

OPINION: CHINA'S GLOBAL CONTRIBUTION P.26 | FEATURES: RURAL E-COMMERCE P.38

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## CHINA LITERACY

Engaging youth is engaging the future



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Cover Photo: Future Close-Up Program participants pose at Ditan Park, also known as the Temple of Earth Park, in Beijing on June 17 (COURTESY PHOTO)

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**E-mail:** chinahoymx@gmail.com  
**Peru Office (Lima)**  
**Chief:** Meng Kexin  
**Tel:** 0051-959212702  
**E-mail:** revistachinaperu@gmail.com

### General Editorial Office

**Tel:** 86-10-68996252  
**Fax:** 86-10-68326628  
**Editorial Desk**  
**Tel:** 86-10-68996250  
**Partnerships**  
**Tel:** 86-10-68995807  
**E-mail:** yecong@cicgamerica.com  
**Distribution**  
**Tel:** 86-10-68310644  
**E-mail:** circulation@cicgamerica.com

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## Helping Gen Z Understand China

Gen Z, born during the late 1990s and early 2000s, is a generation of the information age. They have lived their lives fully connected digitally and are accustomed to ubiquitous access to smart phones and social media. Mostly in the early stages of their careers, Gen Zers are deemed as the most promising and dynamic group. It is of great importance to help Gen Zers around the world acquire a more nuanced understanding of China.

On June 15-20, China International Communications Group, publisher of *Beijing Review*, and Internet giant Tencent co-hosted a journey to give Gen Z a closer look at the headway China has made in the digital economy. During the six-day journey, 16 representatives from 14 countries including China, the United States, the United Kingdom, Spain, Brazil, South Africa and Pakistan, visited Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, and Beijing and experienced China's digital life.

They were able to explore the real China as they not only came and saw, but also interacted with their Chinese peers. They have found they have a lot in common: Their expectations for

digital technology are high and they brim with curiosity as well as a desire to uncover and understand the future.

These youths' growing interest in China's development is representative of the numerous young people who come to China every year to study in universities or participate in exchange programs. China has also invested in opening Confucius Institutes around the world. These institutes, named after ancient Chinese philosopher and educator Confucius (551-479 B.C.), serve as non-profit public institutions to help people overseas better understand China by teaching Chinese language and culture at universities in their host countries.

Amity between peoples holds the key to sound state-to-state relations. The younger generation is the future of a country and the hope of the world. The Internet has narrowed the distance between different parts of the world, but there is still a huge information gap between younger generations in the East and the West. It is essential that more opportunities be created for youths at home and abroad to strengthen communication and deepen mutual understanding. **BR**



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地址：北京市西城区百万庄大街24号 邮编：100037

编委会：李雅芳 李建国 贺鹏 刘云云 高丁博 曾文卉

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总编室电话：(010) 68996252 发行部电话：(010) 68310644

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# SPIN LIKE THE WIND!

The world's first 16-megawatt offshore wind turbine is completed 35 km off the coast of Fuzhou, Fujian Province, on June 28.

China Three Gorges Corp., its operator, said the turbine, with the world's largest per-unit capacity, will start operating soon, marking a breakthrough in China's offshore wind power industry.





## Ready, Relay, Run!

A torchbearer gives the camera a thumbs up during the torch relay of the Chengdu 2021 FISU Summer World University Games, or the Summer Universiade, at Yibin University in Yibin, southwest China's Sichuan Province, on June 28, marking the 30-day countdown to the Universiade.

## Balanced Development

China's regional development has become more coordinated and balanced over the past decade, according to a report from the State Council, China's cabinet.

In 2022, central China's GDP was 26.7 trillion yuan (\$3.7 trillion), with its share of the national GDP rising to 22.1 percent from 21.3 percent in 2012, said the report submitted to a session of the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress for deliberation on June 26.

In 2022, western China's GDP was 25.7 trillion yuan (\$3.5 trillion), and it took up 21.4 percent of the national GDP, up from 19.6 percent in 2012.

The country has also seen a more balanced provision of basic

public services among the regions, with levels of infrastructure access becoming more equal, gaps in basic livelihood guarantees narrowing and regional opening up further expanding, the report said.

The report also noted the challenges and difficulties facing regional coordination, including the lack of vitality in economic development in northern regions, as well as the arduous task of adjusting the distribution of productive forces.

