

FEATURES: TRUMP'S GAZA VISION P.30 | FEATURES: A MINNESOTAN'S CHINA CHRONICLES P.40

# BEIJING REVIEW

VOL.68 NO.8 FEBRUARY 20, 2025

北京周报 WWW.BJREVIEW.COM

## ICE TO MEET YOU!

Asia's athletes unite for a winter of friendship in Harbin



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ASIAN WINTER GAMES



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JPY188

ISSN 1000-9140



9 771000 914253

邮发代号2-922·国内统一连续号: CN11-1576/G2

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Cover Photo: Ice skaters compete in a racing event during the Ninth Asian Winter Games on February 8 (XINHUA)

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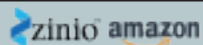
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A News Weekly Magazine  
Published Since 1958

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Published every Thursday by  
CICG Center for Americas, 24 Baiwanzhuang Lu,  
Beijing 100037, China

**Overseas Distributor:** China International Book Trading  
Corporation (Guoji Shudian), P.O. BOX 399,  
Beijing 100044, China

**Tel:** 86-10-68413849, 1-416-497-8096 (Canada)

**Fax:** 86-10-68412166

**E-mail:** fp@mail.cibtc.com.cn

**Website:** <http://www.cibtc.com>

**General Distributor for Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan:**

Peace Book Co. Ltd.

17/F, Paramount Bldg, 12 Ka Yip St, Chai Wan, HK

**Tel:** 852-28046687 **Fax:** 852-28046409

*Beijing Review* (ISSN 1000-9140 USPS 2812) is published weekly in the United States for US\$64.00 per year by Cypress Books, 360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48, South San Francisco, CA 94080. News Postage Paid at South San Francisco, CA 94080. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Beijing Review*, Cypress Books, 360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48, South San Francisco, CA 94080

## Dream of Winter

The Ninth Asian Winter Games (AWG) took place in Harbin, capital of Heilongjiang Province in northeast China, from February 7 to 14. As the largest multi-sport winter event of its kind in Asia, the Ninth AWG featured six sports encompassing 11 disciplines across 64 medal events.

This year, over 1,200 athletes from 34 countries and regions joined, making it the largest edition to date in terms of participation. The Chinese delegation sent 170 athletes to compete in all 64 events.

The AWG serves as a grand platform for athletes to showcase their prowess in ice and snow sports, promoting the development of these disciplines across Asia.

This year's games offered young athletes the opportunity to gain experience in international competition, which is essential in their preparation for the 2026 Olympic Winter Games to be held in Italy.

Additionally, the AWG nurtures friendship among participants from different cultural backgrounds. The games gather athletes, coaches, staff and spectators, allowing for an in-depth exchange of cultures. Beyond the competitions, several sideline activities

enable athletes to learn about each other's traditions and customs.

Themed "Dream of Winter, Love Among Asia," this year's AWG reflected a shared aspiration for peace, development and friendship among all Asians.

Hosting the AWG also presented major development opportunities for Harbin.

The city upgraded its urban transport network, built or renovated several sports venues, and enhanced its overall urban image.

The games attracted a large influx of tourists, boosting the tourism, food and beverage and retail industries, altogether stimulating local economic growth.

Additionally, the success of the Ninth AWG has elevated Harbin's international reputation, with the city being recognized for its vitality, inclusiveness and openness.

From the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics to this year's AWG in Harbin, ice and snow sports in China have made solid strides, demonstrating their growing momentum and broad social impact, providing new energy and inspiration for the advancement of these sports both in Asia and the world at large. **BR**



### WRITE TO US

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JAPAN.....JPY188 EUROPE.....EUR1.90  
TÜRKIYE.....YTL5.00 HK.....HKD9.30 NEPAL.....RS40

