

OPINION: THE U.S. QUEST FOR RARE EARTHS P.24 | FEATURES: REDUCING STUDENT STRESS P.34

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Cover Photo: An exhibition hall at the Zero Carbon Park in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province (VCG)

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Executive Assistant: Zhao Wei
Tel/Fax: 1-201-792-0334
E-mail: yushujun@cicgamericas.com
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Chief: Miao Ye
Tel: 52-55-55127271
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E-mail: chinahoywx@gmail.com
Peru Office (Lima)
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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@cicgamericas.com
Distribution
Tel: 86-10-68310644
E-mail: circulation@cicgamericas.com

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Commitment to Climate

Ten years after nearly 200 nations reached the Paris Agreement to address the impact of climate change, the international community is now at a critical juncture.

The landmark agreement aims to keep the rise in global average temperature well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and, if possible, below 1.5 degrees Celsius. It requires each party to prepare national action plans known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every five years. By September 30, only about a third had submitted their new NDCs.

Chinese President Xi Jinping announced China's new round of NDCs in a video address at the UN Climate Summit on September 24. These cover economy-wide net greenhouse gas emissions for the first time, indicating that China's climate governance has moved beyond carbon emission control and shifted to the broader field of sustainable development. This shift injects impetus into global climate governance and demonstrates China's stance as a major country that champions integrity on climate action.

China is currently a major emitter of greenhouse gases, but it is also a key contributor to the global response to climate change. China adheres to its responsibilities and obligations under the Paris Agreement. It is also committed to strengthening

cooperation with the international community, providing financial, technological and capacity-building support to other developing countries through South-South cooperation.

On September 22, 2020, at the General Debate of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, President Xi said China would strive to reach peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and carbon neutrality before 2060. Over the past five years, the country has achieved historic results in advancing the green and low-carbon transition through painstaking efforts.

China has established the most comprehensive carbon reduction policy framework in the world, built the largest and fastest-growing renewable energy system and the largest and most complete new-energy industrial chain, and achieved the world's largest and fastest adoption of new-energy vehicles. It has contributed about one fourth of the newly added green areas worldwide, and ranks among the countries with the fastest decline in energy consumption intensity. China has blazed a viable trail for developing countries to pursue green and low-carbon development, thereby making a significant contribution to global climate action and the sustainable development of humanity. **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：辛峰 贺鹏 王宁 刘云云 高丁博 于淑均 曾文卉