Efforts should be made to thoroughly implement major regional strategies and foster the impetus of development, promote the construction of key functional areas to ensure the security of grain, ecology and energy, and further expand institutional opening up, according to the report.

## Regulating Online Activities

China's cyberspace regulator has launched a two-month operation to address online activities harmful to minors, including online bullying and fraud, as the summer vacation approaches.

The move aims to reduce the space taken up by harmful information, curb illegal acts, improve the security standards of content for mobile apps and devices reserved for underage users, and help minors to avoid online addiction, according to a circular released by the Office of the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission on June 27.

The targets of the operation included activities such as the malicious spreading of bullying videos that invade the privacy of

minors, sending obscene pictures and messages to minors, and showing violent scenes involving minors through the use of video editing, film and television re-creation or animation adaptations.

Regarding the risks brought about by new technologies and applications, the campaign aims to curb the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the creation of harmful information involving minors, the circular said. Generative AI refers to programs and algorithms that use deep learning to create art, music and other creative content per the command of the user.

## AI for Social Good

The World Internet Conference (WIC) "AI for Social Good" program launched on June 26 in Qufu, east China's Shandong Province, with the aim to harness AI technologies for the betterment of the world.

The launch ceremony also released an action plan that proposes four initiatives concerning AI-backed public welfare activities for the program. The proposed initiatives include establishing a global coordination mechanism, promoting global projects cooperation to share the technological benefits of AI, carrying out training to bridge the global digital divide and enhancing communication and publicity of such activities.

As part of the program, the WIC has invited global submissions for AI-backed public welfare project proposals, according to the event's organizer.

Thirty-three proposals from 23 international tech enterprises and organizations, including Google, Microsoft, Intel, Nokia, Tencent and Alibaba, have been received so far, covering fields such as education, healthcare, cultural exchange and biodiversity conservation.

## Drug-related Crime

The number of drug-related criminal cases in China has continued to decline in recent years, data from the Supreme People's Court (SPC), the country's top court, showed on June 26, the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

Chinese courts at all levels concluded some 37,000 first-instance drug-related cases in 2022, continuing a downward trend that began in 2015, the SPC said.

Drug-related court cases accounted for 3.59 percent of all criminal cases in China in 2022, down from 8.35 percent in 2018, according to the SPC.

The SPC has also published the details of 10 typical criminal cases related to drugs to demonstrate its consistent crackdown on such crimes in accordance with the law and to raise public awareness of the dangers of drugs.

China has made headway in its containment of drug-related criminal cases in recent years, but its endeavors continue to face many risks and challenges as new types of drugs and digital technologies are increasingly involved in such crimes, Li Ruiyi, an SPC official, said.

## Educational Program

China recently organized its 2023 science research educational program for teenagers, aiming to cultivate innovation and practical abilities, according to the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), Xinhua News Agency reported on June 23.

The program was mainly designed for students in primary and junior secondary schools, encouraging them to discover and explore scientific problems in areas such as energy resources, and the ecological environment.

Four topics—low-carbon life, saving food, caring for your eyes, and the BeiDou navigation satellite network—are the focuses of this year's activities, according to the CAST.

Students in the program will gain scientific knowledge, learn research methods, conduct surveys, complete reports and share their findings with others.

The program involves schools, science museums, science popularization education bases and other off-campus educational sites.

## Renewable Energy Capacity

China's installed clean energy



## Cross-border Culinary Experiences

Russian tourists buy snacks during their visit to a night market in Hunchun, northeast China's Jilin Province, on June 27. The city is located at China's border with Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the resumption of passenger services by the Hunchun customs at the start of this year has made it convenient for Russian tourists to visit the city for shopping, entertainment and food experiences.

capacity saw expansion in the first five months of the year, data from the National Energy Administration showed, Xinhua reported on June 22.

By late May, the installed capacity of wind power had risen 12.7 percent year on year to approximately 380 million kilowatts (kW), while that of solar power stood at about 450 million kW, a year-on-year increase of 38.4 percent.

The country's installed power generation capacity totaled about 2.67 billion kW in the period, rising 10.3 percent from a

year earlier.

China has enhanced its investment in renewable energy over the years as part of its pursuit of green development.

During the January-May period, total investment by the country's major power companies in solar energy increased 140.3 percent year on year to 98.2 billion yuan (\$13.6 billion), the data revealed.

China has announced that it will peak carbon emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.



