III. Respect for Civil Liberties

Freedom of Expression

Findings

• During the Commission's 2025 reporting period, the People's Republic of China (PRC) government and Chinese Communist Party (CCP or Party) persisted in imposing restrictions on expression that contravene Article 35 of China's Constitution, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).
• Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked China 178 out of 180 countries and territories in its 2025 World Press Freedom Index, and Freedom House's 2025 Freedom in the World report scored China 0 out of 4 on "free and independent media" for the seventh year in a row.
• The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked China as the world's leading jailer of journalists during this reporting year. Currently detained or imprisoned journalists include **Zhang Zhan, Sophia Huang Xueqin, Dong Yuyu, Chen Pinlin, Gu Wanming, Li Weizhong,** and **Liu Hanbin.** Foreign journalists in China also continued to face restrictions and harassment.
• The Party continued its efforts to shape its image abroad through an expanding network of state-directed media initiatives, including its network of international communication centers (ICCs). OpenAI, a U.S. artificial intelligence (AI) company, found accounts which "appear to originate in China" that used AI to write news articles criticizing the U.S. in Latin American media outlets and to generate posts denouncing a critic of the Party.
• Chinese authorities exercised control over freedom of expression of global audiences on the app TikTok through content moderation and censored posts on the Chinese social media platform Xiaohongshu, known as RedNote.
• Authorities in China continued to tightly control in-person assemblies that they viewed as potentially threatening to the Party and targeted even non-political gatherings, particularly those involving youth. Individuals who participated in protests or commemorative activities continued to face detention and harassment, including **Fang Yirong** and **Mei Shilin,** both detained for hanging pro-democracy banners.
• PRC legislators introduced several measures to tighten control over the internet, including a regulation on a new national internet identification (ID) system and a draft regulation targeting multi-channel networks (MCNs).
• Authorities and social media platforms in China continued to censor online discussions and public expression related to topics that generated criticism or contradicted official policy or positions. Observers noted various examples of authorities treating China's economic challenges as sensitive topics to be censored this past year.

• China experienced a series of violent "revenge against society" attacks this past year, including various knife attacks and car ramming incidents. In response, the PRC government tightly controlled information about the events and prioritized surveillance and punishment.
• Authorities continued to exercise tight control over the entertainment, art, and literature sectors, including by imprisoning artists, writers, and public intellectuals such as **Gao Zhen, Fei Xiaosheng, Xu Lin,** and **Li Yanhe.**
• The PRC continued its control over educational and research institutions this past year, impeding free exchange of information and international academic collaboration.

Freedom of Expression

Freedom of the Press

Party Control of the Media

During the Commission's 2025 reporting period, the People's Republic of China (PRC) government and Chinese Communist Party (CCP or Party) persisted in imposing restrictions on expression that contravene Article 35 of China's Constitution, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).[1] Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked China 178 out of 180 countries and territories in its 2025 World Press Freedom Index, and Freedom House's 2025 Freedom in the World report scored China 0 out of 4 on "free and independent media" for the seventh year in a row.[2]

The Party showcased its priorities for media coverage in November 2024 during the annual China Journalism Awards ceremony, giving top awards to state media outlets for their positive coverage of the Party.[3] One observer described the top four winners as "servile and anodyne," while others claimed that "news is dead."[4] Four of the top winning articles contained "propagandistic" headlines, promoting PRC leader Xi Jinping or the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," for instance.[5] To this end, one observer pointed out that during National Journalists' Day celebrations, local officials made constant references to "'news propaganda' (*xinwen xuanchuan,* 新闻宣传), which refers explicitly to the use of the news form to conduct state propaganda activities and reach the goals of the leadership."[6]

Control over China's Image Abroad

During this reporting year, the Party continued its efforts to shape its image abroad through an expanding network of state-directed media initiatives.[7] Building on Xi Jinping's directive to "tell China's story well" (*jiang hao Zhongguo gushi,* 讲好中国故事), the Party significantly expanded its network of "international communication centers" (*guoji chuanbo zhongxin,* 国际传播中心 or ICCs) at local and provincial levels that aim to "tailor" information to foreign audiences.[8] By early 2025, researchers had documented at least 70 ICCs (28 provincial-level and at least 50 at the city and district level) across China.[9] During this reporting year, the Party opened an ICC in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and one in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in September and December 2024, respectively.[10] The official announcement of the opening of the XUAR ICC described the center as the region's "principal window of external communication."[11] [For more information on Party control in the XUAR and TAR, see Chapter 15—Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and Chapter 14—Tibet.]