编委会主任：辛峰

主编：闫威

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

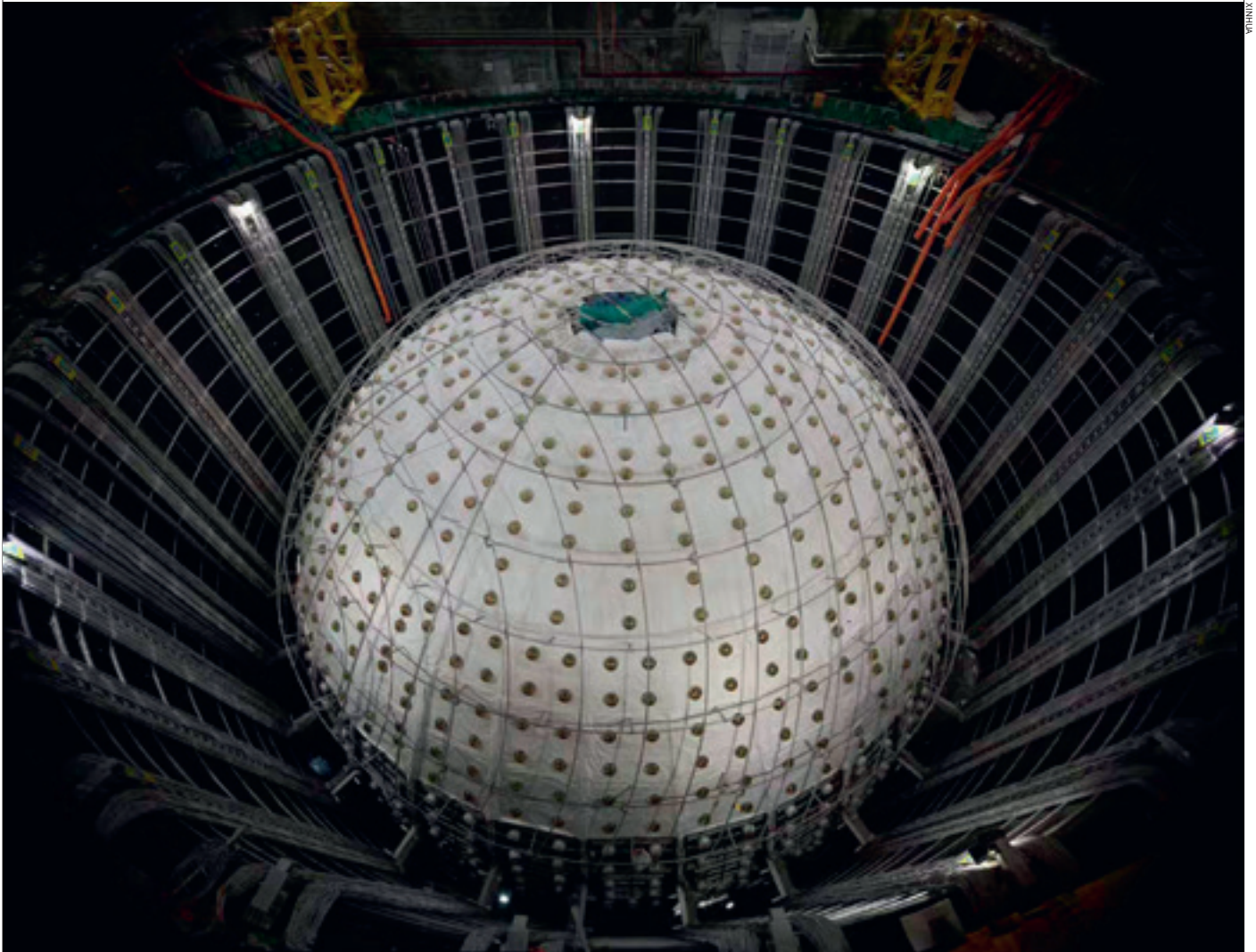
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A MAJOR STEP

The central detector of the Jiangmen Underground Neutrino Observatory (JUNO) in Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, on October 9. A collaborative effort involving over 700 scientists from 75 institutions across 17 countries, JUNO reported its first experimental results on November 19, measuring two key parameters of neutrinos with nearly twice the precision achieved over the past 50 years. Often referred to as “ghost particles,” neutrinos are able to pass through other matter unimpeded, making them difficult to detect and measure.



Tech Fair

A visitor controls a robot using virtual reality devices during the 27th China Hi-Tech Fair in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, on November 14. Held from November 14 to 16, the event attracted over 5,000 companies and international organizations from more than 100 countries and regions to showcase their latest technological advancements.

Cosmetics Industry Regulation

The National Medical Products Administration unveiled a series of guidelines on November 17 aimed at deepening regulatory reforms and promoting high-quality development in the domestic cosmetics industry.

Measures outlined in the document include strengthened support for industrial innovation and incentives for international cosmetics companies to launch new products in China.

Specific measures include streamlining the registration process for cosmetics with new efficacy claims through an “immediate review upon submission” policy, and waiving the requirement for new imported products to submit proof of overseas sales to facilitate their market entry in China.

The document identifies fostering the silver economy as a key reform direction in the cosmetics

industry, and emphasizes the implementation of electronic product labeling, improving label readability and accessibility, and meeting the needs of elderly and diverse demographic groups.

As the world’s largest cosmetics market, China is home to over 20,000 cosmetics enterprises.

The country’s cosmetics market transaction volume surpassed 1.07 trillion yuan (\$151.6 billion) in 2024, representing a year-on-year increase of 2.8 percent, according to data from the China Association of Fragrance Flavour and Cosmetic Industries and other organizations.

Amphibious Assault Ship

China’s first Type 076 amphibious assault ship, the *Sichuan*, returned to the shipyard in Shanghai on November 16 after completing its maiden sea trial.

The three-day mission tested the domestically developed vessel’s

propulsion and electrical systems, as well as other equipment, achieving the expected results.