主管单位：中国外文出版发行事业局

主办单位：中国外文局美洲传播中心（北京周报社）

出版单位：中国外文局美洲传播中心（北京周报社）

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印刷：北京华联印刷有限公司

北京周报 英文版2025年 第8期 ISSN 1000-9140

国内统一连续出版物号：CN11-1576/G2 邮发代号：2-922

广告许可证0171号 北京市期刊登记证733号

国内零售价：人民币9.00元



# DANCING WITH DRAGONS

A dragon dance performance takes center stage in celebration of the upcoming Lantern Festival in Taijiang County, Guizhou Province, on February 11. The dance, performed amid bursts of colorful fireworks, showcased the region's cultural abundance. The Lantern Festival, occurring on the 15th day of the first month in the Chinese lunisolar calendar, fell on February 12 this year.





## From Ice to Insights

A member of China's 41st Antarctic expedition team releases equipment for collecting marine sediment samples onboard the Chinese research icebreaker *Xuelong 2* on February 9. *Xuelong 2*, or *Snow Dragon 2*, is conducting a month-long marine ecosystem survey in the Amundsen Sea, located in the southwestern part of the Southern Ocean, off the coast of Antarctica.

## Senior-Friendly Tourism

China on February 11 unveiled an action plan to expand and improve senior-friendly tourism train services, in its latest bid to create more inclusive and enjoyable travel experiences for the elderly.

The initiative, jointly issued by the Ministry of Commerce and eight other government agencies and state-owned enterprises, aims to enrich the tourism market, promote service consumption, and cater to the growing demand for elderly-friendly travel options.

Measures will be taken to upgrade the trains to be more age-friendly, green and comfortable, which will also be supported by China's large-scale equipment upgrade and consumer goods trade-in program, and to develop themed

travel routes and products tailored to seniors.

The action plan also advocates for improved coordination between tourism trains and scenic spots, encouraging local tourist destinations to offer tailored services such as reservations, green channels, transportation connections, and dedicated reception services for senior travelers.

## Security Camera Management

China on February 10 issued a new set of regulations to better protect personal privacy while safeguarding public security.

Chinese Premier Li Qiang has signed a State Council decree to issue the regulations, which comprise 34 articles and will come into effect on April 1.

The regulations aim to govern the management of public security video image

information systems, maintain public safety, and protect personal privacy and rights and interests of personal information, according to the regulations.

Public security video systems refer to systems that collect, transmit, display and store video image information related to public safety.

The regulations stipulate that the construction and utilization of such systems must neither pose a threat to national security or public interests, nor encroach upon the legitimate rights and interests of individuals or organizations.

According to the regulations, the installation of cameras and related equipment inside guest rooms or private compartments in hotels and restaurants is prohibited. Additionally, the installation of cameras is banned in student

dormitories, public bathrooms, washrooms, changing rooms, fitting rooms, and other areas where it is possible to photograph, observe, or eavesdrop on the privacy of others.

The regulations specify that product and service providers of public security video systems shall not install malicious programs, and clearly require that prominent warning signs should be set up at the camera installation sites.

## Hotel Check-in

China's public security authorities have made strides in enforcing check-in requirements for hotel operators accommodating minors to ensure their safety, the Ministry of Public Security said on February 8.

Hotel operators are required to verify the identity of minors, inquire about guardian information and record details of accompanying persons when accommodating minors to prevent crimes such as child trafficking.

In 2024, hotels nationwide reported over 42 million minor check-ins, and public security authorities conducted 522,000 checks on suspicious activities, according to the ministry.

The ministry released several typical cases regarding information checks of minors at hotel receptions. In one case from September 2024 in Heilongjiang Province, three adults attempted to check in with an infant but failed to provide valid identification for the child. Hotel staff immediately reported to the police. Subsequent investigations revealed that the baby had been abducted, ultimately leading to the cracking of a child trafficking case.

In another case from June 2024 at a hotel in Shanghai, two underage boys refused to provide their guardians' contact information. The hotel staff promptly notified the police, who later discovered that the boys had run away from home after arguments with their parents. Authorities then ensured their safe return.

