

OPINION: NEW START WITH U.S. P.24 | FEATURES: EVOLVING CHINESE FAMILIES P.36

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CONTENTS

EDITOR'S DESK

02 Stable Ties With Russia

THIS WEEK

COVER STORY

12 A New Chapter in an Enduring Partnership

Putin's productive visit built trust and accelerated shared development

16 Global Implications of China-U.S.-Russia Interactions

Striking a new balance between competition and cooperation

Cover Photo: Chinese President Xi Jinping holds talks with visiting Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on May 20 (XINHUA)

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18 Putin's Visit to China: Much Remains to Be Done

Greater prospects for friendship and neighborliness

20 Two Summits in Beijing and the Multipolar Transition

What major-country summits reveal about the changing world

OPINION

24 A Historic Turning Point

The Xi-Trump meeting will be measured by the actions that follow it

26 A New Vision of China-U.S. Relations

Beyond avoiding conflict, the relationship must contribute global goods

28 Transcending the Thucydides Trap In Beijing

Inside the bid to break the cycle

30 The Emergence of a 'Grand Bargain'

Insights on the new agreements between China and the U.S.

32 Competition Without Confrontation

Leaders set new framework for bilateral relations

34 The Strategy Behind Spacesail

The plan to launch a constellation of 15,000 satellites by 2030

FEATURES

36 The Ties That Bind

How the Chinese family is evolving

40 Strategic Shifts

Chinese universities are recalibrating toward national priorities

42 The Weight of Evidence

Prosecutor's diaries shed new light on Tokyo Trial process

CULTURE

46 Mysterious Cities of Gold

Maya and Andean artifacts on display at the Capital Museum

EXPAT'S EYE

48 Edgar Snow's Lasting Legacy

Understanding China through the eyes of a bridge builder



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EDITOR'S DESK



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Stable Ties With Russia

Russian President Vladimir Putin's state visit to China on May 19-20 took place at the dual milestones of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of China-Russia strategic partnership of coordination and the 25th anniversary of the signing of the China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation. It signaled ongoing emphasis placed by both countries on promoting the development of China-Russia relations.

With deepening political mutual trust and frequent high-level exchanges, the two countries have not only established the routine of annual visits between heads of state, but also formed regular meetings between prime ministers, a parliamentary cooperation committee as well as mechanisms for exchanges and cooperation in areas such as energy, investment, culture, economy and trade, local collaboration, strategic security and law enforcement. On the basis of non-alliance, non-confrontation and not targeting any third party, China and Russia have established the most stable, mature and strategically significant bilateral relationship among major countries in the world.

Economic and trade cooperation between China and Russia has continued to strengthen. In 2025, their trade volume exceeded \$200 billion for the third consecutive year, and China remained Russia's largest trading partner for the 16th consecu-

five year. In the first four months this year, bilateral trade increased 19.7 percent year on year, with 99 percent of the bilateral trade paid with their national currencies.

Behind these numbers lies the high degree of complementarity and integration of the two countries' economies. From traditional energy cooperation to emerging fields such as high technology, AI and green and low-carbon development, China-Russia cooperation is steadily gaining better structure and more participants and entering a wider range of areas. Since the two countries began implementing a reciprocal 30-day visa-free regime for ordinary passport holders in 2025, personnel exchanges between China and Russia have been more convenient, promoting practical cooperation across many fields.

Putin's visit to China followed closely on the heels of U.S. President Donald Trump's visit, with the heads of state or government of the four other permanent members of the UN Security Council now having visited China in the last six months. This highlights China's emerging role as a global stabilizer and facilitator of dialogue. Against the backdrop of accelerating global change, Putin's visit not only reaffirmed the high quality of China-Russia relations, but also strengthened the cohesion of China-Russia cooperation. **BR**



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JAPAN.....JPY188 EUROPE.....EUR1.90
TÜRKIYE.....TRY5.00 HK.....HKD9.30 NEPAL.....RS40

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CRUISING!

Adora Flora City, China's second domestically built large cruise ship, prepares to set sail for a sea trial from Pier 5 of Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding Co. Ltd. in Shanghai on May 16.