The Chinese government also placed pro-Party content in international media outlets and on social media platforms.[12] An article published in December 2024 noted that U.S. media company Nexstar Media Group, which owns 200 television stations "reaching 116 markets or more than 70% of all U.S. television households," distributed content from Party-run media outlet *Global Times.*[13] Major

publications including the *Los Angeles Times, Financial Times,* and *Time Magazine* also carried "China Watch" inserts from *China Daily,* which paid "hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to insert their content into major print media."[14]

OpenAI, a U.S. artificial intelligence (AI) company, found accounts which "appear to originate in China" that used AI to write news articles criticizing the U.S. in Latin American media outlets and to generate posts denouncing a critic of the Party.[15] Chinese state media also operated "cloaked" accounts that masked their government connections, which significantly increased engagements.[16] "China Says," an account on X with over 235,000 followers as of June 2025, ran paid promotional content and was revealed to be run by the Chinese Internet News Center, part of China's State Council Information Office.[17] Similar accounts included "Hi, this is GBA" and "Daily Bae," which presented as independent influencers while actually serving as "external propaganda brands run by Guangdong province."[18] [For more information on China's international influence campaigns, see Chapter 17—Human Rights Violations in the U.S. and Globally. For more information on China's use of AI, see Chapter 13—Technology and Human Rights]

TikTok and *Xiaohongshu* (RedNote)

During the Commission's 2025 reporting year, Chinese authorities exercised control over freedom of expression on TikTok through content moderation. Investigations revealed TikTok and its parent corporation, ByteDance, had misused data to spy on journalists in the U.S.,[19] improperly collected and transferred personal data to China[20] and systemically suppressed political and other sensitive content to align with Chinese government interests.[21] Furthermore, under China's laws—including the *National Security Law, Cybersecurity Law, National Intelligence Law, and Counterespionage Law*[22]—the company must cooperate with PRC government defense and intelligence entities, including by sharing the vast amounts of user data it collects upon request, which poses a national security threat to the U.S.[23] After the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the *Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act* in January 2025, TikTok was temporarily banned in the United States until the Trump administration issued three executive orders delaying enforcement in 2025.[24]

TikTok and *Xiaohongshu* (RedNote)—Continued

When TikTok was temporarily unavailable in the United States, a significant number of American users—approximately 700,000 according to one source—migrated to the China-based social media platform known as RedNote internationally (小红书, *xiaohongshu)*.[25] One report noted that the large number of "TikTok refugees" was a byproduct of a possible CCP-backed influence campaign.[26] This influx created a situation where Chinese and American users were able to interact directly on the same platform, an unusual circumstance given China's typical restrictions on foreign social media.[27] The Cyberspace Administration of China responded by ordering RedNote to ensure that China-based users cannot see posts from U.S. users.[28] RedNote later directed different content to users based on their location, seeking to make content from foreign users less visible to Chinese users.[29] Multiple sources documented cases of American users experiencing censorship on RedNote, with posts being removed for discussing topics such as Taiwan, human rights concerns, or LGBTQ lifestyles, or for violating other unstated guidelines.[30] In some cases, the users' posts were quickly removed and accounts suspended.[31]

Some observers also raised concerns about RedNote's extensive data collection practices and potential connections to Chinese government entities.[32] Observers have raised similar concerns about several other Chinese-owned apps, including WeChat,[33] Temu,[34] Pinduoduo,[35] and DeepSeek.[36]

Detention and Imprisonment of Journalists

During the Commission's 2025 reporting year, both the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked China as the world's leading jailer of journalists.[37] According to CPJ's 2024 prison census, over 50 journalists were in prison in China and Hong Kong as of December 2024.[38] RSF counted at least 125 journalists behind bars in China in 2024.[39]

PRC authorities continued to re-detain or harass journalists after they completed their sentences.[40] Authorities detained prominent COVID-19 citizen journalist **Zhang Zhan** again in August 2024, after Zhang advocated for the release of another activist.[41] By January 2025, reports indicated Zhang had begun a hunger strike while in detention, just as she had during her prior detention, and was being force-fed through a gastric tube, raising serious health concerns and contravening the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.[42] Authorities also cut off veteran journalist **Gao Yu**'s access to her internet, landline, and cellular connections in August 2024 after she published an article analyzing an *Al Jazeera* interview with a Chinese think tank vice president.[43] [For more information on Zhang Zhan, see Chapter 7—Status of Women.]

The Commission observed reports of detentions and developments in the cases of several other prominent journalists and media workers during this reporting year, including:

- **Sophia Huang Xueqin.** In September 2025, the Guangdong High People's Court secretly rejected an appeal from journalist

and women's rights advocate Sophia Huang Xueqin, upholding her original sentence of five years in prison.[44] [For more information on Sophia Huang Xueqin, See Chapter 7—Status of Women.]

