anniversary of his birth in Moscow on April 22



IRAQ

A survivor of the Ibn al-Khatib Hospital fire is transferred to another hospital in Baghdad on April 25. The catastrophic blaze killed 82 and wounded another 110 in the COVID-19 treatment facility



THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

ATHLETE WHO DOMINATES 109 KG

Chinese record holder **Yang Zhe** lifted 200 kg in Snatch, resulting in new world and Asian records on the penultimate day featuring the 109 kg category for men at the 2020 Asian Weightlifting Championships held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from April 17 to 25. This event is a Gold Level competition for the upcoming Olympic Games in Tokyo. Participating athletes are trying to gather valuable points to add to their final ranking for the games.

Yang, 30, born in Liaoning Province, was fourth in the 105 kg category at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. He upgraded the best Olympic result of fifth place obtained by Chinese athletes since the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. In 2017, Yang won the men's 105 kg category at the 13th National Games.

This is the first time that the name of a Chinese men's weightlifting athlete has appeared on the World Records list of the International Weightlifting Federation, for 109 kg, the second highest bodyweight category.



Video Copyright Protection *Economic Daily* April 23

As of June 2020, the number of short video users surpassed 818 million, taking up 87 percent of all netizens, according to a report released at the Eighth China Internet Audio and Video Convention last year.

The increasingly booming market of short videos has sprouted the thorny issue of copyright protection.

On April 9, more than 70 Chinese film and television show makers plus associations called for short video platforms to immediately take down any of their content without explicit authorization, China Central

Television (CCTV) reported.

Enticed by visual excerpts taken from films or TV shows, often without permission, hundreds of millions of Chinese Internet users have turned to short video platforms as a source of information.

The group, which includes video streaming platforms iQIYI and Tencent, published a list of demands calling on short video platforms to immediately purge any unauthorized content, according to CCTV.

Meanwhile, local governments should join forces to track and crack down on copyright infringement across platforms. In addition, public awareness of copyright protection can help curb cases of online infringement.



She Power *Lifeweek* April 21

Recently, directed by female filmmaker Yin Ruoxin, Chinese hit drama *Sister* led the domestic box office for 10 consecutive days since its debut on April 2.

Previously, the Spring Festival blockbuster *Hi, Mom* saw Chinese film director Jia Ling overtake Patty Jenkins as the world's

“World public health has now moved to the forefront of the great challenges facing the human race, which include climate change, tackling inequalities and imbalances, and disarmament. In times of polarity, international cooperation is urgently needed.”

Xulio Rios, Director of the Observatory of Chinese Politics in Spain, with Xinhua News Agency on April 25

“The significance of the event is that a number of little steps are sometimes needed to make great conclusions.”

Henry Kissinger, former U.S. National Security Advisor and Secretary of State, in a video speech marking the 50th anniversary of Ping-Pong Diplomacy on April 24

highest-grossing female director of a single film.

The recent female directorial success represents the growth of the so-called “She Power” movement in a male-dominated film industry over the past decade.

The female perspective brought to the big screen by these directors has become a topic of public debate. As the first of its kind in China, *Hear Her*, an eight-episode monologue series about women, touches on some of the most common social issues, ranging from domestic violence to midlife crises and the objectification of females.

The blight of gender inequality, such as women being paid less than men for the same work, or having their voices ignored, still plagues society to this day. There is no doubt that women’s social status has improved, albeit gradually, but many still face barriers and unwanted challenges as a direct result of their gender in their daily lives.

Though women creating films is still not commonplace, the massive box office successes as of late have added to the value of female directors and topics.

Web Celeb Food

People’s Daily
April 21

Affected by the “single-person meal” and “stay-at-home economy,” harnessed by live e-commerce broadcasts, online celebrity food endorsements have become popular. At the same time, many people have voiced their concerns about food safety in this area.

With the rapid advancement of the “Internet Plus,” emerging consumer demands and different forms of consumption patterns have surfaced, contributing to the rise of Internet celebrity food. Data show that in 2020, China’s live broadcast

e-commerce market reached 961 billion yuan (\$147.97 billion).

On the other hand, without quality, the web celebrity food craze is an inevitably short-lived one. For companies, integrity- and quality-oriented management is mandatory.

From the perspective of potential market space, the online celebrity food niche still has many potential growth moments worth exploring.

To create a healthy and safe consumer environment, local governments should make greater efforts to optimize the regulatory framework, not only to strengthen food safety supervision, but also to innovate the methods of platform management.



FAMED DIRECTOR’S FIRST SPY FLICK

Chinese director **Zhang Yimou**’s first spy thriller *Cliff Walkers* debuted in China on April 30, joining a packed screening lineup during the five-day May Day holiday starting on May 1, usually a busy movie-going period.

The action flick is Zhang’s first time trying his hand at the spy genre, as the director broadens his project list away from the kungfu epics that have dominated his body of work in the past decade or so. His martial arts thriller *Hero* made international headlines in 2002.

Zhang, 71, born in Shaanxi Province, is one of the most critically acclaimed Chinese filmmakers. In 1987, Zhang directed his first film, *Red Sorghum*. The epic won a Golden Bear at the Berlin film festival.

Zhang also produced a series of intensely moving period dramas about the emotional inequalities suffered by women in Chinese history, including *Ju Dou* (1990), *Raise the Red Lantern* (1992) and *To Live* (1994).



“It makes Australia less attractive as a location for Chinese investment and that’s bad for jobs and the Australian economy.”

Daryl Guppy, a financial technical analyst, commenting on Australia’s move to overturn the Belt and Road MOU signed with China on the CGTN website on April 23

“Time is running out, and there is much hard work ahead, but this is no time to raise the white flag. The UN will keep flying our blue flag of solidarity and hope. This Earth Day and over the crucial months ahead, I urge all nations and all people to rise together to this moment.”

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, in an article on April 22



Kakhoro Avzalsho from Tajikistan studies Chinese calligraphy at the China University of Petroleum in Qingdao, Shandong Province, on June 13, 2019