It set sail that day on a 12-day sea trial, the final major step before its scheduled delivery on November 6. Measuring 341 meters in length, with a gross tonnage of 141,900 tons, the vessel features 2,130 cabins and suites and can carry up to 5,232 passengers at full capacity.



YINXIANG

Merch Mayhem

A vendor displays World Cup-themed merchandise at the Yiwu International Trade Market in Yiwu, Zhejiang Province, on May 15. As the 2026 FIFA World Cup draws near, related merchandise produced in Yiwu is in high demand. Yiwu is famous for small commodities manufacturing and trading.

Aircraft Carrier Training

A Chinese formation led by the *Liaoning* aircraft carrier on May 19 left for the Western Pacific for training purposes, according to the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy.

The carrier formation will conduct a series of training tasks, including far-sea tactical flight operations, live-fire shooting, support and cover maneuvers, and comprehensive rescue, the PLA Navy said.

The training serves to enhance the forces' capacity to fulfill their missions and complies with related international law and common practice, it added.

Regulating Drones

The Ministry of Public Security (MPS) on May 18 vowed to maintain a tough stance against the illegal use of drone flight control systems by releasing 10 typical

cases of such offenses.

In some cases, individuals used technical means to help others illicitly bypass drone restrictions, including altitude limits and no-fly zones, or tampered with factory-set payload parameters, assisting unauthorized drone flights for illegal profit, according to the ministry.

It warned that such acts pose risks to public and national security. All suspects involved in the 10 cases have been subjected to criminal compulsory measures by police, with further investigation underway.

A ministry official also warned that privately providing services to remove no-fly zone and altitude restrictions for drone owners may constitute a criminal offense, adding that police will continue to crack down on such acts in accordance with the law.

Experts said that drones without altitude restrictions may intrude into civil aviation routes and poten-

tially cause collisions with serious consequences, while those not subject to geographic restrictions could enter prohibited areas, such as military control zones, risking the leakage of state secrets.

In addition, drones with altered performance parameters are more likely to lose control and crash during flight, posing a direct threat to lives and property, experts noted.

Housing 'Health Checks'

The Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development has called for integrated endeavors to advance urban "health checks" and urban renewal, stressing that renewal projects should be carried out after such checks, Xinhua News Agency reported on May 17.

A ministry official said local authorities should also strengthen the use of assessment results in urban renewal planning and

implementation.

The unnamed official said China will accelerate the achievement of full-coverage check-ups across housing, residential communities, street blocks and urban districts.

Having experienced the world's largest and fastest urbanization process over the past few decades, China introduced the city "health check" pilot program in 2018, with aims to build livable, resilient and smart cities. The initiative was implemented in all prefecture-level and higher-tier cities in 2024. Last year, 297 prefecture-level and higher-tier cities, as well as 152 county-level cities, carried out such assessments, according to the ministry.

Taklimakan Rally

The Taklimakan Rally began on May 16 in Urumqi, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, with an extended route and nearly 300 competitors.

The rally will cross Xinjiang, China's largest region, before concluding in Aksu on June 1. Organizers said the total distance is about 7,500 km, including 3,400 km of special stages, the longest in the event's history.

This year's field has also expanded, with 299 competitors and 152 vehicles, including nine trucks, all record highs for the race. The lineup features 28 foreign drivers from eight countries.

First held in 2005, the Taklimakan Rally has grown into a flagship long-distance off-road event in China and was officially included on the International Automobile Federation calendar in 2024.

Recycled Water Utilization

Chinese cities used over 22 billion cubic meters of recycled water in 2025, as reclaimed water has become a stable second water source

for cities, according to the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, Xinhua reported on May 14.

Recycled water helps ease the imbalance between water supply and demand, a ministry official said.

The country has accelerated the construction of recycled water facilities, stepped up leakage control in public water supply networks and advanced sponge city construction, the official added.

Recycled water, wastewater treated to meet particular quality standards so that it can be reused, provides a steady additional water source for cities and can replace fresh water while reducing the strain on urban water delivery systems.

Sustainable Urban Development

Mayors and city representatives from around the world gathered in the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu recently to discuss how cities can respond to mounting pressures from climate change, population aging, resource constraints and public safety risks.