- **Dong Yuyu.** In November 2024, the Beijing No. 2 Intermediate People's Court sentenced the former editor of the state-run newspaper *Guangming Daily,* Dong Yuyu, to seven years in prison on "espionage" charges.[45]
- **Chen Pinlin.** On January 6, 2025, the Baoshan District People's Court in Shanghai municipality tried in a closed proceeding and sentenced filmmaker Chen Pinlin to three years and six months in prison for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" after he produced a documentary about the 2022 White Paper protests against China's COVID-19 restrictions.[46] Chen's documentary, titled "Urumqi Middle Road" in Chinese and "Not the Foreign Force" in English, was released on YouTube and X, but his accounts have since been removed.[47]
- **Gu Wanming.** In November 2024, Minhang District People's Court in Shanghai sentenced Gu Wanming, a retired journalist from state-run media outlet *Xinhua,* to one year in prison for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble," reportedly related to his 2023 public letter calling for an investigation into the sudden death of former Premier Li Keqiang.[48] In December 2024, *Xinhua* revoked Gu's retirement benefits.[49]
- **Li Weizhong.** Authorities placed Li Weizhong, an independent journalist writing under the pen name Li Yuanfeng, under "residential surveillance at a designated location," a form of secret detention, in November 2024 for "inciting subversion of state power" after being detained the previous month.[50]
- **Liu Hanbin.** Authorities detained Liu Hanbin, a blogger who documented farmers' protests against land seizures in Inner Mongolia, in November 2024 on suspicion of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble."[51]

CONDITIONS FOR FOREIGN JOURNALISTS

Foreign journalists also continued to face restrictions and harassment.[52] For nearly a week, from late May to early June 2024, two French investigative journalists received a dozen threatening messages, allegedly from Chinese police, after releasing a documentary about a Chinese dissident.[53]

Also during this reporting year, the Foreign Correspondents' Club of China (FCCC) expressed concern about employers pressuring foreign journalists not to join professional organizations such as the FCCC and Hong Kong journalists' associations, undermining freedom of association.[54]

In-Person Protest and Assembly

During the past year, authorities in China continued to tightly control in-person assemblies that they viewed as potentially threatening to the Party through a combination of preventive measures, real-time suppression, detentions, and intimidation.[55] According to Freedom House's *China Dissent Monitor,* which tracks the incidence and types of dissent in the PRC, Chinese citizens engaged in 937

documented protests in the third quarter of 2024 alone, a 27 percent increase over the same period in 2023.[56] Authorities demonstrated increased sensitivity toward non-political gatherings, particularly those involving youth. In October 2024, officials implemented a crackdown on Halloween celebrations across major cities including Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Hangzhou municipalities.[57] Police established checkpoints, detained costumed individuals, and demanded personal information from detained individuals.[58] According to leaked notices, authorities banned not only costumes and makeup but also Halloween decorations like "bats, pumpkins, ghosts, coffins and skeletons," while businesses had to seek prior approval for Halloween decorations.[59] These measures followed the 2023 celebrations at which some participants wore costumes satirizing government policies and officials.[60] Similarly, in November 2024, authorities in Henan province shut down a spontaneous trend of nighttime bicycle rides between the municipalities of Zhengzhou and Kaifeng involving tens of thousands of students.[61] According to one analyst, authorities' swift suppression of these non-political gatherings was "a sign of the authorities and police feeling very insecure after the uprising of 2022."[62] [For more information on the Henan night rides, see Chapter 2—Civil Society and Social Movements.]

Authorities continued to detain and harass individuals who participated in protests or commemorative activities. In August 2024, **Fang Yirong** hung pro-democracy banners from a footbridge in Loudi municipality, Hunan province and used a loudspeaker to call for democracy and Xi Jinping's removal, mimicking **Peng Lifa's**[63] 2022 "Bridge Man" protest.[64] In a later posted video, Fang identified himself as a White Paper movement participant and acknowledged possible consequences: "I expect to be treated as mentally ill. I could also wind up dying in prison. But I will have no regrets."[65] Similarly, in April 2025, **Mei Shilin,** a 27-year-old resident of Muchuan county, Leshan municipality, Sichuan province, displayed another banner from a road overpass in Chengdu municipality.[66] Authorities continued to detain all three individuals—Fang, Peng, and Mei—without providing information about their condition or whereabouts, effectively constituting an "enforced disappearance."[67] In July 2024, police took several individuals into custody who had participated in a memorial event for Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo, with rights advocates **Zan Aizong** and **Zou Wei** formally arrested on charges of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble."[68]

PRC Control over the Internet

The Party continued to maintain a tight grip on online spaces.[69] During this reporting year, PRC legislators introduced significant measures to tighten control over the internet, focusing on identity verification and data security, reflecting an ongoing strategy to enhance surveillance, regulate data flows, and enhance compliance.

