

OPINION: THE FLYING TIGERS' LEGACY P.20 | FEATURES: FANTASTIC FACTORY TOURISM P.38

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# CONTENTS

## EDITOR'S DESK

**02 Shared Insights for Shared Challenges**

## THIS WEEK

### COVER STORY

**12 Preserving Progress**

Rural initiatives are vital for poverty alleviation

**16 Lessons From Nujiang**

A Brazilian perspective on poverty alleviation in China

**18 The Strength of Nujiang Women**

Gender equality in poverty alleviation

## OPINION

**20 Allies in the Skies: The Growing Legacy of the Flying Tigers**

An interview with Jeffrey B. Greene, Chairman of the Sino-American Aviation Heritage Foundation

**22 Beating the Butterfly Defect**

Risk and reward and China's role in an increasingly globalized world

**24 When Truth Shatters Prejudice**

Visitors to China offer an alternative narrative to mainstream Western media

**25 Sky Net to Catch Out Corruption**

New measures to combat cross-border crime

## FEATURES

**28 Quake Response**

China's contribution to global relief efforts in Myanmar

**30 Rights Over Bytes**

IP protection in the age of AI

**32 Greener and Smarter**

The technologies empowering China's green development

**34 Guarding Glaciers**

Innovation and cooperation to protect Earth's thermostat

**36 Cultivating Success**

High-quality promotion turns produce into prosperity

**38 Workshops of Wonder**

Fabulous factories and the rise of industrial tourism

**40 Beyond the Lab**

Content creators share the delight of discovery

**42 Imagining the Future**

The increasing popularity and prospects of science fiction

## CULTURE

**46 A Sci-Fi Jamboree**

The China Science Fiction Convention in Beijing

## EXPAT'S EYE

**48 A Cross-Cultural Study of Public Capital Markets in Beijing**

A visiting researcher's views on China's finance system

Cover Photo: A village in the mountains of Lijiang, Yunnan Province (VCG)

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## Shared Insights for Shared Challenges

The 2025 International Forum on Poverty Governance and Global Development, or Nujiang Forum, was held in Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, on March 29. Convened around the theme Together Promote Rural Revitalization and Common Development, the forum drew more than 300 diplomats, government officials and experts from 34 countries and regions as well as international organizations such as the United Nations. Participants exchanged experience in poverty reduction and rural revitalization in order to gather wisdom and strength to promote sustainable development and shared modernization.

Nujiang's experience in eliminating absolute poverty is a major success story in China's miracle of poverty reduction. The prefecture has not only completed the leap from deep poverty to overall poverty alleviation and from closed backwardness to open development, but also taken the lead in rural revitalization while seizing the opportunities presented by digital economic development.

Since its inception in 2021, the Nujiang Forum, focusing on issues such

as poverty alleviation, ecological protection and sustainable development, has become an important platform for international cooperation in poverty reduction and sharing development experience. In particular, it provides an opportunity for Global South countries to share experience and mutual learning in poverty reduction, which will assist in narrowing the North-South gap and promote more inclusive and resilient global development.

Four thematic sessions were held during the forum, including integrated agriculture-culture-tourism development, green transformation, digital empowerment and global sharing of China's poverty alleviation experience. These topics provide diversified solutions that not only contribute to the rural revitalization of Nujiang, but also provide useful references for other regions. They are also highly consistent with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals under the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Through exchange of this kind, the international community will build consensus and increase cooperation in poverty governance and sustainable development. **BR**



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## FLYING CAR DEMO

The air module of Chinese electric vehicle maker XPENG's land-to-air flying car, the Land Aircraft Carrier, conducts a flight demonstration at Liuye Lake Tourist Resort in Changde, Hunan Province, on March 27. The hybrid vehicle is comprised of an electric ground module and an electric vertical takeoff and landing air module. Following a previous test flight in Shanghai last year, the company has received nearly 5,000 orders for the vehicle.





## Traditional Culture on Show

People in traditional *hanfu* attire participate in a parade in Langzhong ancient town of Langzhong, Sichuan Province, on March 29. *Hanfu* is the traditional clothing of the Han people—China's largest ethnic group. The *hanfu* parade attracted enthusiasts from all over the country.

## Top 10 Scientific Advances

The National Natural Science Foundation of China released the country's top 10 scientific advances of 2024 during the opening ceremony of the 2025 Zhongguancun Forum Annual Conference in Beijing on March 27.