The 2026 World Mayors Dialogue, held on May 13-15, brought together representatives from 26 countries, 32 cities and

five international organizations. The event was themed Park City: Harmonious Coexistence. Participants exchanged views on technological innovation, industrial cooperation, cultural exchange and ecological security.

Chengdu, the host city and capital of Sichuan Province, aimed to promote its “park city” model, an approach that local officials say links ecological protection, public services, a business-friendly environment and urban governance. The city is also known internationally as the home of giant pandas and one of the UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy.

Chengdu Mayor Chen Shuping said the city has been exploring a sustainable development path that brings together ecology, production and daily life.

Cross-Border Drug Crimes

Chinese police have intensified their crackdown on cross-border drug-related crimes, including smuggling and trafficking of drug-making precursor chemicals and new psychoactive substances, solving 29 criminal cases and arresting 157 suspects since 2025.

They have also seized 720 kg of drugs, 1.3 tons of new psychoactive substances, 0.9 kg



China-Russia Expo

Attendees learn about Russian food products at the 10th China-Russia Expo in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, on May 17. The 10th China-Russia Expo, which concluded on May 21, attracted over 1,500 enterprises from 46 countries and regions.

of stimulants and 27.7 tons of non-scheduled precursor chemicals, the MPS said on May 15.

China’s national narcotics control authority has repeatedly issued notices warning of the legal risks of selling drug-making precursor chemicals and new psychoactive substances overseas.

The MPS released details of 10 cases involving cross-border trade in such substances.

Several of the disclosed cases revealed that some suspects posted advertisements online

to solicit orders from overseas clients, obtained or produced the chemicals domestically, and then smuggled them abroad.

China has issued arrest warrants for some of the suspects involved in these cases or taken criminal coercive measures against them. Others were sentenced in accordance with the law. The charges or suspected offences included smuggling, trafficking, transporting or manufacturing drugs, as well as illegal business operation, environmental pollution and fraud, according to the MPS.



Panda Express

Crew members prepare desserts for passengers on a tourist train known as the “panda train,” at Anjing Railway Station in Sichuan Province on May 19. The train departed on that day from Chengdu, home of the giant panda, carrying 92 passengers for a 16-day tour of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Data from China Railway Chengdu Group Co. Ltd. show that the “panda train” service has transported over 50,000 passengers since it first rolled out in March 2021.

Private Sector

The national market regulator said on May 19 it had taken steps to improve the business environment for private firms since the country's first law dedicated to promoting the private sector took effect last year.

Zhang Daoyang, an official with the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR), said in the year since the Private Sector Promotion Law took effect, the regulator had initiated dozens of policy measures, including 22 measures to support private sector development and 34 key tasks targeting the sector's growth in 2026.

To ensure fair competition, the regulator trimmed the market access negative list to 106 items and launched anti-monopoly campaigns targeting barriers to market entry, factor markets and public tendering.

The regulator handled nearly 14,600 unfair competition cases in 2025 and investigated more than 30,000 trademark and patent violations, while cracking down on arbitrary fees

charged to businesses.

Over 3,000 one-stop technical service centers have been set up to support innovation. Quality-backed financing helped more than 40,000 firms secure loans exceeding 300 billion yuan (\$43.9 billion), according to the administration.

SAMR said it would press ahead with implementing the Private Sector Promotion Law to sustain growth momentum in the sector.

The private sector accounts for more than 60 percent of China's GDP. The Private Sector Promotion Law, which went into effect on May 20, 2025, aims to optimize the sector's development environment, ensure fair market competition and foster the growth of both the private economy and private entrepreneurs.

Power Use

China's electricity consumption, a key barometer of economic activity, rose 6 percent year on year to 820.5 billion kilowatt-hours (kwh) in April, data from the National

Energy Administration showed on May 19.

Power use by the primary industry rose 2 percent year on year to 11.2 billion kwh, while that by the secondary industry increased 5.3 percent to 558.4 billion kwh.

Within the secondary industry, industrial power use rose 5.5 percent year on year to 553.8 billion kwh, while electricity consumption by hi-tech equipment manufacturing climbed 10.1 percent to 105 billion kwh.