## Moon-Landing Spacesuit

The China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) on February 12 unveiled the names of the moon-landing spacesuit and manned lunar rover for the country's manned lunar exploration missions.

The moon-landing spacesuit is named Wangyu, meaning "gazing into the cosmos," and it echoes the name of the country's extravehicular spacesuit, Feitian, which means "flying into space," according to the CMSA.

The manned lunar rover is called *Tansuo*, which means "to explore the unknown." This name reflects the lunar rover's mission and practical value in helping the Chinese people uncover the mysteries of the moon, said the agency.

Currently, research and development endeavors concerning both Wangyu

and *Tansuo* are progressing smoothly, the CMSA stated.

## Hazardous Waste

The Ministry of Ecology and Environment has announced that by 2030, the proportion of hazardous waste sent to landfills will be controlled to within 10 percent of total hazardous waste treatment, as part of a broader effort to strengthen environmental risk management.

In a guideline released on February 12, the ministry outlined a phased approach to digitalize hazardous waste management and reduce land-fill dependency. By 2026, all key hazardous waste facilities will be required to implement full-process digital monitoring systems, with coverage extending to all related facilities nationwide by 2027.

The ministry plans to progressively restrict the direct landfilling of hazardous waste that can be reduced through utilization or incineration.

For medical waste management, the guideline urges efforts to establish a comprehensive disposal system that ensures sufficient treatment capacity at the municipal level.

The ministry also promotes alternative treatment methods, which will allow qualified hazardous waste incineration



## Cargo Connection

A cargo train prepares for departure at the Tuanjiecun Station in Chongqing on February 10. The train made its inaugural journey that same day to Hairatan, a port city in Afghanistan, marking the launch of the first direct freight train service between the two cities.

facilities and municipal waste incinerators to process medical waste when necessary, particularly in emergency situations.

## Record Visitors

Harbin Ice-Snow World, the world's largest ice-and-snow theme park, had welcomed over 3 million visits as of February 11, setting a new attendance record just 52 days into its 26th edition, organizers announced.

Located in Harbin, capital of

Heilongjiang and often referred to as the "City of Ice," this year's park was built with 300,000 cubic meters of ice and snow and features elaborate ice structures inspired by the Ninth Asian Winter Games, which Harbin hosted from February 7 to 14.

Beyond its artistic ice sculptures, the park offers a range of interactive winter attractions, including a snowflake ice maze, ice rinks, and a massive ice slide complemented by over 20 smaller ones.



## Decorate, Celebrate and Elevate

A merchant decorates her store at the Yiwu International Trade Market in Yiwu, Zhejiang Province, on February 9. On that day, merchants at the market welcomed their first business day in the Year of the Snake, which began on January 29.

## SME Development Index

An index tracking the development of China's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) edged up in January, data from an industry association showed on February 11.

The SME development index rose by 0.1 points to 89 in January, compared to the previous month, the China Association of Small and Medium Enterprises data showed.

Six of the eight sub-indices rallied in January, including those for market, labor and investment, according to the association.

In terms of sectors, sub-indices for the industry, transport, real estate, wholesale and retail sales, social service, and information transmission software sectors grew 0.1, 0.4, 0.2, 0.2, 0.5 and 0.3 points, respectively.

In terms of regions, the sub-indices for eastern, western and northeastern regions stood at 89.7, 88.1 and 81, up 0.1, 0.3 and 0.3 points, respectively. The

sub-index for the central region was 89.9, equivalent to the previous month.

In China, more than 90 percent of private companies are SMEs, and more than 90 percent of SMEs are private companies.

## Passenger Car Growth

In January, China's passenger car output totaled about 2.11 million units, up 3.6 percent year on year. The country exported 380,000 units of passenger automobiles, representing a year-on-year increase of 3 percent, according to the China Passenger Car Association (CPCA).

During the period, the production and sales of new-energy passenger vehicles grew 25.8 percent and 10.5 percent, respectively, from a year earlier to reach 940,000 units and 744,000 units, respectively.