## Marine Tech Tools

A young visitor tries on a virtual reality headset at the 2023 East Asia Marine Expo in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province, on June 28. The expo, which ran from June 28 to 30, showcased the latest marine technologies and attracted visitors from more than 30 countries and regions.

## Industrial Profit

China's major industrial firms reported a smaller profit decline in May, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed.

Industrial firms each with an annual main business revenue of at least 20 million yuan (\$2.77 million) saw their combined profits stand at 635.81 billion yuan (\$88.06 billion) that month, down 12.6 percent from a year ago, narrowing from the 18.2-percent drop in April.

Industrial production continued to improve, and business profits maintained their recovery trend in May, NBS statistician Sun Xiao said.

The manufacturing sector posted better performance that month thanks to an array of supporting policies, with its profit decline narrowing 7.4 percentage points from April.

Equipment manufacturers saw combined profits rise 15.2 percent in May, and the profit decline of consumer goods producers shrank 17.1 percentage points.

Meanwhile, the power,

heating, gas and water supply sectors saw rapid growth, with their profits up 35.9 percent from a year earlier.

In the first five months, profits of industrial firms went down 18.8 percent year on year, narrowing 1.8 percentage points from the January-April period. Aggregate revenue of these firms edged up 0.1 percent.

## Development Zones

State-level economic and technological development zones have attracted more than 30,000 foreign-funded companies, the Ministry of Commerce said on June 27.

China currently counts 230 such zones in 31 provincial-level regions on the mainland, gathering more than 4 million enterprises, Chen Chunjiang, Vice Minister of Commerce, said at an event in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, on promoting the projects.

Over 300 *Fortune* 500 enterprises have established

headquarters or research centers in these zones.

Last year, the zones generated a regional GDP of 15 trillion yuan (\$2.08 trillion), increasing 117 percent over 2013.

Chen said at the event that China will consider a further, reasonable shortening of its list that outlines sectors off-limits for foreign investment and strengthening the opening up of its modern service industries.

He added the country will also increase policy support to promote innovation and upgrade state-level economic and technological development zones.

## Airbus Aircraft

For the first time in the company's history, Airbus, the Europe-based global leader in the aerospace industry, has delivered an aircraft assembled in Tianjin to a European client.

Hungarian airline Wizz Air, the largest Central and Eastern European budget carrier, took delivery of its first A321neo aircraft

assembled at the aircraft manufacturing titan's Final Assembly Line Asia (FALA) facility in the northern Chinese municipality on June 27.

The delivery is a milestone for Airbus Tianjin, Christoph Schrempp, General Manager of the Airbus Tianjin Delivery Center, said.

To meet the increasing demand for the A321 model, one of the most popular airline variants in the world, Airbus in 2021 announced its plans to expand the capability of its FALA in Tianjin to A321 production.

The A321neo, the largest member of the A320 family, has a maximum certified passenger capacity of 244 seats.

Inaugurated in 2008, the FALA in Tianjin was the first Airbus commercial aircraft assembly line outside Europe. Since its first A320 delivery in 2009, more than 600 aircraft have rolled off the Tianjin production line over its 14 years in operation.

In April, Airbus announced

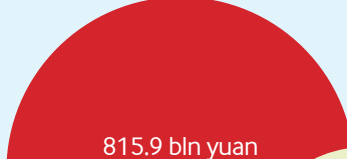
## NUMBERS

### China's Service Outsourcing Industry in January-May

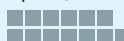
(\$1=7.22 yuan as of June 29, all growth rates are y.o.y.)

#### Service outsourcing contracts inked by Chinese firms

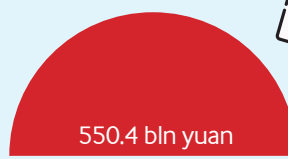
Total value



Up 12.3%



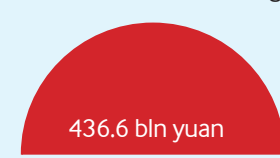
Executed contract value



Up 18.0%



Offshore service outsourcing contract value



Up 12.3%



#### Service outsourcing executed contract value

With members of the RCEP

76.3 bln yuan

With the United States

64.1 bln yuan



With the European Union

40.7 bln yuan





the construction of a second assembly line in Tianjin to expand the production capacity of its A320 passenger aircraft family.