Power consumed by the tertiary industry reached 151.7 billion kwh that month, up 8.9 percent year on year. The charging and battery swapping service sector and Internet data services reported rapid growth in electricity consumption, rising 61.9 percent and 42.8 percent, respectively.

Electricity consumption by residents rose 6 percent from a year earlier to 99.2 billion kwh.

In the first four months of the year, China's total power use exceeded 3.33 trillion kwh, up 5.4 percent year on year, the data showed.

Sales Revenue

Chinese enterprises posted considerable growth in sales revenue in the first four months of 2026, with those involved in the AI industry posting particularly strong growth, according to the invoice data released on May 19 by the State Taxation Administration.

During this period, sales revenue from the manufacturing of electronic specialty materials and integrated circuits, which are directly related to AI production and application, surged 70 percent and 54.4 percent year on year, respectively.

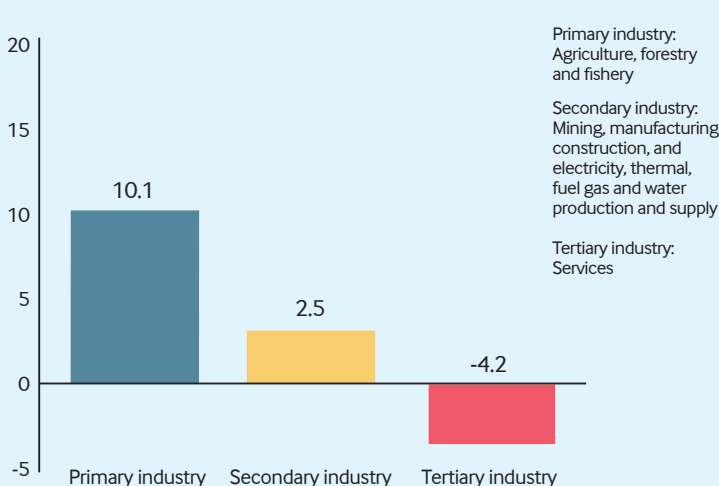
Meanwhile, sales revenue from the intelligent in-vehicle equipment and robotics sectors related to AI terminal applications grew 50.7 percent and 27.5 percent year on year, respectively.

Sales revenue from hi-tech manufacturing, in general, rose 14.9 percent year on year and accounted for 18.1 percent of all sales revenue from the manufac-

NUMBERS

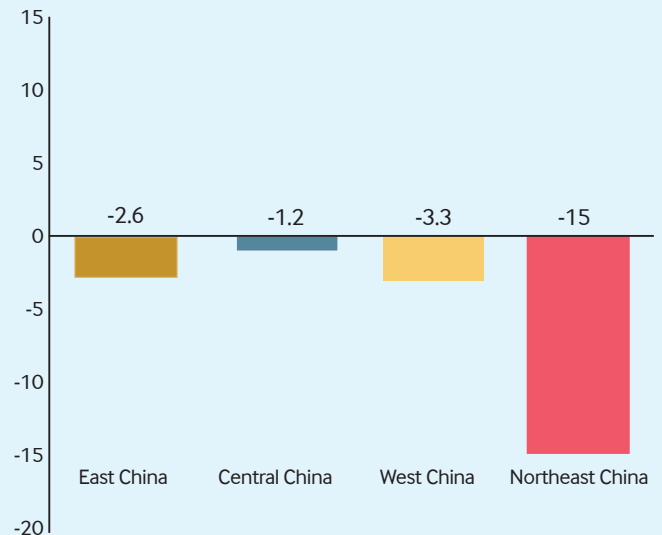
Fixed Assets Investment Growth by Sector

Jan-Apr (%; y.o.y.)



Fixed Assets Investment Growth by Region

Jan-Apr (%; y.o.y.)



turing sector.

Amid China's measures aimed at boosting consumption, the service consumption market remained vibrant in the first four months of this year, with sales revenue from travel agencies and culture, sports and entertainment industries posting double-digit growth. Sales revenue from food and beverage and delivery services, as well as guesthouse services, increased 7.7 percent and 14.1 percent, respectively.

Forex Market

China's foreign exchange (forex) market operated steadily in April, with cross-border capital flows returning to net inflows, according to official data released on May 18.