In July 2024, the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) and Ministry of Public Security jointly announced draft regulations for a national internet identification (ID) system, proposing to assign each internet user a unique code linked to their real identity.[70] The proposal triggered criticism on Chinese social media, leading to swift censorship.[71] Authorities blocked numerous search terms

related to the proposal and censored at least eight critical articles from academics and legal experts, among others.[72] Several commentators expressed concern that the new ID system would dampen freedom of expression by allowing the government to shut down all the internet accounts of a critic in a single action.[73] Despite being framed as "voluntary," as of August 2024, over 80 apps had already implemented the proposed authentication system on a trial basis since the release of the draft, including WeChat, Xiaohongshu (RedNote), Taobao, and Zhaopin (a job application app).[74] The finalized *Measures on the Management of the National Online Identity Authentication Public Service,* released in May 2025 and scheduled to take effect in mid-July, remained largely similar to the draft, but hardly any criticism could be found online.[75]

PRC authorities also introduced potential regulations aimed at controlling online content. In January 2025, CAC proposed new regulations targeting multi-channel networks (MCNs), which are third-party agencies that manage social media influencers.[76] These draft rules require MCN institutions to "adhere to correct political direction, public opinion guidance, and value orientation" and prohibit them from activities such as "manufacturing or spreading rumors" or "hyping social hot points."[77]

Authorities continued to target Chinese internet users accessing overseas platforms.[78] In July 2024, police detained members of a Discord community that had hosted political discussions among Chinese users.[79] In December 2024, a 2023 case against five individuals for their involvement with a pro-democracy X group (League for Tearing Down the Wall @LTDW2025) became public.[80] The individuals, **Ren Jianping, Yao Xirui, Lin Yangpeng, Gu Haiying,** and **Peng Haiming,** were sentenced to terms ranging from 4 to 10 years for "inciting subversion of state power."[81]

In December 2024, the Shanghai High People's Court upheld the seven-year prison sentence of blogger **Ruan Xiaohuan,** also known as "program-think" (*biancheng suixiang,* 编程随想), for "inciting subversion."[82] Ruan had posted for 12 years on topics such as technology, politics, and circumvention of the Great Firewall before his sudden disappearance in May 2021.[83]

CENSORSHIP

This past year, authorities and social media platforms in China continued to censor online discussions and public expression related to topics that generated criticism or contradicted official policy or positions.[84] The CAC launched what one expert characterized as its "annual, or semi-annual tradition" of censorship campaigns, including a three-month crackdown on online news content deemed false or contrary to the official line[85] and a two-month "Clear and Bright" operation targeting content considered harmful to children, including videos glorifying school bullying, "extravagant lifestyles," and other "vulgar" content.[86]

Other examples of online censorship include:

- **Economic discussions.** Observers noted various examples of authorities treating China's economic challenges as sensitive topics to be censored this past year.[87] In January 2025, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that economist Gao Shanwen faced

censorship after he questioned the reliability of China's GDP growth figures at a Washington forum.[88] Chinese economists Ren Zeping and Fu Peng have also both been silenced online since December 2024.[89] Following the Third Plenum economic meeting, nationalist commentator Hu Xijin disappeared from social media for months, apparently for espousing an interpretation of the Plenum counter to official policies.[90] Social media platforms also censored the phrase "garbage time of history"—used to describe China's economic malaise—after it gained popularity.[91]

- **Trade War.** After reciprocal tariffs on Chinese goods came into effect in April 2025, Chinese authorities began censoring some tariff-related content on Chinese social media platforms Weibo and WeChat including "104" (referring to 104 percent tariffs) while allowing comments that mock the U.S. position.[92] Online censors also took down posts by Chinese companies complaining about the negative impact of Trump's tariffs and other expressions of concern or dissent.[93]
- **Youth unemployment.** When images of a Hangzhou job fair with 35,000 job seekers went viral on Weibo, a social media outlet popular in China, online commentators noted the visual resemblance to Xi'an's famous Terracotta Warriors packed in tightly like a small army, and Weibo censored the original post making the comparison.[94]
- **Electoral politics and democracy.** Weibo suppressed discussion of Taiwan's January 2024 general election, blocking the hashtag "#TaiwanElection" after it reached number 11 on Weibo's "hot list."[95] During the U.S. election season in fall 2024, *CNN*'s broadcast of the vice presidential debate was abruptly cut off in China when the discussion turned to candidate Tim Walz's time in China and because of potential references to the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown.[96] Later, a WeChat article calling for then-U.S. President Joseph Biden to "exit the political stage" was censored, possibly because authorities interpreted it as containing veiled messages relevant to Xi Jinping,[97] while influential blogger Sima Nan was banned for a year—reportedly for expressing support for Donald Trump in the U.S. election.[98]
- **Olympic training funding.** After the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Sports revealed it had allocated 47 million yuan (nearly US$6.5 million) to fund Eileen Gu's Olympic training in 2023, with a similar amount budgeted for 2025, censors quickly deleted a *Caixin* article reporting these figures.[99] Subsequently, four related articles discussing the expense were removed from multiple platforms, and Weibo users questioning the allocation of taxpayer money were censored, with one commenter asking, "Why are they so afraid the taxpayers will find out?"[100]
- **Bu Xiaohua trafficking case.** In December 2024, police announced they had located Bu Xiaohua, who, suffering from mental illness, disappeared in 2011 and was "taken in" by a man surnamed Zhang.[101] After Bu gave birth to multiple children during her 13-year ordeal, her case sparked widespread outcry and comparisons to the 2022 "chained woman" incident in Xuzhou municipality, Jiangsu province, a case that was also