New-energy vehicles (NEVs) refer to vehicles completely or mainly driven by new-energy sources, including battery

electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid vehicles, and fuel-cell vehicles.

Exports of new-energy passenger vehicles accounted for 35.9 percent of the country's total auto exports that month, an increase of 7.5 percentage points compared to the same period last year, according to the data.

Chinese automobile manufacturers have rapidly built up their global competitiveness in recent years. In December 2024, China's auto sales accounted for 41 percent of the world's total, a historical high.

The association predicted that domestic auto sales will grow 2 percent to 23.4 million units for 2025, while passenger NEV sales are expected to surge 20 percent to about 13.3 million units this year.

## Smart Robot Industry

As of late 2024, the number of enterprises in the smart robot industry in China had reached 451,700, with a total registered

capital of 6.44 trillion yuan (\$880 billion), according to the State Administration for Market Regulation.

The number of such enterprises grew 19.39 percent compared to the same period in 2023, demonstrating a steady upward trend in the industry's development.

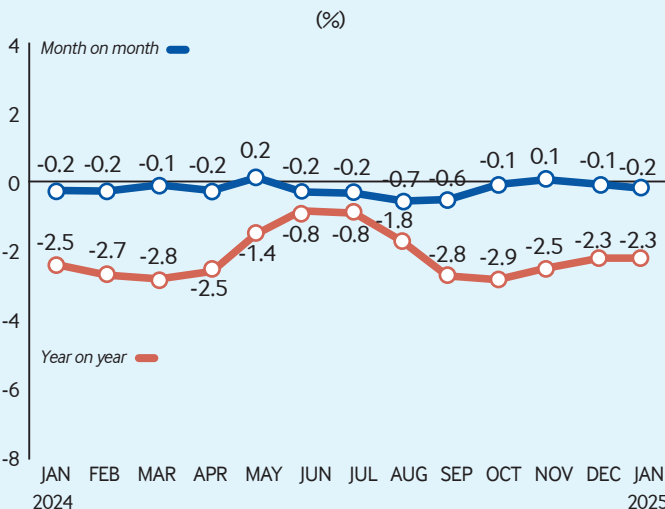
Nearly 80 percent of these enterprises were concentrated in three sectors: scientific research and technical services; information transmission, software and information technology services; and wholesale and retail.

The eastern region of the country, with its geographical advantages, robust research and development strength, and well-established industrial ecosystem, has become a hub hosting about two thirds of smart robot enterprises in China.

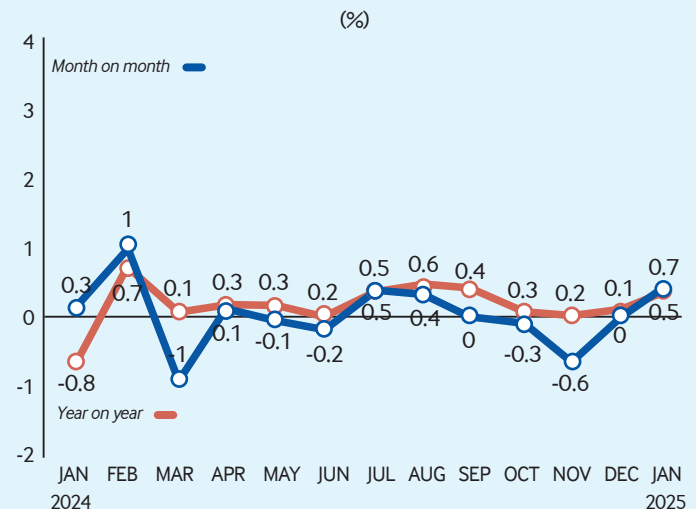
The numbers of such enterprises in central and north-western regions accounted for 15.33 percent and 14.97 percent of the total, respectively, according to the administration.