The *Sichuan* will undergo follow-up tests in accordance with established plans.

Being the new-generation amphibious assault ship of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Navy, the vessel incorporates innovative electromagnetic catapult and arrestor technologies, enabling it to carry fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters and amphibious equipment.

AI Deepfakes Crackdown

Chinese cyberspace authorities are cracking down on the use of AI-generated deepfakes to impersonate public figures in livestreaming e-commerce, as the country grapples with a surge of AI-fueled fraud.

The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) said on November 14 that authorities had recently “se-

verely dealt with” a batch of online accounts that used AI to mimic celebrities to promote products in livestreams and short videos, misleading users. Online platforms launched a cleanup, which has so far removed over 8,700 pieces of non-compliant content and dealt with more than 11,000 accounts that impersonated public figures.

The campaign follows a series of high-profile cases, including one involving actress Wen Zhengrong, who discovered multiple AI-generated clones of herself promoting products across different live streams.

Her experience underscores a growing challenge in China’s booming e-commerce sector. As AI tools become more accessible and affordable, they have been co-opted by unscrupulous merchants to create sophisticated but fake endorsements from public figures, sometimes for low-quality or counterfeit products.

“These behaviors violate the Civil Code,” said Liu Hongchun, an associate professor at the Yunnan University Law School. “They infringe upon the public figures’ portrait rights and also violate consumers’ right to information.”

While China implemented the Artificial Intelligence Generated Content Labeling Measures on September 1, requiring AI-generated content to be clearly marked, enforcement remains challenging.

Violators often hide watermarks in inconspicuous corners of videos or use technical means to remove identifiers. Some break synthesized content into fragments and distribute them across multiple accounts, making detection difficult.

Legal experts and industry insiders say addressing the problem requires a multi-pronged approach: stronger penalties for violators, better detection technology and clearer accountability for platforms.

The CAC said cyberspace authorities would maintain a “high-pressure” stance, continuing to hold platforms accountable and to “dispose of and expose” malicious marketing accounts.

Population Growth

Despite an overall population decline in China since 2022, 11 provincial-level regions have registered growth in the number of permanent residents over the past three years, according to the newly released China Statistical Yearbook 2025, Xinhua News Agency reported on November 13.

The yearbook, compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics, shows that Zhejiang, Guangdong, Xinjiang, Hainan, Jiangsu, Anhui, Guizhou, Fujian, Ningxia, Xizang and Hubei saw population increases between 2021 and 2024.

Among them, Zhejiang Province recorded the largest rise, adding 1.3 million people in three years, with all of its prefecture-level cities reporting growth.

Zhejiang’s private sector is highly dynamic and provides broad employment opportunities, said Tang Hairu, vice chairman of the provincial urban science research association. He added that the province’s balanced regional development and small urban-rural gap have helped sustain steady population growth.

The yearbook also shows that China’s population continues to flow into the Yangtze River Delta and the Pearl River Delta, two of the country’s most developed regions. Within provinces, people are also moving from smaller towns and rural areas toward core cities.

Among individual cities, Hefei in Anhui, Guiyang in Guizhou, Hangzhou in Zhejiang, Changsha in Hunan and Zhengzhou in Henan, all provincial capitals, recorded the largest population increases over the past three years, with four of them located in central and west China. Hefei led the list with a gain of 537,000 people, becoming the fourth city in the Yangtze River Delta—after Shanghai, Suzhou in Jiangsu and Hangzhou—to surpass 10 million residents.

Fewer Violent Cases

From 2020 to 2024, Chinese courts at all levels concluded the trials of 243,000 cases of intentional homicide and other serious violent crimes, which was a 6.75-percent decrease compared to the previous five-year period, according to statistics from the Supreme People’s Court (SPC), the country’s top court, Xinhua reported on November 13.



Welcome to China

Tourists visit a fair selling intangible cultural heritage products at Yuyuan Garden in Shanghai on November 14. Located near the Bund in central Shanghai, Yuyuan Garden is a landmark attraction in the metropolis. Last year, it welcomed a record 27 million visitors—with international tourists comprising nearly one fourth of that total.