The forum ran from March 27 to 31, focusing on cutting-edge fields from large artificial intelligence models to quantum technology.

The advances were mainly achieved in the fields of mathematics, physics, astronomy, information science, chemistry, materials science, energy, Earth and environmental science, and life and medical science.

The list includes the *Chang'e-6* mission's returned lunar samples, which revealed volcanic activity on the far side of the moon dating back 2.8 billion years, the realization of intelligent reasoning and training using large-scale photonic computing chips, and the discovery of key evidence that supermassive black holes affect the formation and evolution of their host galaxies.

## Human Rights in Xizang

A press conference was held on March 28 in Lhasa, capital of Xizang Autonomous Region, for the release of a white paper on the progress of human rights in the region.

The document, titled Human

Rights in Xizang in the New Era, was released by the State Council Information Office.

The event introduced the all-round progress and historic achievements of the human rights cause in Xizang in the new era.

"Today is the Serfs' Emancipation Day. Sixty-six years ago, Xizang launched its democratic reform, and about 1 million serfs were emancipated from feudal serfdom, beginning a landmark chapter in the history of both human civilization and the global progress of human rights," Gama Cedain, Chairman of the regional government of Xizang, said at the press conference.

Reflecting on the development of human rights in Xizang

over the past six decades, especially since the 18th Communist Party of China National Congress in 2012, Gama Cedain said the Party's leadership has provided a fundamental guarantee for lasting stability and high-quality development in the region.

He noted people of all ethnic groups in Xizang have made historic achievements in their rights to subsistence and development.

## Jewelry Fashion Hub

Shanghai is set to establish an international jewelry fashion hub in Huangpu District, with the goal of creating a vibrant center for the gold and jewelry industry encompassing trade, design, consumption, innovation and professional services.

Relevant policy was released by Shanghai Municipal Government on March 31.

Shanghai has three national-level trading markets for gold, diamonds, and gems and jade. In 2024, the city's major retailers recorded over 36.6 billion yuan (\$5 billion) in gold and jewelry sales, accounting for 11.1 percent of the national total.

Huangpu, a historical center for Shanghai's jewelry industry, will leverage its established gold and jewelry industry chain to realize this vision. The initiative aims to reshape the industry, stimulate consumption, and foster high-quality development within the local gold and jewelry sector.

## Residential Building Standards

The Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development announced new national

standards for residential projects on March 31, designed to meet the people's demand for improved living quality.

The new standards address residential projects as a whole, emphasizing safety, comfort, environmentally friendly practices and smart design. They specify requirements for construction, use and maintenance across aspects including scale, layout, functionality, performance and key technical measures.

Effective on May 1, the new standards encompass seven key areas: general principles, basic regulations, living environment, building space, structure, indoor environment and building equipment.

Key provisions include a minimum ceiling height of three meters for new residential buildings, mandatory elevator installation in structures with four or more floors, and improved sound insulation standards for walls and floors.

The existing home design standards, in effect since 2012, mandated a minimum ceiling height of 2.8 meters.

According to an official from the ministry, rapid economic and social development, coupled with advancements in living standards and construction technology, have driven higher expectations for housing quality.

## New Oilfield

The China National Offshore Oil Corp. (CNOOC) announced on March 31 the discovery of a significant oilfield in the eastern South China Sea, with proven reserves exceeding 100 million tons.

Designated the Huizhou 19-6 oilfield, this discovery represents a breakthrough for China's offshore oil exploration. CNOOC highlighted that it is the nation's first large-scale integrated clastic oilfield discovered in deep to ultra-deep layers. An integrated clastic oilfield is an oilfield developed in clastic sedimentary rock formations, where the exploration, production and infrastructure are coordinated as one unified operation.

In the field of marine oil and gas exploration, formations buried deeper than 3,500



## Robot Worker

A robot transports materials at a workshop in the Sci-tech Innovation Center in Xiongan New Area, Hebei Province, on March 26. Since 2017, when China announced plans to establish the Xiongan New Area to take on functions transferred from Beijing that are not essential to Beijing's role as China's capital, it has evolved from a blueprint into a highly developed city of the future.

meters are generally classified as deep layers, while those exceeding 4,500 meters are considered ultra-deep layers.