heavily censored.[102] Censors moved to control the narrative, blocking several Weibo hashtags related to the case, removing commentary of Party-controlled newspaper *Beijing Daily*[103] calling for accountability, and deleting search terms related to "taking in" (*shouliu,* 收留)—language some have criticized as being a euphemism for trafficking and rape.[104] Authorities also censored discussions about the film "Blind Mountain," which depicts a similar abduction scenario.[105] [For more information on trafficking of women, see Chapter 9—Human Trafficking. For more information on lack of accountability for domestic abuse, see Chapter 7—Status of Women].

Rise of "Revenge against Society" Events and Censorship

China experienced a series of violent "revenge against society"[106] attacks this past year, including a knife attack at a Zhenxiong county, Yunnan province hospital (2 dead, 21 injured);[107] a stabbing in Suzhou municipality, Jiangsu province targeting Japanese victims, resulting in the death of a Chinese national who intervened;[108] a fatal stabbing of a Japanese schoolboy in Shenzhen municipality, Guangdong province;[109] a knife attack near a Beijing municipality primary school;[110] a car ramming at a Zhuhai municipality, Guangdong province sports center (35 dead, 43 injured);[111] a mass stabbing at a Wuxi municipality, Jiangsu province vocational school (8 dead, 17 injured);[112] and a car ramming outside a Changde municipality, Hunan province elementary school.[113]

The government's response followed a pattern of information control. After the Zhuhai incident, authorities delayed releasing details while implementing the playbook of "delet[ing] posts, clos[ing] comments, and reduc[ing] popularity" tactics.[114] Government officials framed the violence as "isolated incidents" stemming from individual grievances rather than systemic issues.[115] Comments demanding more information and pointing to potential deeper societal causes and governance failures, including economic pressure and state-sanctioned ultra-nationalism,[116] were also heavily censored.[117] A psychotherapist also reflected that these events suggest a "very strong sense of feeling that society is not just."[118] Authorities censored the name Zhang Xianzhong (张献忠), a brutal Ming-era rebel leader, whose name was used on line to refer to these attacks.[119] In modern Chinese internet culture, this term symbolizes an escape from societal pressure.[120] Rather than addressing root causes, authorities prioritized surveillance and punishment, developing technologies to predict behavior like the "Crowd Emotion Detection and Early Warning Device system" while emphasizing severe punishment of "major vicious crimes."[121] This security-focused approach aims to preempt violence through technical means while leaving the social pressures generating that violence unaddressed.[122] As Cornell University professor Peidong Song notes, "Public attacks are often reactions to repression; the irony is that the government generally responds to them with even more repression."[123]

Entertainment, Art, and Literature

This past year, Chinese authorities continued to exercise tight control over the entertainment, art, and literature sectors.[124] According to PEN America, an organization dedicated to defending freedom of expression, China jails the largest number of writers and public intellectuals.[125] Relevant examples follow:

- Police detained artist **Gao Zhen** in August 2024 when he was visiting China with his family, on charges of "insulting revolutionary heroes and martyrs" for creating satirical artwork in the past depicting Mao Zedong.[126] Authorities raided the studio belonging to Gao Zhen and his brother near Beijing and barred Gao's wife and minor son, who is a U.S. citizen, from leaving China.[127]
- Authorities in Xi'an municipality, Shaanxi province detained musician **Fei Xiaosheng** in January 2025, reportedly for supporting the Hong Kong democracy movement.[128]
- Authorities criminally detained Guangzhou municipality, Guangdong province-based lyricist **Xu Lin** for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" in May 2024.[129] Before his criminal detention, Xu, who previously served three years in prison for songs he wrote promoting democratic values, said that he will not hire a lawyer but if he died, it would be as a result of "persecution by the CCP."[130]
- Shanghai First Intermediate People's Court held a so-called "public trial" of Taiwan-based publisher **Li Yanhe** (also known as Fu Cha or "Fuschia") after detaining him for two years while he was visiting Shanghai municipality.[131] Authorities detained Li on charges of "endangering national security" but later changed this to "secession" charges.[132] Li's Eight Banners publishing house published many works banned in China, including on the topics of China's overseas influence operations and the 1989 Tiananmen protests.[133]

Authorities also censored content deemed inconsistent with official values, including the following examples:

- Censors pulled the movie "Wild Child," about homeless children who care for each other.[134] According to *Radio Free Asia,* Cai Qi, a member of the Standing Committee of the Communist Party Central Committee Political Bureau,[135] likely ordered the film's withdrawal because it "didn't conform to the main theme of encouraging young people and teenagers to grow and thrive in a positive way."[136]
- Online censors deleted hundreds of TV micro-dramas portraying family conflicts, with authorities claiming that these shows "deliberately amplify and exaggerate conflicts between husband and wife."[137] This campaign appeared connected to government efforts to boost falling birth rates by promoting positive images of family life.[138] The National Radio and Television Administration ordered ByteDance's micro-drama streaming platform Hongguo to cease posting new videos in December 2024.[139] Hongguo subsequently removed 279 videos with "bad value orientation."[140] [For more information on China's attempts to control population growth, see Chapter 8—Population Control.