Forex settlements by banks totaled \$257.3 billion that month, while sales came in at \$217.2 billion, according to the State Administration of Foreign Exchange.

In the first four months, forex settlements by banks

totaled \$1.0237 trillion, while sales reached \$844.9 billion, the administration said.

Li Bin, deputy head and spokesperson of the administration, said China's forex market has remained generally stable despite volatility in international financial markets caused by geopolitical situations.

Foreign-related transactions remained active. In April, cross-border receipts and payments by enterprises, individuals and other non-banking sectors totaled \$1.6 trillion, up 15 percent year on year, while forex market turnover reached \$3.7 trillion, staying at a relatively high level, Li said.

Companies have also become more capable of managing exchange rate risks and more rational in forex transactions, Li said.

In April, companies' willingness to settle forex was stable with a slight decline, and the settlement ratio of forex earnings edged down from the previous month, indicating that market expectations remained basically stable, Li said.

Industrial Output

China's value-added industrial output posted a rapid year-on-year growth of 5.6 percent in the first four months of 2026, underpinned by strong growth particularly in the equipment and hi-tech manufacturing sectors, official data showed on May 18.

In April alone, the value-added industrial output grew 4.1 percent year on year and rose 0.05 percent compared to the previous month, according to data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

The industrial output is used to measure the activity of large enterprises each with an annual main business turnover of at least 20 million yuan (\$2.9 million).

The NBS further noted that in the first three months of 2026, the total profits made by industrial enterprises above this designated size were about 1.7 trillion yuan (\$250 billion), up 15.5 percent year on year.

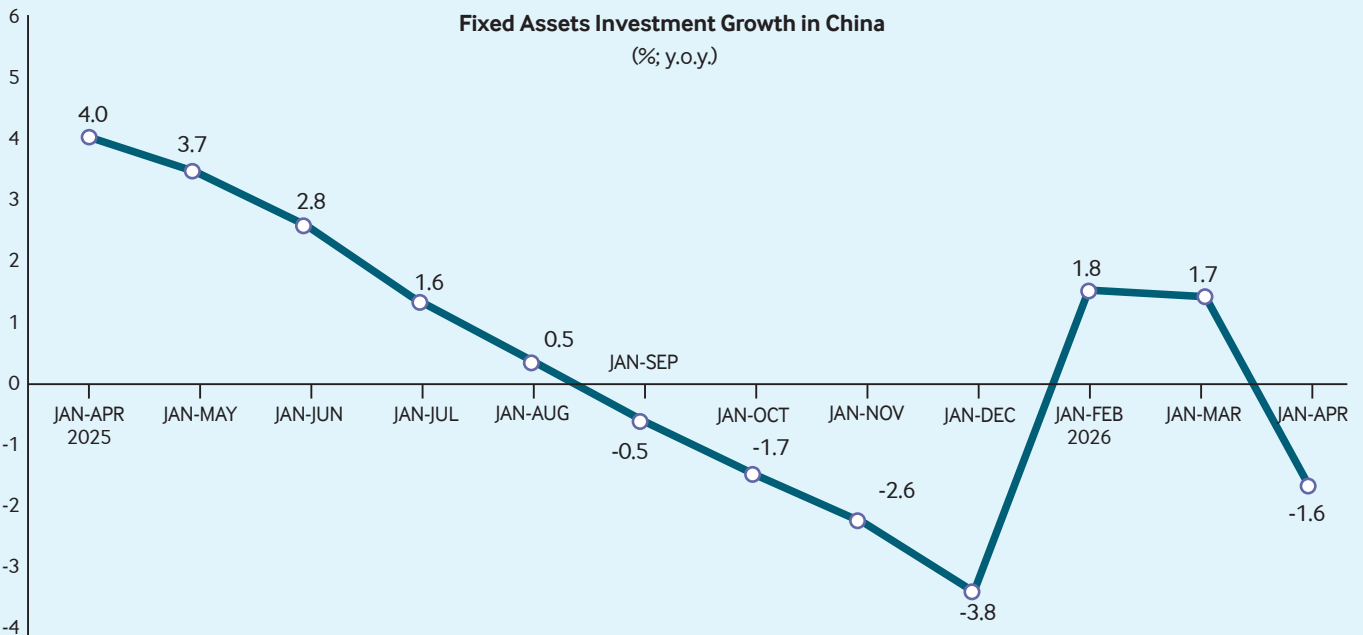
Satellite Navigation

China's satellite navigation industry continues to expand, with the total output value of the sector reaching 629 billion yuan (\$92 billion) in 2025, an increase of 9.24 percent year on year, according to a white paper published on May 18.