Of that total, the number of cases involving intentional homicide, robbery, kidnapping, arson, bombing and spreading dangerous substances dropped from over 40,000 in 2015 to below 16,000 in 2024, according to figures released at a national conference on criminal trial work convened by the SPC on November 13.

In the same period, Chinese courts concluded the trials of 827,000 cases involving robbery, forcible seizure or theft, representing a 33.26-percent

drop from the previous five years. Drug-related criminal cases also dropped 58.5 percent.

Chinese courts also intensified their crackdown on crimes infringing on the lawful rights and interests of women and children, concluding 2,957 cases involving the trafficking of women and children.

From 2020 to 2024, Chinese courts acquitted 3,967 criminal defendants based on evidence and the law. A total of 21 major wrongful convictions involving 22 individuals were corrected, and 399 were acquitted upon retrial.



Harvesting Wasabi

Farm workers harvest wasabi in Longyang District of Baoshan City, Yunnan Province, on November 17. Baoshan offers ideal conditions for wasabi, which is globally in demand but notoriously difficult to cultivate. The local government now promotes the growing of the crop to help increase incomes in mountainous areas.

Auto Exports

China's automobile exports rose 15.7 percent year on year in the first 10 months of 2025, according to data from the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers.

The country exported over 5.6 million vehicles during the period, the data showed.

Specifically, some 2.01 million new-energy vehicles (NEV) were exported, surging 90.4 percent year on year.

In October alone, automobile exports rose 22.9 percent from the same period last year, and NEV exports soared 99.9 percent.

Business District Ranking

Beijing Central Business District (Beijing CBD) ranked sixth globally in the 2025 Global Business Districts Attractiveness Report, released on November 14, moving up one place from 2020.

The report was released by EY, a global professional service firm, with the support

of the Global Business Districts Innovation Club. First launched in 2017 and updated in 2020, this year's ranking is the third edition of the report.

EY evaluates 30 leading business districts across 19 countries, using an eight-category benchmarking system covering talent, market proximity, influence, macro conditions, real estate, urban amenities, innovation and sustainability. The rankings include both category-specific and overall results.

The report lists the Midtown and Financial District of New York, Marunouchi in Tokyo, La Défense in Paris and the City of London as the top five business districts, placing Beijing CBD just behind them. Other Chinese business districts on the list include Hong Kong Special Administrative Region's Central District at 13th, Shanghai's Pudong-Lujiazui at 14th and Guangzhou's Tianhe CBD at 22nd.

Located in Chaoyang District, Beijing CBD scored particularly high in urban amenities and talent, with the report noting that

it has successfully created a "work-life-leisure" ecosystem with a high density of cultural, retail, dining and public amenities.

Beijing CBD's continued climb in global rankings reflects the growing comprehensive competitiveness of Chinese cities on the world stage, according to the Beijing CBD Administration Committee.

Retail Sales

China's retail sales of consumer goods went up 4.3 percent year on year to more than 41.2 trillion yuan (\$5.8 trillion) in the first 10 months of the year, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed on November 14.

In October alone, retail sales rose 2.9 percent year on year.

As policy measures to boost service consumption took effect and the holiday economy provided a strong impetus, retail sales of both goods and services continued to grow, NBS spokesperson Fu Linghui told a press conference.

The combined National Day and Mid-Autumn Festival holiday,

spanning eight days from October 1 to 8, was the longest break in China of the year.

In the first 10 months, retail sales in the service sector rose 5.3 percent year on year, outpacing the growth rate of retail sales of goods.

During the period, retail sales of consumer goods in urban and rural areas rose 4.2 percent and 4.6 percent year on year, respectively.

Online retail sales remained a bright spot, climbing 9.6 percent year on year in the first 10 months, the NBS data showed.

