

TOP NEWS

FIVE-YEAR STRIDES

China steps up efforts to boost opening-up

Headway made in trade facilitation and customs cooperation, senior officials say

By ZHONG NAN
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China will upgrade its special customs supervision areas and advance international customs cooperation to reinforce foreign trade resilience, senior government officials said on Monday.

Speaking at a news conference in Beijing, Wang Jun, vice-minister of the General Administration of Customs, said the government will push forward the transformation of special customs supervision areas, with a focus on diversified functions, high-end industrial upgrading and greater trade facilitation.



Sun Meijun, minister of the GAC, said that facilitating cross-border trade is an essential requirement of high-level opening-up, a key means to improve the business environment and counter external shocks, and a necessary step to implement the World Trade Organization's commitments and uphold the multilateral trading system.

Special customs supervision areas are key platforms for opening-up, especially when it comes to expanding trade and attracting investment. Covering less than 0.005 percent of China's land area, the areas account for one-fifth of the country's total imports and exports.

Wang said that 19 new special customs supervision areas were added during the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) period, bringing the total number to 174. The distribution of locations was also optimized to cover all provincial-level regions.

Cai Hongbo, director of Beijing Normal University's Free Trade Zone Research Center, said that upgrading special customs supervision areas will help China remain a powerful engine for high-tech investment, emerging industries and institutional innovation, while deepening the integration of manufacturing and services.

Zhang Baofeng, head of the GAC's National Office of Port Administration, said that as many parts of the world are facing a complex and volatile global trade environment, the administration will strengthen international cooperation to ensure smoother trade flows and more resilient supply chains.

Since 2021, China has signed 519 cooperation documents with foreign partners and ranked among

the top three trading partners for 157 countries and regions, data from the GAC showed.

In 2024, China's trade with countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative reached 22 trillion yuan (\$3.07 trillion), accounting for over 50 percent of its total imports and exports, according to customs statistics.

The country's trade with emerging markets, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Latin America, Africa and Central Asia, has expanded at an annual pace of more than 10 percent since 2021.

Trade experts said that China's foreign trade is expected to stay resilient in the second half of 2025, supported by robust high-tech exports, dynamic private sector activity and deepening links with emerging markets.

Liang Ming, director of the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation's Institute of International Trade, said that powered by cost efficiency, product quality and modern infrastructure, China's industrial ecosystem is evolving into a vibrant hub for innovation, enabling manufacturers to tap into new technologies, strengthen collaboration with global partners and expand their presence in both domestic and overseas markets.

One such company is Neusoft Medical Systems, a Shenyang, Liaoning province-based medical equipment manufacturer.

Its products, including computed tomography scanners and magnetic resonance imaging devices, have been exported to more than 110 countries and regions spanning Europe, South America, Africa and the Middle East, serving over 13,000 overseas clients, with particularly extensive coverage in economies participating in the BRI.

"We will actively expand into emerging markets and step up investment in research and development to enhance competitiveness and deliver innovative medical solutions worldwide," said Wang Zhiqiang, the company's senior vice-president.

Neusoft's exports of high-end medical equipment exceeded 260 million yuan in the first seven months of 2025, marking a year-on-year increase of 21.8 percent, according to Shenyang Customs.

China's foreign trade grew 3.5 percent year-on-year to 25.7 trillion yuan between January and July, while exports rose 7.3 percent year-on-year to 15.31 trillion yuan, customs data showed.

Panda party



Giant panda Katyusha, the first giant panda born in Russia, enjoys a cake to celebrate her second birthday at the Moscow Zoo in the Russian capital on Sunday. The birthday celebrations capped week-long programs, including science lectures, documentary screenings and handicraft workshops, said the zoo director. XINHUA

Cultural bridge



Contestants pose for a group photo on Sunday during the world final of the 24th "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreign College Students in Pingtan, Fujian province. The event featured various activities including a Chinese culture quiz, stand-up comedy and debate, attracting 155 contestants from 133 countries and regions. WANG DONGMING / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

World's highest bridge passes stress test

By YANG JUN and LIU BOQIAN
in Guiyang and ZHANG XIAOMIN

A fleet of 96 trucks weighing a whopping total of 3,360 metric tons drove down the world's highest bridge under construction — the Huajiang Grand Canyon Bridge in Guizhou province — on Monday to test its load-bearing capacity.