The report, unveiled by the Global Navigation Satellite System and Location-Based Services Association of China, said nearly 1.4 billion smartphones in China were equipped with BeiDou (the Chinese equivalent of GPS) positioning capabilities by the end of 2025, accounting for about 98 percent of all mobile phones in the country.

It also said more than 160 million wearable devices supported BeiDou positioning services. In addition, over 100 million passenger cars had onboard devices using BeiDou services for navigation and positioning.

Beyond China, BeiDou services and related products have been exported to more than 140 countries and regions worldwide, the white paper said.



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)

THIS WEEK WORLD



EGYPT

The Egyptian Museum in Cairo on May 17, a day before International Museum Day



AZERBAIJAN

Representatives at the 13th Session of the World Urban Forum in Baku on May 17. Global leaders, policymakers and urban experts gathered to discuss the challenges of rapid urbanization and sustainable city development



GERMANY

Guests sample Chinese tea at the China Cultural Center in Berlin on May 19. A tea salon event was held on that day at the China Cultural Center in Berlin, featuring tea culture exhibitions, lectures and cultural performances





THAILAND

The site of a train-bus collision that killed eight people in Bangkok on May 16



ITALY

Tennis players Jannik Sinner (left) and Casper Ruud pose for a photo following the men's singles final at the ATP Italian Open in Rome on May 17.

Tennis world No. 1 Sinner, of Italy, defeated Norway's Ruud 6-4, 6-4



CAMEROON

Military vehicles parade during the National Day celebrations in Yaounde on May 20. The country celebrated its 54th National Day with nationwide military and civilian parades



↓ FROM ACADEMIC HEADACHE TO DESERT HARVEST MAKER

Agricultural entrepreneur **Kuang Feiting** has reached a new milestone in desert agriculture, growing grain crop triticale on saline-alkaline desert land in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Kuang released a video this month showing her plants standing about 1.7 meters tall.

Triticale, a hybrid of wheat and rye, is highly tolerant of poor soil, cold, drought, salinity and sandstorms, according to Kuang. It's a dual-purpose plant that can be used both for grain and as a fodder crop for livestock.



Kuang was mentored for five years by Yuan Longping, the late Chinese agricultural pioneer known as the “father of hybrid rice,” with the legendary scientist overseeing her experiments. She recalled that Yuan would chase her demanding her latest results. “I got so nervous that I would take a detour whenever I saw him coming,” she said.

Samsung's Exit?

Global Times

May 8

On May 7, Samsung Electronics announced it would stop selling all home appliance products, including televisions and monitors, in the Chinese mainland. With this, Samsung, a multinational that entered this huge market in 1992, has officially exited.

The withdrawal has obvious causes: the rise of formidable local manufacturers and Samsung's own operational missteps. But set against the broader backdrop of shifting global supply chains, it is less a simple retreat than a strategic restructuring.

Samsung is recasting China's place in its global operations: less as an end market for appliances, and more as a manufacturing and supply chain hub. Its decision in April last year to renew an agreement with the Suzhou Industrial Park, one of its long-standing manufacturing bases, points in that direction. Rather than being dismantled, Samsung's production network there is likely to be redirected toward overseas demand.

At the same time, the company is concentrating its China business on higher-value areas, such as semiconductors, memory chips and advanced electronics. Samsung may become less visible in Chinese homes, but more deeply embedded in China's industrial chain.



Books as Building Blocks

Oriental Outlook

April 30

China has opened a new chapter in its push to promote reading nationwide, with the country's inaugural National Reading Week held from April 20 to 26. The weeklong celebration brought together reading-related activities across libraries, bookstores, schools and community spaces, aiming to further promote reading as part of everyday public life.