6G Progress

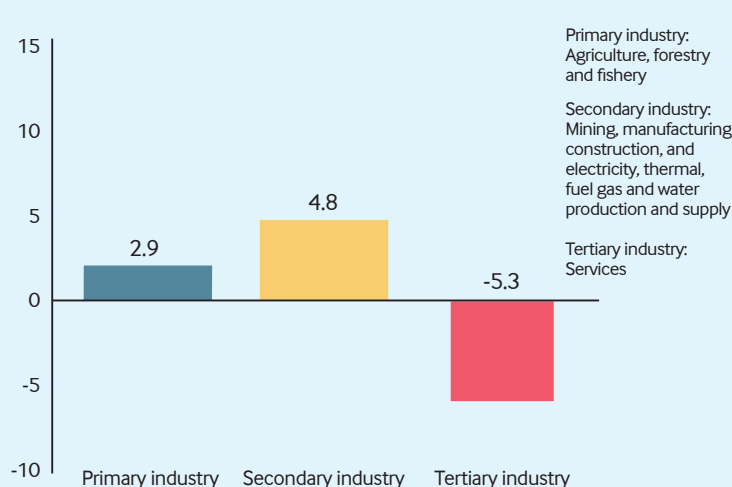
China has advanced the innovative development of 6G over recent years, with progress including systematic research on 6G system design and network architecture, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology on November 13.

The country now has a reserve of over 300 key 6G technologies, Vice Minister of Industry and Information Technology Zhang Yunming said

NUMBERS

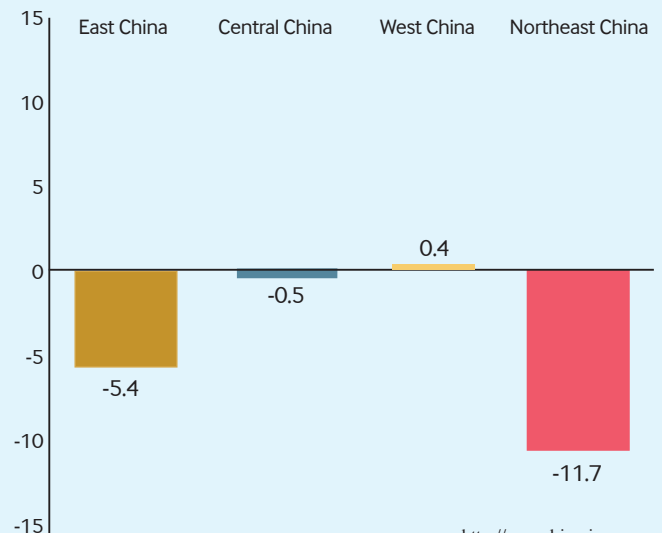
Fixed Assets Investment Growth by Sector

Jan-Oct (% y.o.y.)



Fixed Assets Investment Growth by Region

Jan-Oct (% y.o.y.)



at the 2025 6G Development Conference, which took place in Beijing on November 13-14.

The country has united over 100 domestic and foreign industrial-chain entities, invited global firms to participate in 6G tech trials, and deepened cooperation with Europe's 6G-IA and the Republic of Korea's 6G Forum, Zhang said.

The full launch of 6G-standardization research took place this year, he noted, adding that 6G development is now at a critical stage that calls for collective wisdom and consensus.

China will make more efforts to strengthen research on core tech and advance research and development, standardization and application cultivation, and it will deepen industrial integration and foster 6G application ecosystems in the future, Zhang said.

It will also promote global cooperation on 6G technology, 6G standards and the 6G spectrum to strengthen coordination and maximize development benefits, he added.

Seed Supply Capacity

China has seen a notable improvement in its seed supply capacity thanks to efforts to invigorate the seed industry since 2021, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs on November 13.

At a national meeting on invigorating the seed industry, held in Changsha, Hunan Province, that day, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Zhang Xingwang said domestically developed crop varieties constitute over 95 percent of China's total capacity, with domestic livestock and poultry breeders holding a market share of over 80 percent and domestic aquatic product breeders accounting for a share of 85 percent.

Over the last five years, urgently needed new crop varieties such as scab-resistant wheat and dense-planting corn suitable for mechanical harvesting have been developed, and the total

planting areas of domestically bred corn and vegetables have risen to 94 percent and 91 percent, respectively.

In international trade, China's seed exports surpassed imports for the first time in 2024, achieving a trade surplus, Zhang said.

Hybrid rice, cotton and vegetable seeds are now exported to over 40 countries, with domestically bred livestock and aquatic products entering overseas markets, he added.