Located approximately 170 km from Shenzhen in Guangdong Province, the

oilfield sits at an average water depth of 100 meters. Test drilling has yielded a daily production of 413 barrels of crude oil and 68,000 cubic meters of natural gas, underscoring its potential.



## New Air Route

A Russian woman welcomes passengers arriving on the inaugural Air China flight from Beijing to Vladivostok with bread and salt, a traditional gesture of hospitality, at Vladivostok International Airport in Russia, on March 31.

## Treasury Bond Issuance

China will issue 500 billion yuan (\$70 billion) of special treasury bonds to support large state-owned commercial banks in replenishing their core Tier 1 capital, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) said on March 31.

Tier 1 capital consists of common stock and disclosed reserves (retained earnings). Financial regulators use Tier 1 capital as a means of measuring a bank's solvency.

The capital injection will be carried out prudently, in line with market-oriented and law-based principles, to support Bank of China, China Construction Bank, Bank of Communications and Postal Savings Bank of China.

The country's major state-owned commercial banks currently enjoy stable operations, sound asset quality and sufficient provisions for potential losses. Key regulatory indicators remain within a "healthy range," the ministry said.

Earlier, on March 30, the four

banks announced plans to raise a combined 520 billion yuan (\$73 billion) through the issuance of A-shares targeting specific investors.

A-shares are the shares of companies incorporated in the mainland and listed on the Shanghai, Shenzhen and Beijing stock exchanges. A-shares are primarily available for trading by mainland investors. Overseas investment is permitted under strict regulations.

According to their plans, Bank of China aims to raise no more than 165 billion yuan (\$23 billion), China Construction Bank no more than 105 billion yuan (\$14 billion), Bank of Communications no more than 120 billion yuan (\$17 billion) and Postal Savings Bank of China no more than 130 billion yuan (\$18 billion).

All four banks said the raised funds, after deducting issuance-related costs, will be used to replenish their respective core Tier 1 capital.

They noted capital replenishment from the MOF is a crucial

move from the government to support their stable operations and development.

## Social Credit System

On March 31, China released a guideline for improving the social credit system amid efforts to promote its high-quality development.

The guideline, issued by the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council, China's highest state administrative organ, includes 23 measures and aims to build a unified national market while maintaining a fair and orderly competitive market environment.

Under the guideline, a social credit system covering all types of entities, featuring unified rules and regulations, and being jointly built and with shared benefits, should be established to promote deep integration of the social credit system into all aspects of social and economic development.

Credit has played a key role in optimizing the business environment, promoting financial services for the real economy and enhancing government governance and service efficiency, according to the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

However, challenges remain in the social credit system, such as inconsistent regulatory frameworks and insufficient sharing and openness of credit information. Therefore, further improvements to the social credit system are necessary to provide foundational support for high-quality economic and social development, the NDRC said.

Regarding information security, the NDRC said the construction of the social credit system adheres to the fundamental principle of defending information security and individual rights, while guarding against excessive information collection and any illegal or irregular activities relating to the disclosure, processing, sale or use of information.

## NUMBERS





## Invention Patents

The number of valid invention patents in China's strategic emerging industries had exceeded 1.3 million by the end of 2024, with a year-on-year growth of 15.7 percent, the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) announced on March 28.

At a press conference in Beijing, Wang Peizhang, a senior official at the CNIPA, said invention patents now account for 70.4 percent of new patent applications filed by universities and other research institutions.

Strengthening the transformation and application of patents has played a vital role in promoting the deep integration of scientific and technological innovation with industrial innovation, and in driving high-quality development, Wang added.

The CNIPA will also promote the deep integration of industry, academia and research, supporting key enterprises in the industrial chain to strengthen collaborative innovation with leading colleges and research institutions while

cultivating high-value patent portfolios, according to Wang.

## External Assets

China's external financial assets stood at \$10.22 trillion and its external financial liabilities hit \$6.92 trillion, resulting in nearly \$3.3 trillion of net external assets at the end of 2024, according to data released on March 28 by the State Administration of Foreign Exchange.

In external financial assets, reserves assets hit \$3.46 trillion, accounting for 34 percent of external financial assets. Direct investment assets amounted to \$3.13 trillion, accounting for 31 percent.

In external liabilities, direct investment liabilities were \$3.62 trillion, accounting for 52 percent of the external financial liabilities. Portfolio investment liabilities reached \$1.94 trillion, accounting for 28 percent.

