

News on China | No. 36



About 10 min read.



Geopolitics

China and South Korea Revive Dialogue Amid Tensions on the Korean Peninsula

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's 19–20 August visit to South Korea, the first by a Chinese foreign minister in five years, renewed efforts to strengthen bilateral ties amid tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Beijing and Seoul agreed to accelerate negotiations on the second phase of their Free Trade Agreement and expand cooperation in trade, supply chains, technology, and cultural exchanges. Wang called for South Korea to pursue external relations in an 'independent, autonomous, balanced and non-conflicting manner' and urged Washington to change its 'hostile policy' towards Pyongyang. China reaffirmed its commitment to peaceful resolution and regional stability; Seoul reiterated the one-China principle. Beijing is considering a Xi–Lee summit at November's APEC in Shenzhen.

Read More:

- [Brasil de Fato, 20 August 2026](#)
- [South China Morning Post, 20 August 2026](#)

US Imposes Drone Tariffs of up to 100% as China Demands Repeal

China has urged the United States to withdraw new Section 232 tariffs on drones and related components, calling them discriminatory against Chinese products and harmful to Chinese companies. On 13 August 2026, President Donald Trump signed a proclamation imposing tariffs of up to 100% on certain drones and components, while others face 25% duties. Producers in the European Union, Japan and Switzerland face a 15% ceiling, and UK suppliers 10%. Most tariffs take effect on 3 September, with some components delayed until 9 February 2027. Beijing's 20 August response follows a US national-security investigation launched in July 2025 and broader efforts to restrict Chinese technology and reshape global supply chains.

Read More:

- [Global Times, 14 August 2026](#)
- [Xinhua, 20 August 2026](#)



National Politics

Cross-Border Corruption Bill Goes to First Reading After 963 Fugitives Repatriated in 2025

Convening at the Great Hall of the People on 18 August, the Council of Chairpersons, chaired by Zhao Leji, set 25–28 August for the 14th National People's Congress Standing Committee's 24th session, with the National Commission of Supervision's anti-graft measure – on the legislative plan since 2023 – to be deliberated alongside draft laws on healthcare security and farmland protection, days after Evergrande founder Xu Jiayin's life sentence for fraud and bribery.

Read More:

- [Xinhua, 18 August 2026](#)
- [China Daily, 28 February 2026](#)

Xi Marks Jiang Zemin's Birth Centenary, Tying 1990s Reform Record to the 'New Journey'

About 6,000 people filled the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on 17 August for an address crediting the late leader with the Theory of Three Represents, accession to the World Trade Organization, the response to the Asian financial crisis and the 1998 floods, and a push for a multipolar world, each achievement then matched to a present-day task from strengthening Communist Party leadership to high-quality development.

Read More:

- Friends of Socialist China, 17 August 2026
- People's Daily, 17 August 2026



Economy

Weekly Arctic Route Opens to Europe, Halving Shipment Times for a Chinese Container Line

Bound north through the Bering Strait and the frigid waters along Russia's northern coast, the Dubai Tower sailed from Ningbo-Zhoushan Port on Saturday evening carrying energy storage cabinets, power batteries and photovoltaic modules from the Yangtze River Delta, and is timetabled into Felixstowe on 7 September with Hamburg and Gdynia later that week – a crossing possible only while the ice has melted enough to allow transits without icebreakers.

Read More:

- AFP, 16 August 2026
- Xinhua, 15 August 2026

BRI Markets Take US \$83.67 Billion of China's Car Exports as Consultants Warn of Overcapacity

Customs data compiled by the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers record 3.381 million vehicles, 1.135 million of them new energy models (up 59.4 percent), shipped to Belt and Road Initiative partner countries in the first half of 2026, which now take 57.5 percent of China's automobile export value; the surge continues even as AlixPartners predicts that only 15 of China's 129 electric and hybrid brands will be financially viable by 2030.

Read More:

- Reuters, 17 September 2025
- China Daily, 14 August 2026



Agriculture and Environment

Ecological and Environmental Code Takes Effect, Replacing 10 Laws with Systematic Governance

Adopted by the National People's Congress in March 2026 and binding on every company operating in China, the 1,242-article text has applied since 15 August, absorbing 10 statutes in full while drawing more than 100 administrative regulations and over 30 laws into one system, its dedicated green and low-carbon chapter tying ecological stewardship to growth as the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026–2030) embeds environmental considerations across economic policy.

Read More:

- World Economic Forum, 5 June 2026
- NPC Observer, 11 March 2026

Shanghai's Domestic Green Methanol Chain Delivers World-Record 8,016 Tonnes to a French Ship

Fuel made from Jilin's wind, solar and biomass, moved through Dalian Port along an inter-provincial corridor opened in June 2026, reached CMA CGM's 13,000-TEU (twenty-foot equivalent unit) dual-fuel vessel with a single 8,016-tonne lift covering an entire transoceanic voyage without a top-up, while cutting lifecycle emissions by an estimated 10,000 tonnes of CO₂ and giving international shipping a production-to-bunkering model that Shanghai Electric says can be repeated and expanded.

Read More:

- Marine Insight, 18 August 2026
- Bunker Market, 18 August 2026



Science and Technology

China's Non-Governmental 'Nobel Prize' Awards US \$1 Million Each to Three 2026 Laureates

Zhang Hong of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Fudan University's Zhao Dongyuan and Peking University's Yuan Xinyi were named in Beijing on 13 August for work on autophagy ('self-eating'), on mesoporous materials underpinning catalysis, energy storage and biomedicine, and on arithmetic geometry; their selection takes to 49 the scientists recognised since 2016 by the country's first privately funded science award, which scientists and entrepreneurs, not the state, jointly initiated.

Read More:

- Xinhua, 13 August 2026
- South China Morning Post, 16 August 2024

DeepSeek's 'Everything Is a Plugin' Harness Passes 33,000 GitHub Stars Within Hours

Released as a developer preview one week ago and built on the Cordis composability framework, the MIT-licensed Node.js runtime treats the model adapter, tool registry, session log and even the agent loop itself as interchangeable plugins (no privileged core to patch); because external pull requests are not yet accepted, DeepSeek channels contributions into community plugins and GitHub Discussions instead, around a harness that drives Anthropic, OpenAI, Azure or Google models just as readily.

Read More:

- South China Morning Post, 14 August 2026
- The New Stack, 13 August 2026



People's Life and Culture

Qixi's Weaver Girl Returns to the Square as a Migrant Cook's War Drama Tops Cinemas

Guangzhou's Tianhe district opened a seven-day carnival on 14 August, carrying customs listed as national intangible cultural heritage – needle-threading for skill, offerings to the Seventh Sister on the night the Cowherd and Weaver Girl meet on a magpie bridge – into public space, while cinemas drew couples to *Once Upon a Time in the Middle East (Welcome to Dragon Restaurant)*, where a migrant cook keeps his kitchen open through a war because people need three meals a day.

Read More:

- Xinhua, 19 August 2026
- Global Times, 19 August 2026
- Sixth Tone, 14 August 2026

Frenchmen Hand Kunming Museum 16 Pages of Nantes Archives on a War the West Overlooks

Some 618 wartime photographs from Marcus Detrez's grandfather in 1930s Shanghai set off a cross-border campaign by the non-profit Echoes of the World, which in August lodged 138 pages on the Chongqing Bombing and 891 more in Shanghai before handing a Kunming museum six documents dated 1938 to 1941 – drawn from France's own diplomatic files, while the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45) remains, Detrez says, insufficiently understood in many Western societies.

Read More:

- China Daily, 18 August 2026
- Global Times, 15 August 2026