Elite SMEs

China has incubated more than 17,600 national-level "little giants" to date, according to data released by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology at a conference on the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), held in Chongqing Municipality on November 12.

"Little giants" refer to the novel elites of SMEs that are engaged in manufacturing, specialize in a niche market and boast cutting-edge technologies.

Although they represent just 3.5 percent of all industrial SMEs with annual main business revenue of at least 20 million yuan (\$2.8 million) nationwide, these firms contribute 9.6 percent of the sector's total operating revenue and 13.7 percent of its total profits, the data showed.

The high-quality development of China's SMEs has continued to make steady progress, with growing strength and improving performance, Li Lecheng, Minister of Industry and Information Technology, said at the conference.

So far, the country has nurtured more than 600,000 scientific and innovative SMEs, Li said, adding that in the future, China will continue to advance new industrialization and modernization by strengthening the role of enterprises as the main drivers of innovation, enhancing the capacity of high-quality firms to support industrial chains, and fostering a sound business environment for enterprise development.



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)

THIS WEEK WORLD



GERMANY

A decorative robot at Medica 2025 in Dusseldorf on November 17. Some 70 countries and regions took part in the medical technology trade fair, which ran until November 20



UNITED STATES

Chinese Opera *The Monkey King* holds its final dress rehearsal in San Francisco on November 12. The world premiere of the opera was staged at the San Francisco Opera on November 14. The performance will stay on in the city until November 30



INDIA

Relatives mourn the victims of an explosion inside Nowgam Police Station in Srinagar, the summer capital of Indian-controlled Kashmir, on November 15. At least nine people were killed and 32 others injured





RUSSIA

The closing ceremony of the China-Russia Year of Culture at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow on November 17



CHILE

Leftist candidate Jeannette Jara attends a celebration in Santiago on November 16, after confirming her entry into the second round of the presidential election on December 14



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Aircraft perform during the 19th edition of the Dubai Airshow in Dubai on November 17



THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

CHINESE JUDGE ELECTED TO UN APPEALS TRIBUNAL

Zhang Lingling, a 44-year-old judge, has been elected as a member of the UN Appeals Tribunal. The election took place on November 17 during the 80th Session of the UN General Assembly. Zhang was the sole candidate from the Asia-Pacific region and her term, lasting seven years, will begin on July 1, 2026.

With 15 years' experience as a senior judge in the Supreme People's Court, China's highest court, Zhang has handled thousands of cases and published over 60 papers and monographs.

The UN Appeals Tribunal, established in 2009, is a key part of the UN's internal justice system. Comprising seven judges based at the UN headquarters in New York City, it plays a vital role in protecting the legal rights of UN staff and upholding the rule of law within the world body.



Outsourced Children

Gmw.cn
November 13

This September, a type of senior care service known as “outsourced children” went viral on Chinese social media. Providers offer to accompany elderly clients to medical appointments, chat with them, join them on their daily walks, or even step in to mediate family disputes.

The demand is real. According to the 2024 *China Statistical Yearbook*, the old-age dependency ratio reached 22.57 percent in 2023—meaning that for every 100 working-age people, there were about 23 seniors aged 65 and above. Beyond this structural gap, many adult children now live far from their parents or are simply

overwhelmed by work, prompting more seniors to seek companionship and support through such services.

However, the service also reveals a core paradox of paid companionship services. While safety protocols, transparent pricing and standardization are essential for healthy industry growth, they can also strip away the warmth that elderly clients value most.

Therefore, a more measured approach is needed to guide this emerging sector. Rather than rushing to impose strict rules, it is more important to give the industry room to grow on its own. As long as basic boundaries around safety are upheld, allowing these services to develop organically may be the best way to keep the human touch at the heart of what they offer.



Humanities Rewired

Lifeweek
November 3

When the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, the U.S.—long regarded as a premier training ground for translators—announced it would shut its graduate programs by 2027, the news reignited debate about the decline of the humanities. Similar stories are emerging in Britain, the Netherlands and Japan, where universities are trimming or restructuring arts faculties on an unprecedented scale. The same pattern is now

“We hope the U.S. will engage in normal law enforcement and judicial cooperation through bilateral and multilateral legal frameworks, and choose the course of action that is conducive to peace and stability in Latin America and the Caribbean region.”