For more information on the complicity of businesses in human rights abuses, see Chapter 12—Business and Human Rights.]

- In the video game industry, NetEase Games released *Marvel Rivals* in December 2024, which reportedly contained censorship mechanisms that filter out statements critical of China while permitting criticism of the United States.[141] The players of the game *Black Myth: Wukong,* developed by Chinese company Game Science, also faced censorship, being told by developers to avoid discussing certain topics such as "feminist propaganda" or COVID-19.[142]

Authorities applied inconsistent censorship to foreign content, apparently influenced by economic considerations.[143] The Marvel film "Deadpool & Wolverine" gained approval with limited alterations, and rapper Kanye West's concerts in Hainan province generated substantial tourism revenue.[144] Meanwhile, U.S. Vice President JD Vance's book *Hillbilly Elegy* was removed from WeChat Reading, a Chinese reading platform, after his selection as U.S. Republican vice-presidential candidate.[145] Similarly, Peter Hessler's book *Other Rivers: A Chinese Education* disappeared from Chinese social media platform Douban, along with its reviews.[146]

Academic Freedom

The PRC continued to exert control over educational and research institutions this past year, impeding free exchange of information and international academic collaboration.[147]

The Commission observed numerous cases of public intellectuals or professors being harassed, censored, or silenced for expressing views that diverged from official positions:

- In July 2024, a report surfaced regarding the dismissal of foreign professor Björn Alexander Düben from Jilin University after a nine-year tenure following an interview with *Voice of America* about PRC leader Xi Jinping's Europe visit.[148] He was ordered to leave China by May 30, 2024.[149]
- Chinese academics faced similar or worse treatment. In September 2024, reporters said that Zhu Hengpeng, an economist at the state-run Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), was put under investigation, subsequently detained, and ultimately removed from his position after criticizing PRC leader Xi Jinping in a private WeChat group.[150] His name was subsequently scrubbed from CASS websites.[151] A scholar at the Shanghai Party Institute of the Communist Party, Hu Wei, was reportedly forced into early retirement in 2023 after publicly criticizing Russia's invasion of Ukraine.[152]
- Authorities also used travel restrictions against an academic. Law professor Liang Xingguo and his wife were banned from traveling to Hong Kong in November 2024, apparently due to an article he wrote two years earlier discussing how unlimited terms for leaders could transform a republic into a dictatorship,[153] but authorities refused to provide documentation explaining the ban.[154]

Notes to Chapter 1—Freedom of Expression

[1] "中华人民共和国宪法" [PRC Constitution], passed December 4, 1982, amended March 11, 2018, art. 35; "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," *United Nations,* adopted and proclaimed by UN General Assembly resolution 217A (III) of December 10, 1948; "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," *United Nations,* adopted December 16, 1966, entry into force March 23, 1976, art. 19; "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," *United Nations Treaty Collections,* Chapter IV Human Rights. The PRC signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) on October 5, 1998 but has not yet ratifed it, despite stating repeatedly its intent to ratify including in the National Human Rights Action Plan 2016–2020. The U.S.-China Relations Act of 2000, Pub. L. No. 106-286, §§301–309 requires the CECC to use the ICCPR's provisions to monitor compliance with human rights standards in the PRC. For past coverage of restrictions on Freedom of Expression, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "2024 Annual Report," *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2024, 46–63; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "2023 Annual Report," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 48–68.

[2] "2025 World Press Freedom Index: China," *Reporters Without Borders,* accessed May 14, 2025; "Freedom in the World 2025 Country Report: China," *Freedom House,* accessed May 14, 2025; "Freedom in the World 2024 Country Report: China," *Freedom House,* accessed May 14, 2025; "Freedom in the World 2023 Country Report: China," *Freedom House,* accessed May 14, 2025; "Freedom in the World 2022 Country Report: China," *Freedom House,* accessed May 14, 2025; "Freedom in the World 2021 Country Report: China," *Freedom House,* accessed May 14, 2025; "Freedom in the World 2020 Country Report: China," *Freedom House,* accessed May 14, 2025; "Freedom in the World 2019 Country Report: China," *Freedom House,* accessed May 14, 2025.

[3] Cindy Carter, "Translation: Anodyne Winners of 34th China Journalism Awards Prompt Declaration That 'News is Dead,'" *China Digital Times,* November 13, 2024.