The simulated traffic congestion was the final structural performance test for key bridge components under heavy load, marking a crucial step toward the bridge's opening in September.

After five days of intensive and orderly inspections, the load test — a comprehensive "physical examination" essential for verifying the bridge's structural safety and load-bearing capacity — was completed successfully.

"Preliminary analysis of the load test data shows that all measured indicators responded normally," said Han Hongju, deputy general manager and chief engineer of Guizhou Communications Investment Group, the company that built the bridge.

Stretching 2,890 meters in total length with a main span of 1,420 meters, the bridge towers 625 meters above the Beipan River. Once open, it will be the world's highest bridge and longest bridge span in mountainous terrain.

To describe the world-class project, the builders used a vivid analogy of two "sky-high trees" 1,420 meters apart, connected by a giant "clothesline" that is

2,378 meters long and nearly 1 meter thick.

From this "clothesline", 91 pairs of "hangers" are suspended vertically, spaced 15.4 meters apart. Below these hangs a large "clothes-drying platform" — the bridge deck — which is 8 meters high, 30.5 meters wide, and weighs approximately 22,000 tons.

The "sky-high tree" on the Liuzhi side in Anshun city stands 262 meters tall, while the one on the Anlong side in the Qianxinan Bouyei and Miao autonomous prefecture touches 204 meters. At the top of each "tree", a "saddle" is installed to ensure the "clothesline" performs smoothly and is firmly anchored.

In technical terms, the "clothesline" refers to the main cable, the "hangers" are the suspenders, the "sky-high trees" are the main towers, the "saddles" are the cable saddles, and the "clothes-drying platform" is the main girder.

The test was designed based on the bridge's intended vehicle load capacity. Through both dynamic and static assessments, the performance of the four major systems was thoroughly evaluated.

Originally scheduled to be conducted from Thursday to Saturday, the static load test was rescheduled due to unpredictable weather conditions. The tests were finally carried out from Thursday to Monday, with a break in work on Saturday.

Lei Min, technical director of

the Bridge and Tunnel Division of Guizhou Shunkang Testing, said that three weight classes — 18, 48 and 96 trucks, with each weighing 35 tons — were used sequentially, with the maximum load reaching 3,360 tons, to test the bridge's load-bearing capacity.

"This approach simulated varying traffic volumes and load distributions while ensuring there was no damage to the bridge structure," he said.

Construction of the bridge began in January 2022, and the bridge is expected to open to traffic in late September.

A key project component of the Liuzhi-Anlong Expressway, the bridge will reduce travel time between the two sides of the canyon from two hours to just two minutes.

It is also expected to enhance regional tourism by linking attractions such as the Huangguoshu Waterfall, Longgong Cave and Wanfenglin scenic area, helping create a world-class tourism destination.

"The bridge itself is a world-class attraction," said Zhang Xiangyu, a member of the bridge and tourism integration team at Guizhou Communications Investment Group.

The builders have integrated modern facilities as well as experience-based activities such as bungee jumping, paragliding and rope swinging from the bridge structure, Zhang said.

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Political Lens

Documentary launch highlights Xi's cultural heritage vision

Ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit, which will take place in Tianjin from August 31 to September 1, the launch ceremony of *Heritage Guardian*, a special documentary produced by China Media Group that is to be aired in SCO member states, was held in Beijing on Monday.

The documentary showcases stories that highlight President Xi Jinping's dedication to cultural heritage and development to convey to the international audience the essence of Xi Jinping Thought on Culture and the deep cultural roots of Xi's governance philosophy. It vividly interprets the values of cultural prosperity for national strength, emphasizing the importance of culture in the nation's development.

It features places Xi has worked in or visited during his inspection tours, along with in-depth interviews with individuals who have worked with him. The documentary presents a panoramic view of China's modern practices in cultural heritage protection and civilizational exploration.

Zhao and Volodin meet

Zhao Leji, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China's top legislature, co-chaired the 10th meeting of the China-Russia committee for parliamentary cooperation with Vyacheslav Volodin, chairman of the Russian parliament's lower house, the State Duma, in Beijing on Monday.