## NUMBERS

China's Producer Price Index Growth



China's Consumer Price Index (CPI) Growth





## Electricity Pricing

Chinese authorities announced on February 9 that the prices of on-grid electricity generated from new-energy sources will be determined by the market as the country pushes forward market reform of new-energy electricity pricing.

All on-grid electricity generated from new-energy sources, such as wind and solar power, whose prices have so far been artificially fixed, will enter the electricity market, according to a notice issued by the National Development and Reform Commission and the National Energy Administration.

“With its large-scale development, the fixed pricing for on-grid new-energy electricity cannot fully reflect market supply and demand, nor does it share its due responsibility of power system regulation,” the two authorities told Xinhua News Agency, stressing the need to leverage market mechanisms and promote the sector’s high-quality development.

The reduction in costs for constructing new-energy facilities, the rapid development of regional electricity markets, and improvements of the regulatory framework have all created favorable conditions for the full integration of new-energy sources into market transactions, they said.

A price settlement mechanism will be established to support sustainable new energy development, and different pricing methods will be adopted to new as well as existing projects, according to the document.

Projects that begin operation on or after June 1 this year will partly sell electricity under the new mechanism, which will match transaction prices with rates set through market-based bidding to help them avoid revenue fluctuation in trading.

For projects starting operation before June 1, prices and volume of electricity to be covered by the new mechanism shall align with current policies.

## Forex Reserves

China’s foreign exchange (forex) reserves totaled more than \$3.2 trillion as of late January, up \$6.7 billion, or 0.21 percent, compared to late last December, official data showed.

The U.S. dollar index fell while global financial asset prices climbed that month, driven by macroeconomic data from major economies as well as monetary policies and expectations of key central banks, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange said in a statement.

China’s forex reserves rose in January due to the combined effects of factors such as currency translation and changes in asset prices.

The fundamental conditions and long-term trends underpinning China’s economic growth remain strong. These factors will continue to support the stability of China’s forex reserves, the administration said.

## Promoting Trade

China has maintained its position as the world’s largest trading nation in goods over the past eight years, according to the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC).

The nation’s total goods imports and exports surpassed 43 trillion yuan (\$6 trillion) for the first time last year, up 5 percent year on year, GACC data showed.

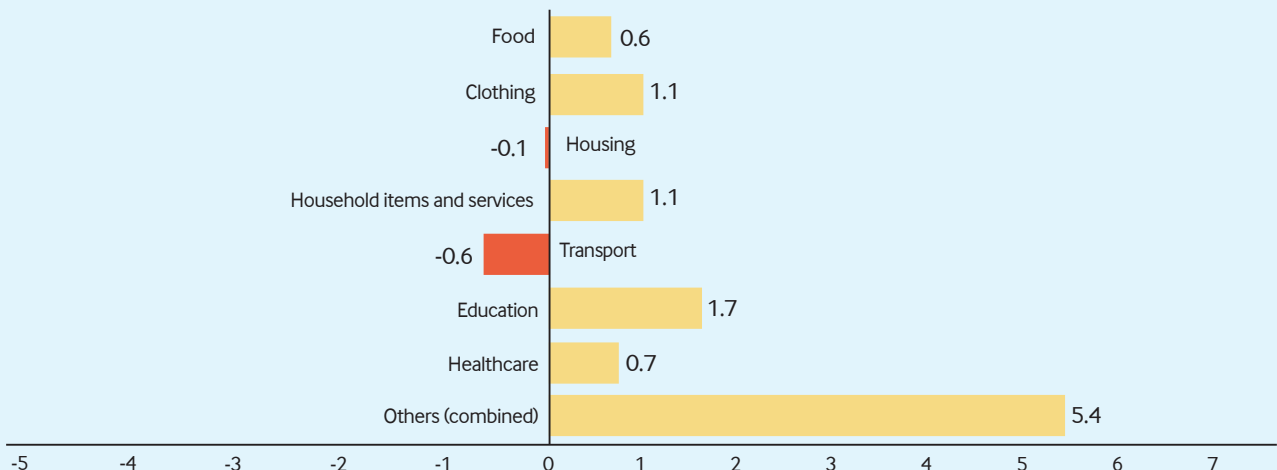
In 2024, the GACC introduced and implemented 16 measures aimed at further optimizing the business environment at ports and facilitating trade for enterprises throughout the year.