## Freight Train Services

The number of China-Europe freight train services increased 16 percent year on year to 7,126 trips in the first five months of the year, according to China State Railway Group Co. Ltd.

Some 774,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU) of containers of goods were transported via the freight trains during this period, up 31 percent from a year ago, the company said. A TEU is an exact unit of measurement used to determine cargo capacity for container ships and terminals.

In May alone, the number of China-Europe freight train trips increased 13 percent year on year to 1,515. The trains transported about 165,000 TEUs of containers, marking an increase of 29 percent from a year ago.

As of late May, the freight train services had reached 213 cities in 25 European countries.

## Power Station

The Kela photovoltaic (PV) power station in Garze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, went into operation on June 25.

The power station in Yajiang County, which covers an area of 1,667 hectares, is the world's largest and highest-altitude hydro-PV complementary power station—combining both solar and hydropower.

As the first phase of the Lianghekou hydropower plant's hydro-PV complementary project, the station has an installed capacity of 1 million kW and can generate an average of 2 billion kWh annually, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by more than 1.6 million tons per year.

With a planned total installed capacity of 3 million kW, the Lianghekou hydropower plant is located on the Yalong River in

Garze. The Yalong River basin is one of China's clean energy bases.

## Courier Sector

As of June 24, China's courier sector saw its delivery volume exceed 60 billion parcels this year, according to the State Post Bureau.

The figure was achieved 172 days earlier this year than it was in 2019, prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as 34 days earlier than in 2022, data from the bureau showed.

Mid-year promotional activities launched by e-commerce platforms in May contributed to the surge in express delivery volume. From June 1 to 18, average daily express delivery volume exceeded 400 million pieces.

Since the start of the year, courier companies have improved their transit and delivery processes, and expanded the use of automatic sorting, drones, unmanned warehouses and vehicles to improve productivity.

The companies have also worked to advance the layout of

overseas hubs and warehouses to better serve the cross-border consumer market, the bureau said.

## RMB Global Payment

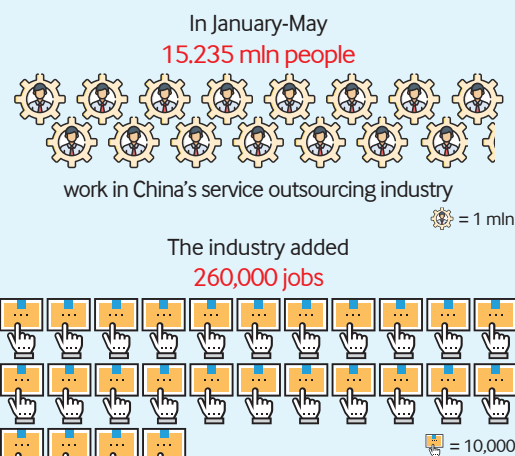
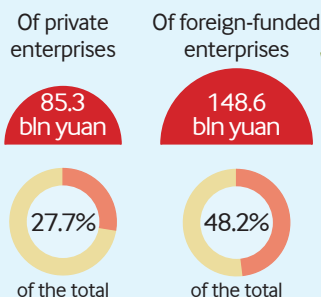
China's currency, the renminbi (RMB) or the yuan, saw its share in global payments rise from 2.29 percent in April to 2.54 percent in May, according to the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT), a global provider of financial messaging services. The RMB remained the fifth most active currency.

The renminbi payments value gained 20.38 percent from April, while, in general, all payments currencies went up 8.75 percent.

In terms of international payments, excluding the eurozone, the renminbi ranked sixth with a share of 1.51 percent.

China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is the largest market for offshore renminbi transactions, accounting for 73.48 percent, followed by the UK at 5.17 percent and Singapore at 3.84 percent.

## Executed contract value of outsourcing services



(Source: Ministry of Commerce)



## GREECE

Kyriakos Mitsotakis, leader of the New Democracy Party, celebrates his party's victory in the elections in Athens on June 25. The party garnered 40.55 percent of the vote, securing 158 seats in the next 300-member parliament to form a single-party government



## RUSSIA

A fireworks display lights up the night sky during the Scarlet Sails Festival in St. Petersburg on June 25. Since 1968, the festival is a celebration of youth and congratulates high-school graduates on the beginning of their adult life journey