Zhao highlighted the development of bilateral ties and expressed the NPC's willingness to work with the Federal Assembly of Russia to implement the consensus reached by the two heads of state and leverage the cooperation mechanism to enhance exchanges and cooperation, thereby promoting the development of China-Russia relations.

Volodin expressed the State Duma's readiness to strengthen exchanges with the NPC and make joint contributions to promoting all-around cooperation between the two nations.

CHINA DAILY

Computing: AI chip firms expand share

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According to Wei Liang, vice-president of the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology, more than 100 computing service providers have joined the platform, along with over 1,000 registered enterprise users, while nearly 100 large language models have been connected, providing diverse online services to more than 1,000 developers.

Meanwhile, Chinese AI chip companies are also working hard to beef up their prowess in graphic processing units, prompting their stocks to be favored by investors, as US company Nvidia's H20 chips face weak demand in China.

On Monday, Chinese AI chip stocks continued their strong upward trajectory, with Cambricon Technologies emerging as a potential challenger to beverage giant Kweichow Moutai for the title of the highest-priced stock on the A-share market.

Cambricon closed at 1,384.93 yuan per share on Monday, surging 11.4 percent for the day. Since mid-July, its share price has more than doubled, and it has skyrocketed by more than 562 percent since September 2024.

The AI chip intellectual property products of Cambricon have powered smartphones and data server chips, including those made by Huawei Technologies Co and Alibaba Group.

Chen Tianshi, co-founder and CEO of Cambricon Technologies, said in an earlier interview with China Daily that "there is rigid demand for AI chips in China. We don't worry about orders, as long as our technologies are strong enough".

Pan Helin, a member of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology's Expert Committee for Information and Communication Economy, said, "The Nvidia incident offers a strategic window for ambitious Chinese AI chip designers to expand their market share."

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Members of the research team, led by Yang Huan, an associate professor at Northwestern Polytechnical University's Institute of Culture and Heritage in Xi'an, applied their knowledge of materials science in computer simulations to duplicate the bronze pouring and solidification process.

Using 3D scanning to capture millimeter-level details and reverse modeling technology to build a virtual casting workshop, the researchers re-created the ancient process with unprecedented detail.

"It's like performing a holographic scan on the artifact," said Fang Minghui, a PhD candidate and member of the team. "For the first time, we have dynamically duplicated the entire process to understand how molten bronze flowed and solidified inside the pottery mold."

The team tested two pouring gates — one at the right hind leg and another at the left front leg — to observe the differences in solidification time and the distribution of defects. Their findings confirmed that the ancient crafts-

men used the right hind leg to pour molten metal when they cast the buffalo-shaped vessel.

"The precision with which Shang Dynasty artisans controlled the gate location fully aligns with modern materials science principles," associate professor Yang said, pointing to the simulated flow path of molten bronze in a dynamic video demonstration.

Equally remarkable is the thickness of the vessel's wall, which was maintained at about 3 millimeters throughout, a standard that matches modern casting criteria, she added.

The buffalo — an animal revered in the Shang Dynasty as a sacred medium between heaven and earth — gave the vessel exceptional status at Yinxu. It is the only known bovine-shaped bronze vessel to be unearthed at the site.

"Even when examined through a modern lens, the technical skills of the artisans can only be described as extraordinary," Yang said.

Casting such a vessel would have required a fully customized pouring system, akin to what

would be needed for a precision engineering project in modern times, she said.

"The artisans had thoroughly mastered the tempering of tin bronze," Yang said. "In an era without instruments, they relied on their accumulated experience to precisely control alloy ratios and achieve flawless casting within margins of millimeters."

Chinese bronze craftsmanship, which began to emerge in the late Neolithic period, or New Stone Age, reached its zenith in the late Shang Dynasty.

Yang's team plans to apply the same high-tech methods to study other bronze artifacts and further explore ancient manufacturing techniques, materials and purposes.

The casting technique used at Yinxu demonstrates the creativity and persistence of ancient artisans, Yang said.

"In an era when technology was less developed, they made beautiful things — perhaps after numerous trials and errors. That spirit is really inspiring," she added.

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