Tariff reductions and different types of tariff preference measures were enforced, resulting in a total tax reduction or refunding of 282.9 billion yuan (\$38.7 billion).

Last year, 111 types of agricultural products from 62 countries and regions were authorized for import into China, 14 ports were newly opened or took further opening-up measures, and seven bonded logistics centers were established, according to the GACC.

China’s CPI Growth by Type

January (% y.o.y.)



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)



## GUATEMALA

Rescue workers search for victims at the site of a bus accident in Guatemala City on February 10. At least 51 people were killed after a bus carrying 75 people plunged into a ravine



## FRANCE

The AI (artificial intelligence) Action Summit underway at the Grand Palais in Paris on February 10. The summit, which concluded on February 11, focused on five major themes: Public Interest AI, Future of Work, Innovation and Culture, Trust in AI and Global AI Governance



## MALTA

A set of newly-released Year of the Snake zodiac stamps in Valletta on February 12. MaltaPost unveiled the stamps, designed by Maltese artist Fabio Agius and Chinese designer Fang Jun, in celebration of the Chinese New Year, which fell on January 29 this year







## THAILAND

A scene during the handover of rescued foreign nationals on the Thai side of the Myanmar-Thailand border on February 6. Thai authorities received 61 foreign nationals believed to be victims of human trafficking and scam operations in Myanmar



## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Arrested President Yoon Suk-yeol (center) attends the seventh hearing of his impeachment trial at the constitutional court in Seoul on February 11



## IRAN

People celebrate the 46th anniversary of the country's 1979 Islamic Revolution in Tehran on February 10





## ↓ 'FATHER OF CHINA'S NUCLEAR SUBMARINES' DIES AT 99

**Huang Xuhua**, chief designer of China's first-generation nuclear submarines, died in Wuhan, Hubei Province, on February 6. He was 99 years old.

Huang dedicated his life to the development and advancement of China's nuclear submarine program. He led the research and development of the nation's first nuclear submarines from the 1950s to the 1980s. With the completion of the building of the first Type 09I nuclear-powered attack submarine in 1970, China became the fifth nation in the world to possess such hardware.

Huang was a member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering. In 2019, he received the Medal of the Republic, the highest state honor.

He was also a recipient of the State Preeminent Science and Technology Award, the country's top science honor, in 2020.



## AI Crash Course Craze

*Xinhua Daily Telegraph*

February 10

DeepSeek, a Chinese artificial intelligence (AI) company, has recently emerged as a powerhouse in the world of open-source large language models. Along with its rise has come a wave of crash courses on Chinese social media platforms teaching users how to master the company's latest AI model.

Under titles such as "Learn AI in Two Days and Earn 50,000 Yuan (\$6,900) a Month," these courses are often taught by self-proclaimed industry insiders boasting elite university degrees or prestigious careers. According to these "tech gurus," an instant mastery of AI tools is one of the quickest and

easiest ways to make money.

Many consumers, however, feel deceived, as what most of these courses offer are freely available materials with little to no practical value. Some also complain that the skills they learned through these AI bootcamps require running computations on gigabytes of data, a task their laptops are incapable of handling.

AI proficiency is no magic bean, and learning takes effort. Amid the current hype that has been building around AI online courses, everyone should stay informed and think critically before jumping right in. Authorities and online learning platforms should also work in tandem to strengthen regulation and offer more certified AI courses.