## VIET NAM

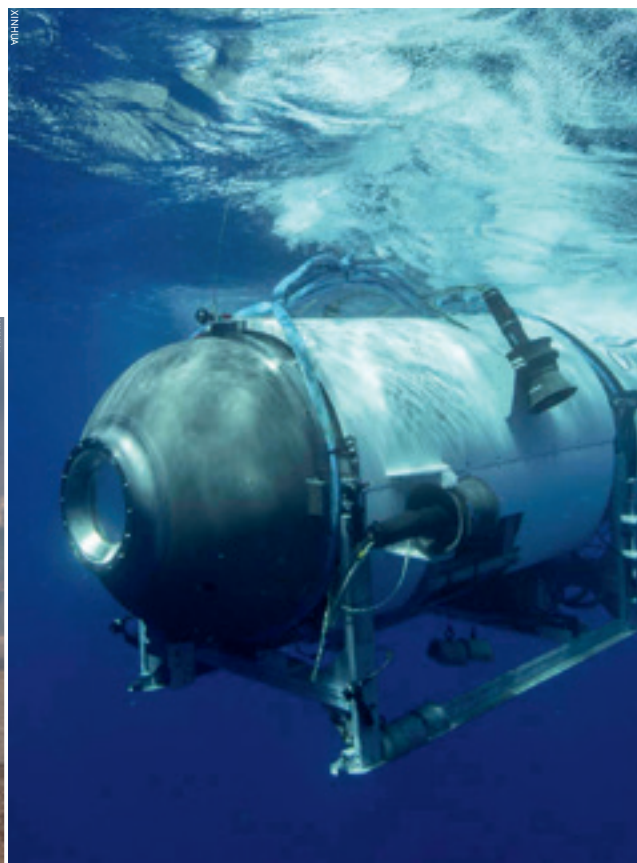
An examinee leaves an exam site in Hanoi on June 28. More than 1 million students nationwide took their high school graduation exams that day





## FRANCE

A demonstrator confronts policemen during a protest in Nanterre, a town on the western outskirts of Paris, on June 29. Security forces deployed tear gas as they clashed with protesters during a rally triggered by the fatal shooting of Nahel M, a 17-year-old driver, by a police officer during a traffic stop on June 27



## UNITED STATES

File photo released by OceanGate Expeditions shows the Titan submersible, which had been missing since June 18. On June 22, U.S. Coast Guard officials said they had uncovered parts of the Titan consistent with an implosion. All five passengers aboard are believed to have died



## MYANMAR

A burning pile of seized illegal drugs in Yangon on June 26. On that day, authorities destroyed more than \$446 million worth of illegal drugs on the annual International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking



# THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

## ↓ ALIBABA MANAGEMENT RESHUFFLE

**Zhang Yong**, also known as Daniel Zhang, will step down as Alibaba chairperson and CEO as of September 10 in order to focus on the company's cloud business, according to an internal letter recently made public by the e-commerce giant.

With two other executives taking over the reins, Zhang will serve exclusively as chairperson and CEO of Alibaba Cloud Intelligence Group.

Alibaba Cloud, which Zhang said is currently in its most critical period of development, specializes in cloud computing and artificial intelligence services. According to American technological research and consulting firm Gartner, it ranks third in the world among cloud service providers in terms of market share.

Zhang became CEO of Alibaba in 2015 and took on the additional role of chairman in 2019 after Ma Yun (Jack Ma) decided to retire from his corporate responsibilities at the company he founded in 1999.



## Urban Rewilding

**Eastday.com**  
**June 25**

With the continuous expansion of greeneries in many Chinese cities, a great variety of wildlife, especially small mammals, are making their way back into residential compounds and busy urban streets, where they can find not only regular food supplies, but also a safe living space rid of their natural predators.

In response to the increasing arrival of wildlife in urban quarters, cities across China are launching new policies and upgrading their green spaces to better accommodate these new settlers.

On June 20, Shanghai passed a wildlife

conservation regulation that will come into force on October 1. It stipulates the establishment of a local network of wildlife habitats, where construction and other potentially harmful human activities are strictly prohibited.

Similarly, Beijing has created 20 green belts in its urban areas. With plant species carefully selected and planted to mimic the biotic composition of natural ecosystems, these green belts will gradually evolve into miniature forests that closely resemble animals' natural habitats. According to a catalog published in May, the total number of bird species found in Beijing has increased by nearly 100 over the past decade to reach 515, and this number is set for continuous growth.