Foreign Ministry spokesperson **Mao Ning**, commenting on Washington's announcement of a new military operation to remove “narco-terrorists” from the Western Hemisphere at a press briefing on November 19

“The foundation connects the public with Dunhuang culture. We hope more people will appreciate Dunhuang culture and support its preservation.”

Su Bomin, head of the Dunhuang Academy, speaking at a forum marking the 30th anniversary of the China Dunhuang Grottoes Conservation Research Foundation.

The foundation has received 210 million yuan (\$30 million) in donations for the preservation of the UNESCO World Heritage Site

playing out in China, alongside a rapid expansion of programs in data science, AI, robotics and cybersecurity.

A major force behind this shift is AI. Skills long seen as the preserve of humanities students—close reading and strong writing—are now increasingly replicable by large language models. Earlier this year, an AI poetry-writing system named Jiuge, developed at Tsinghua University, learned to compose intricate classical verses after training on more than 800,000 human-written poems.

Yet AI's rapid progress also creates opportunities for the humanities to reinvent themselves. In 2023, Chinese authorities issued a reform plan urging universities to build multidisciplinary programs that integrate science and engineering into humanities training. The gains are visible: AI can sift through vast corpora at speeds no research assistant could match, detect patterns indiscernible to human readers, and aid in the preservation and digitization of fragile documents.

AI is likewise pushing the humanities to confront a deeper question: What remains uniquely human? As algorithms assume more cognitive labor, questions about value, morality and meaning grow sharper. Far from rendering the humanities obsolete, AI may instead underscore why societies need them: to make sense of the very world technology is transforming.

Steaks in Space

People's Daily
November 18

On November 3, the crews of *Shenzhou-20* and *Shenzhou-21* missions sat down to a meal that would have been unremarkable on Earth but was quietly historic in space: barbecue steaks and chicken wings, freshly grilled aboard China's space station.

Dining in space is no simple matter. Within the tightly packed interior of a space vessel, there is little room for cooking equipment or ingredients. Early space meals therefore often resembled toothpaste or dehydrated vegetables—efficient, but hardly enjoyable.

Over the past two decades, culinary options for China's astronauts have steadily expanded. *Shenzhou-5* in 2003 carried barely 20 ready-to-eat rations. Hot meals were introduced on *Shenzhou-6*, which was launched in 2005. In 2016, the *Shenzhou-11* crew enjoyed menus featuring more than 100 types of food.

High-temperature, residue-capturing cooking devices now allow astronauts to enjoy freshly prepared meals without compromising cleanliness. Meanwhile, China's "space garden" experiments have advanced steadily, enabling the cultivation of lettuce, cherry tomatoes and other plants in space. Together, these innovations demonstrate China's commitment to improving astronauts' wellbeing while laying the groundwork for future deep space exploration.

↓ YOUNGEST BEST ACTOR AWARD WINNER

Actor **Yi Yangqianxi** won the Best Actor Award at the 38th Golden Rooster Awards on November 15 in Xiamen, Fujian Province, becoming the youngest recipient of the top acting honor in the award's history.

Yi received the accolade for his portrayal of Liu Chunhe, a young man with cerebral palsy, in the film *Big World*. In the movie, his character courageously breaks through physical and mental constraints to find his place in the world.

"In taking on this role, I never worried about my image; I just really wanted to grasp this challenging character and get inside this boy's heart," Yi said during a red carpet interview. The 24-year-old actor graduated from the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing and is also a member of the Chinese pop band TFBOYS.



"It will compete with the big players and find a place in the Middle East market."

Sergey Kireev, a procurement manager at Dubai-based aircraft leasing company Meridien, commenting after touring China's first homegrown large passenger aircraft C919 at the Dubai Airshow in the United Arab Emirates in November

"Harbin city authorities have enhanced public facilities and services to boost ice and snow tourism, including the construction of barrier-free access and upgrades to 26 tourist information centers."

Wang Hongxin, head of the culture, radio, television and tourism department of Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, a popular winter destination, in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency



COVER STORY

THE GREAT GREEN SHIFT

China is powering a global climate solution By Li Nan