“Our experience has shown that old factories and aging equipment are still precious assets that preserve historical memory and generate new momentum for cultural and tourism consumption.”

Zeng Chao, General Manager of Tsingtao Beer International Tourism Development Co. Ltd., in an interview with Xinhua News Agency about the surge in tourist visits to beer museums

“We often call the stains on ancient texts ‘age spots.’ But the Wensuge copy is nearly free of such marks.”

Chu Hui-liang, a former researcher at the Taipei Palace Museum, commenting on *The Complete Library of the Four Treasuries* copy housed in Lanzhou, Gansu Province. Of the seven original copies of this monumental book collection, compiled during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), only three and a half survive today

The idea of “reading for all” was formally advanced by UNESCO in 1997. Since 2012, China’s nationwide reading campaign has moved from a broad social initiative to a national strategy. A further milestone came with the release of China’s first national regulation focused specifically on reading promotion, which officially took effect on February 1. The introduction of the regulation marks the transition of the country’s national reading drive from policy guidance to a legally binding framework.

As information technology and AI reshape how people access knowledge, advocates say the value of reading and physical reading spaces needs renewed emphasis. Public libraries, bookstores and community reading rooms can help shape cities’ cultural characters.

Across China, new reading spaces are being woven into everyday life. Examples include libraries embedded in parks and zoos in Guangdong Province, as well as bookstores integrated into food markets in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Experts caution, however, that promoting reading requires more than landmark libraries or trendy bookstores. What matters more than attendance figures alone is long-term operation, rich programming, regular collection updates and the cultivation of a sustainable reading culture.

World Cup Commerce

China Business Journal

May 16

FIFA, the world governing body of association soccer, and state broadcaster China Media Group have recently reached a broadcast rights deal for the 2026 World Cup, ending a standoff over TV rights after FIFA initially sought a price said to be multiple times the final figure.

The agreement comes as FIFA pushes the World Cup to an ever greater commercial scale. The 2026 World Cup will expand to 48

teams and, for the first time, be jointly hosted by three countries. FIFA is also experimenting with new distribution channels, naming TikTok its first “preferred platform.”

Yet China’s market looks cooler than before. Awkward kick-off times will make live viewing harder. The tournament is also losing some of its old star power, with players such as Cristiano Ronaldo expected to retire soon. Meanwhile, fans no longer need to sit through an entire match when a few minutes of highlights on social platforms can capture its key moments. That means less attention for advertisers and weaker revenue prospects for broadcasters.

AN AMERICAN WHO BECAME CHINESE AT HEART

Kungfu enthusiast **Jake Pinnick**, 36, from the U.S., is seen as a notable example of “becoming Chinese,” a viral social media meme describing people embracing Chinese culture.

“I want to let people from all over the world appreciate the charm of traditional Chinese culture and benefit from it,” he said in a recent interview with *China Daily*.

Pinnick was first enrolled in a five-year kungfu program on Wudang Mountain in Shiyan, Hubei Province, one of China’s major centers for martial arts, in 2010. He returned in 2018 and has since taught kungfu to more than 700 international students.



Pinnick, who goes by the Chinese name Li Zigen, has over 2 million fans online. In April 2025, he secured China’s Foreign Permanent Resident ID Card, which allows holders to live and work in China without a visa.

“We used to spend a lot of time explaining complex medical terms that patients often struggled to grasp. Now, AI helps patients understand their conditions more intuitively.”

Wang Chenglin, a dentist at the West China Hospital of Stomatology in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, about the hospital’s AI-powered “smart brain,” which can diagnose over 30 common dental diseases

“For Chinese tea to further enter everyday consumption scenarios overseas, it has to retain Oriental aesthetic elements, while also adapting to young local consumers’ preferences for iced drinks, portability and personalized mixing.”

Jin Lusha, Chief Financial Officer of Chinese tea brand Tenet Tea, telling Xinhua during the London Coffee Festival in London, the UK, on May 17



COVER STORY

A NEW CHAPTER IN AN ENDURING PARTNERSHIP

Russian president's recent state visit to China: an extended treaty, two joint declarations, over 40 agreements By Ma Miaomiao