## Significant Source Of Salts

**Outlook Weekly**  
**June 26**

Surrounded by vast stretches of desert and sand dunes, a cluster of lakes sit serenely in the heartland of the Qaidam Basin, a hyper-arid basin located in the northwest of Qinghai Province.

These landlocked lakes furnish China with a major vault of mineral resources. Data have shown that, at the end of 2021, the basin's total reserve

**"Our development remains unbalanced and inadequate. Yet such a situation is also where China's development potential and space lie."**

Chinese Premier **Li Qiang**, at the opening of the 14th Annual Meeting of the New Champions, also known as the Summer Davos, in Tianjin on June 27

**"While we must continue to provide energy to the world, we must also recognize the need to continually reduce emissions and to continue to decarbonize."**

**Haitham Al Ghais**, Secretary General of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, at the Energy Asia 2023 conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on June 26

of potassium-based salts amounted to 778 million tons, which accounts for 75 percent of the domestic reserve.

The mining of mineral salts in the area dates back to the 1950s. Flash forward seven decades and, now, Qinghai has grown into China's largest manufacturing hub for potassium fertilizers. The province boasts an annual output of 8 million tons of potassium fertilizers, more than half of the country's total output.

The rise of Qinghai as a major industrial base for minerals has been powered by a series of technological breakthroughs. Over recent decades, the province has invested much energy into developing its own unique set of core technologies. Now, Qinghai is home to the world's only project that uses salt lake-derived mineral content to collect magnesium, which was once considered an unwelcome byproduct of the extraction of potassium. The project's turning of this byproduct into a valuable raw material speaks volumes about China's commitment to environmentally friendly development.

## The Mystery Box Craze

Ce.cn

June 23

Blind boxes or mystery boxes—toy figurines hidden in identical boxes—are one of the hottest trends among young Chinese consumers. Data have shown that the blind box industry has expanded in recent years, its market value rising from 2.5 billion yuan (\$345 million) in 2019 to almost 10 billion yuan (\$1.3 billion) in 2021. Showcasing great market potential, the industry has branched out from the world of toys into many other market sectors, from cosmetic products to meals.

However, there is a dark side to this trend. The fact that the actual content is unknown prior to purchase gives some dishonest

profiteers the chance to slip in substandard products or engage in illicit trades, the most infamous of which is the delivery of mystery live pets. Stuffed into small enclosed spaces, these animals may die during delivery.

To root out these unethical practices, the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) has recently unveiled a set of trial guidelines on how to regulate the country's billion-dollar blind box industry. The guideline has stipulated that blind boxes cannot be used as a means to sell live animals, drugs and medical devices. Furthermore, key information, such as product type and the rules for drawing these boxes, should all be clearly printed on the outer packaging, the SAMR said. Hopefully, with these regulations in place, these mystery boxes will yield only good surprises.



### 'SALUTE BOY' EXCELS IN GAOKAO

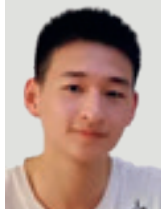
**Lang Zheng**, who touched the nation's heart after the 8.0-magnitude Wenchuan earthquake in 2008 by saluting the soldiers rescuing him from among the rubble, is likely to enroll in one of China's most prestigious universities.

The then 3-year-old Lang became widely known after his salute was captured on camera. Lang scored 637 out of 750 in the college entrance examination, or *gaokao*, this year.

The score placed him within the top 30 among the hundreds of thousands who took the liberal arts *gaokao* in his native Sichuan Province.

The *gaokao*, which usually takes place in early June, is one of the most important exams for Chinese students as the scores largely determine which university they can attend and their future career.

Lang said he would like to apply to study at Peking University, and history and international relations are his preferred majors.



“People naturally think Chinese civilization is difficult to understand. But actually, the underlying ideas are very straightforward and [there is] something that lots of people can empathize with.”

British writer **Tim Clissold**, author of the critically acclaimed 2006 book *Mr. China*, speaking about the need to introduce traditional Chinese culture to Westerners in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency

“The trouble with ‘de-risking’ is that the world needs to make trade, not war.”

**Anthony Rowley**, a veteran journalist specializing in Asian economic and financial affairs, commenting on the newly proposed U.S. strategy on its relations with China in an opinion piece for the *South China Morning Post* on June 25



COVER STORY

# UP-CLOSE WITH THE FUTURE

Young people from different countries experience China's digital economy

By Tao Xing