## Healthy Aging

*China Newsweek*

January 20

China has one of the fastest-aging populations in the world. This rapid aging raises concerns about the health and wellbeing of older adults, and has led to the rise of geriatrics, a branch of medicine dedicated to providing patient-centered care for seniors, as a standalone specialty within China's healthcare system. Between 2018 and 2022, the number of geriatric departments

"We've witnessed the incredible speed of Shanghai and Tesla once again. I'm excited to have this factory kick off an exciting year for Tesla."

**Mike Snyder**, Vice President of U.S. carmaker Tesla, at the launch ceremony of Tesla's new Megafactory in Shanghai on February 11, expressing confidence that the new factory will become a cornerstone of Tesla's global production network

"Terrorism remains a significant and evolving threat to global peace and security, one that no state can confront in isolation."

**Vladimir Voronkov**, Under-Secretary-General for the Office of Counter-Terrorism, at a UN Security Council meeting on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts on February 10

## Shopping 2.0

*People's Daily*  
February 5

across the nation tripled.

A key feature that separates geriatrics from other medical specialties is comprehensive geriatric assessment (CGA). CGA is an interdisciplinary process that considers not only medical diagnoses but also the functional impairments of elderly patients to develop an integrated plan for treatment, rehabilitation and long-term care. Apart from overt symptoms, geriatric medicine also pays attention to conditions such as falls, fatigue, hearing loss, cognitive impairment and chronic pain—symptoms that are often easily neglected as mere signs of natural aging.

However, this branch of medicine still faces many misconceptions and biases within Chinese society. Many people still equate geriatrics with senior daycare services. In addition to public bias, the geriatric departments of many large hospitals still prefer to hire graduates trained in specialties such as cardiology and gastroenterology rather than geriatrics. Therefore, concerted efforts from healthcare, medical insurance and other related sectors are needed to address these challenges and facilitate the sustained development of this emerging field of medicine.

With the rapid rise of e-commerce over the past decade, China's brick-and-mortar shopping scene is no longer just about making purchases, as more and more people are going to malls merely to window shop. Having noticed this trend, department stores and shopping malls are starting to focus more on providing things that people can't buy online—the shopping experience itself—by rolling work, play, dining and entertainment into a single space.

Mall owners are becoming increasingly creative today, with many transforming their properties into art spaces where exhibitions, art installations, performances and lectures are

held. Others are hosting food and beverage fairs. Still others have modeled themselves after famous landmarks to offer visitors the experience of an outdoor sightseeing tour.

Innovation in the retail sector comes in many forms. However, one common trend is that malls are shifting from being retail-centric to becoming more human-centric, with a focus on creating spaces that are seamlessly integrated into their surrounding communities. Some have set up repair and maintenance stations to better cater to the needs of local residents, while others have launched school drop-off and pickup services to assist working parents. The future of shopping centers lies in becoming lively community hubs that are less about shopping than about promoting an all-round lifestyle experience.

 SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Veteran diplomat **Lu Shaye** has been appointed special representative of the Chinese Government on European affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced in early February.

In his role, Lu will be one of China's main diplomats responsible for conducting consultation and exchange and promoting cooperation with the EU and its member states and institutions.

Born in October 1964, Lu began his foreign service career in 1987 as a staff member at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He previously served as ambassador of China to France and to Monaco from 2019 to 2025, as ambassador of China to Canada from 2016 to 2019, and as ambassador of China to Senegal from 2005 to 2009.



“Innovation can't be planned. You don't know when and where the innovation comes. What you can do is just to foster an environment that is conducive to innovation.”

**Robin Li**, cofounder and CEO of Chinese tech heavyweight Baidu, at the World Governments Summit 2025 in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, on February 11

“I have been interested in China for years because it has many world heritage sites. I see people here taking good care of their cultural and natural sites. I hope people across the world can see this and do the same with their own culture.”

**Olivier Chiabodo**, French producer and TV host, in a recent interview with newspaper *China Daily*



COVER STORY

# CHILLING TRIUMPHS

The Ninth Asian Winter Games and beyond

By Yuan Yuan