[4] Cindy Carter, "Translation: Anodyne Winners of 34th China Journalism Awards Prompt Declaration That 'News is Dead,'" *China Digital Times,* November 13, 2024.

[5] "第34届中国新闻奖获奖作品目录" [List of Winners of the 34th Annual China Journalism Awards], *Xinhua,* November 7, 2024; Cindy Carter, "Translation: Anodyne Winners of 34th China Journalism Awards Prompt Declaration That 'News is Dead,'" *China Digital Times,* November 13, 2024; David Bandurski, "Commending a Compliant Press," *China Media Project,* November 12, 2024.

[6] David Bandurski, "Commending a Compliant Press," *China Media Project,* November 12, 2024.

[7] For past coverage of the Party's media initiatives abroad, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 49.

[8] "中共沧州市委宣传部：讲好本地故事，做好地方国际传播" [CCP Cangzhou Municipal Committee Propaganda Department: Tell local stories well and do a good job in local international communication], *All-China Journalists' Association,* February 7, 2024; Alex Colville, "Telling Zhejiang's Story," *China Media Project,* December 34, 2024; Alex Colville and David Bandurski, "China's Global Talent Crunch," *China Media Project,* December 6, 2024; Devin Thorne, "Breaking the Circle: Chinese Communist Party Propaganda Infrastructure Rapidly Expands," *Recorded Future,* December 10, 2024, 1, 162; Artem K., "Propaganda Watch: China's International Communication Centres," *Grey Dynamics,* February 15, 2025.

[9] David Bandurski, "Ancient Outpost Seeks a New Voice," *China Media Project,* March 5, 2025.

[10] "China Launches New Propaganda Center in Lhasa," *International Campaign for Tibet,* September 11, 2024; Alex Colville, "China Opens ICC to Rebrand Xinjiang," *China Media Project,* January 10, 2025.

[11] Alex Colville, "China Opens ICC to Rebrand Xinjiang," *China Media Project,* January 10, 2025; "China Launches New Propaganda Center in Lhasa," *International Campaign for Tibet,* September 11, 2024.

[12] For more information on China's content-sharing agreements, see "Beyond Borders: China's Grip on Global Media," *Human Rights Foundation,* March 27, 2024. For past coverage of PRC content-sharing initiatives, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 49. "Content-sharing" is a strategic partnership between CCP media outlets and foreign media outlets where China provides free content for the foreign news media to use without disclosing their origins in order to gain international credibility.

[13] Henryk Szadziewski, Peter Irwin, and Ben Carrdus, "Faithfully Implementing Propaganda: Chinese State Media Inserts in Overseas Media," *Uyghur Human Rights Project,* December 4, 2024.

[14] Henryk Szadziewski, Peter Irwin, and Ben Carrdus, "Faithfully Implementing Propaganda: Chinese State Media Inserts in Overseas Media," *Uyghur Human Rights Project,* December 4, 2024.

[15] Ben Nimmo, Albert Zhang, Matthew Richard, and Nathaniel Hartley, "Disrupting Malicious Uses of Our Models: An Update," *OpenAI,* February 2025, 3–4, 5, 9, 14–18; Cade Metz, "OpenAI Uncovers Evidence of A.I.-Powered Chinese Surveillance Tool," *New York Times,* February 21, 2025.

[16] Alex Colville, "Cloaking What China Says," *China Media Project,* October 31, 2024; Kevin Schoenmakers and Claire Liu, "China's Telling Twitter Story," *China Media Project,* January 18, 2021.

[17] Alex Colville, "Cloaking What China Says," *China Media Project,* October 31, 2024; Kevin Schoenmakers and Claire Liu, "China's Telling Twitter Story," *China Media Project,* January 18, 2021.

[18] Alex Colville, "Cloaking What China Says," *China Media Project,* October 31, 2024.

[19] Glenn Thrush and Sapna Maheshwari, "Justice Dept. Investigating TikTok's Owner over Possible Spying on Journalists," *New York Times,* March 17, 2023; Amanda Florian, "If the US

Bans TikTok, WeChat Might Be Next," *Wired,* March 23, 2023; Hannah Murphy, "TikTok Admits Tracking FT Journalist in Leaks Investigation," *Financial Times,* December 22, 2022; Clare Duffy, "TikTok Confirms That Journalists' Data was Accessed by Employees of Its Parent Company," *CNN,* December 22, 2022.

[20] Adam Satariano, "TikTok Fined $600 Million for Sending European User Data to China," *New York Times,* May 2, 2025; David Shepardson, "U.S. Sues TikTok over 'Massive-Scale' Privacy Violations of Kids under 13," *Reuters,* August 2, 2024; Emily Baker-White, "Leaked Audio From 80 Internal TikTok Meetings Shows That US User Data Has Been Repeatedly Accessed From China," *BuzzFeed News,* June 17, 2022.