## Digitalizing Light Industry

By 2027, the popularization rate of

digital research and design tools in key light industry enterprises will reach around 90 percent, according to a light industry digital transformation implementation plan jointly issued by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and two other central government authorities.

By 2030, digital transformation will be extensively carried out in major light-industry enterprises, rendering them more high-end, intelligent and greener, it reads.

To achieve these goals, the plan outlines four major actions: empowering light industry with new-generation information technology; innovating business models and applications; promoting high-quality industrial development; and strengthening foundational support. These are further detailed into 15 specific measures.

At the end of 2024, the popularization rate of digital research and design tools in light industry enterprises reached 84.9 percent, 0.8 percentage points higher than the national average.

## Non-Fossil Fuel Power

Nationwide installed non-fossil fuel power generation capacity surpassed 2 billion kilowatts (kw) for the first time at the end of February, according to the latest data released by the China Electricity Council.

The figure accounted for 58.8 percent of the country's total installed power generation capacity.

The installed capacity of new-energy generation, represented by wind and solar power, reached 1.46 billion kw at the end of that month, accounting for 42.8 percent of the country's total installed power generation capacity.

Official data showed that China's installed capacity of non-fossil fuel power generation surpassed 1 billion kw for the first time at the end of June 2021.

The quick increase in the installed capacity reflected the power sector's continued efforts to optimize the energy structure and accelerate the green and low-carbon transition.



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)



## UNITED STATES

A police officer works at the site of a box truck accident in Boston, Massachusetts, on April 1. The truck struck multiple pedestrians and crashed into a building in downtown Boston



## NEW ZEALAND

Competitors showcase their skills at a sheep shearing competition in Te Kuiti on March 28



## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

An ancient temple destroyed by fire in Uiseong County, North Gyeongsang Province, on March 27. The death toll in the country's worst-ever wildfires that broke out on March 21 rose to 30 as of April 2





## FRANCE

Chef Hugo Roellinger delivers a speech at the 2025 edition of the Michelin Guide France awards ceremony in Metz, Moselle, on March 31. French chefs Roellinger and Christopher Coutanceau were awarded with three Michelin stars at the ceremony



## DENMARK

A woman holds a protest sign against the U.S. Pituffik Space Base in Nuuk, capital of Greenland, an autonomous territory of Denmark, on March 28. U.S. Vice President JD Vance and an American delegation visited the base in northwest Greenland that day



## GERMANY

The Hannover Messe 2025, one of the country's most important industrial trade fairs, opens in Hannover on March 30



# THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

## ↓ NATIONAL DIVING TEAM LEADER RETIRES

**Zhou Jihong** has been removed from the post of leader of the Chinese diving team and will retire, the General Administration of Sport of China said on March 26.

Born in 1965, Zhou made it to the Chinese national diving team in 1982. At the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984, she claimed the gold medal in the women's 10-meter platform event, securing China's first Olympic gold in diving.

Zhou retired from competitive diving in 1986. In 1990, she became a coach for the Chinese diving team, later serving as team leader in 2000. She assumed presidency of the Chinese Swimming Association in 2017.



In 2020, the Chinese Diving Association was established, with Zhou elected as its president. In 2021, she was elected vice president of World Aquatics (formerly the International Swimming Federation), becoming the first woman to hold the post in the organization's history.

Zhou led the Chinese diving team to win over 300 gold medals.

## High-tech Tourism

**Guangzhou Daily**  
March 27

In recent months, robotic exoskeletons have been tested at a number of top tourist sites in China to help tourists tackle steep mountain trails and staircases. Worn with a harness around the waist, thighs and knees, the AI-powered device can sense users' movements and provide synchronized assistance to ease the burden on their legs.

Meanwhile, other nascent technologies are also making their way into travel attractions across the country, with robot dog porters being used to remove trash, drones deployed for food delivery, and robotic tour

guides tested to guide visitors through shopping malls and museums.

This recent entry of smart technology into China's tourism sector is closely tied to the rapid advancements made by the domestic AI sector. In recent years, China has made great strides in AI deployment and is promoting the AI Plus initiative, which aims to support the extensive application of AI across sectors such as new-energy vehicles, robotics and smart manufacturing devices.

Yet challenges remain. Tourism authorities must come up with more concrete measures to improve digital infrastructure in scenic spots and ensure that personal privacy is well-protected when collecting tourist data.



## The Race Against Dementia

**China Newsweek**  
March 24

This January, China rolled out a sweeping action plan to set up a thorough prevention and control system for Alzheimer's disease (AD), a neurodegenerative disorder that slowly destroys a person's memory and thinking skills.

This progressive condition is expected to become more prevalent as life expectancy rises and the elderly population continues to expand in China. As of now, it has become one of the leading causes

“We will further expand our visa-free ‘circle of friends’ and roll out more facilitation measures for cross-border travel. We welcome more foreign friends to visit China in this beautiful spring.”

**Guo Jiakun**, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson, at a press briefing on April 1, commenting on the increasing number of foreign influencers who have visited China and shared their thoughts on social media

“From initially selling products to later producing in China, we now place greater emphasis on locating our innovation initiatives in the country.”

**Xia Fuliang**, President of Evonik Greater China, in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency, highlighting the vast market opportunities emerging from China's drive to boost consumption. Evonik Industries AG is a German specialty chemicals company

of death in the country. According to a report released last year, the total number of people with AD and other related conditions in China was about 17 million, which made up nearly 30 percent of the global total.

Due to the subtle and varied nature of the disorder's early symptoms, delayed diagnosis has become the biggest challenge in AD intervention and treatment around the world. In China, a national survey conducted between 2015 and 2018 showed that more than 70 percent of AD patients surveyed had never sought medical treatment.

This situation is improving, as increased health awareness over the past few years has made many people realize the importance of early diagnosis. However, the early diagnostic rate for the disease in the country is only 28 percent.

Multiple experts have recommended strengthening public education on the disease, especially in rural areas. These educational campaigns, they said, should also target not only older adults, but more importantly, their middle-aged children, for whom the emotional suffering is most acute. Regular cognitive screenings for the elderly should also be established across the country to identify those at risk of developing dementia and enable early intervention.

## Skinny Scams

*South China Morning Post*  
March 26

During the Third Session of the 14th National People's Congress, China's top legislature, in March, the Central Government announced a weight management campaign to promote public wellness and prevent obesity and chronic diseases linked to poor diet and unhealthy lifestyles.

While more and more businesses, hospitals and individuals are joining in this national weight-loss drive, some scammers have capitalized on the trend by contriving weight loss scams, many of which are hard

to detect on one's own.

Recently, China Central Television exposed the truth behind so-called "slimming coffee," a popular item on Chinese e-commerce platforms that contains sibutramine, a harmful substance that can cause sudden cardiac arrest.

Weight loss scams are an obstinate problem resulting from a mix of factors, such as limited health literacy, insufficient platform regulation and the common misconception that weight loss can happen instantly. Tackling these issues requires targeted actions, coordinated efforts from all players involved and a sustained commitment to the national fitness campaign.

## NEW CHAIR OF ZTE

Industry veteran **Fang Rong** was elected chair of Chinese telecommunications equipment giant ZTE Corp. on March 31.

Fang joined ZTE in 1997 and served as senior vice president from 1998 to 2009. Before accepting her new role, she had served as a non-executive director at ZTE since June 2018. ZTE is a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions.

As a senior expert in the information and communications technology industry, Fang's leadership has yielded many notable results in the research, development and large-scale commercialization of technologies in fields such as optical communications, videoconferencing and power supply.

She has played a leading role for ZTE's operation and cooperation in overseas markets including India and European countries, laying a solid foundation for the company's globalization.



"China has actively promoted international collaboration through data sharing and joint research initiatives, significantly advancing global lunar exploration efforts."

**Wu Weiren**, chief designer of China's lunar exploration program, at the opening of an exhibition at the National Museum of China, which explores the program's development over the last two decades

"[Large language model] DeepSeek's explosive growth is driving AI integration across sectors, and the intensifying competition for AI professionals is pushing companies to increase salaries."

**Li Qiang**, Executive Vice President of leading Chinese online recruitment platform Zhaopin, in a recent interview with Xinhua, commenting on China's rapid AI growth leading to a hiring boom and salary increases



Local residents dressed in traditional ethnic attire perform folk songs and dances at a village in Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, on March 28

**COVER STORY**

# PRESERVING PROGRESS

A case study of rural priorities after eradicating absolute poverty

By Tao Xing