[21] Danit Finkelstein et al., "Information Manipulation on TikTok and Its Relation to American Users' Beliefs about China," *Frontiers in Social Psychology,* vol. 2, January 28, 2025; Joel Finkelstein et al., "The CCP's Digital Charm Offensive: How TikTok's Search Algorithm and Pro-China Influence Networks Indoctrinate GenZ Users in the United States," *Network Contagion Research Institute,* August 6, 2024.

[22] "中华人民共和国国家安全法" [PRC National Security Law], adopted July 1, 2015; "中华人民共和国网络安全法" [PRC Cybersecurity Law], adopted November 7, 2016; "中华人民共和国国家情报法" [PRC National Intelligence Law], amended April 27, 2018; "中华人民共和国反间谍法" [PRC Counterespionage Law], amended April 26, 2023.

[23] Laura He, "Wait, Is TikTok Really Chinese?," *CNN Business,* March 28, 2024; "Data Security Business Advisory," *Department of Homeland Security,* December 22, 2020, 7–8; Peter Harrell, "Managing the Risks of China's Access to U.S. Data and Control of Software and Connected Technology," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,* January 30, 2025; "China's National Security Laws: Implications Beyond Borders," *CNA,* December 4, 2023.

[24] Amy Howe, "Supreme Court Upholds TikTok Ban," *SCOTUSblog,* January 17, 2025; "Executive Order 14166: Application of Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act to TikTok," *White House,* January 20, 2025; "Executive Order 14258: Extending the TikTok Enforcement Delay," *White House,* April 4, 2025; "Executive Order 14310: Further Extending the TikTok Enforcement Delay," *White House,* June 19, 2025; "TikTok Ban: All the News on the App's Shutdown and Return in the US," *Verge,* updated May 5, 2025.

[25] Yvette Tan and Fan Wang, "Americans and Chinese Share Jokes on 'Alternative TikTok' as US Ban Looms," *BBC,* January 17, 2025; Eric Cheung, Joyce Jiang, and Hassan Tayir, "The Great Social Media Migration: Sudden Influx of US Users to RedNote Connects Chinese and Americans Like Never Before," *CNN Business,* updated January 15, 2025; Christian Shepherd, Vic Chiang, and Katrina Northrop, "'TikTok Refugees' Flock to Another (Heavily Censored) Chinese App," *Washington Post,* January 14, 2025; "Xiaohongshu," directly translated as "Little Red Book," could be a reference to the book of quotations from Mao Zedong.

[26] Rohit Sharma, Nikhil Prashar, and Kashish Kunden, "Was a CCP Influence Operation Behind RedNote's US Surge?," *Diplomat,* March 11, 2025.

[27] Cindy Carter, "Netizen Voices on TikTok 'Refugees': 'We All Know This Isn't Going to End Well, So Let's Enjoy This "Global-Village Moment" While We Can,'" *China Digital Times,* January 17, 2025; Eric Cheung, Joyce Jiang, and Hassan Tayir, "The Great Social Media Migration: Sudden Influx of US Users to RedNote Connects Chinese and Americans Like Never Before," *CNN Business,* updated January 15, 2025; Makena Kelly, "RedNote Recruited US Influencers to Promote App Amid TikTok Ban Uncertainty," *Wired,* January 20, 2025.

[28] Zeyi Yang, "RedNote Scrambles to Hire English-Speaking Content Moderators," *Wired,* January 16, 2025; Shen Lu, Hannah Miao, and Raffaele Huang, "American TikTokers Get a Taste of Chinese Censorship as They Rush to RedNote," *Wall Street Journal,* January 20, 2025.

[29] Shen Lu, Hannah Miao, and Raffaele Huang, "American TikTokers Get a Taste of Chinese Censorship as They Rush to RedNote," *Wall Street Journal,* January 20, 2025.

[30] Micah McCartney, "RedNote Censorship Concerns Emerge as TikTok Users Flock to Chinese App," *Newsweek,* January 16, 2025; Bertin Huynh, Helen Davidson, and Amy Hawkins, "Censorship, Homework Help and Cats: China's RedNote Users Welcome 'TikTok Refugees,'" *Guardian,* January 17, 2025; Eric Cheung, "As US TikTok Users Move to RedNote, Some Are Encountering Chinese-Style Censorship for the First Time," *CNN Business,* updated January 16, 2025; Lucie Lo, "'TikTok' Refugees Could Soon Run into Chinese Censorship on RedNote," *Radio Free Asia,* January 16, 2025.

[31] Lucie Lo, "'TikTok' Refugees Could Soon Run into Chinese Censorship on RedNote," *Radio Free Asia,* January 16, 2025.

[32] "小红书用户隐私政策" [RedNote user privacy policy], updated April 23, 2025; "TikTok Users Move to Xiaohongshu, or 'Red Note,' A Chinese App with Overt Censorship and Data Collection," *Human Rights in China,* January 14, 2025; Jason Snyder, "RedNote Gains Traffic Ahead of TikTok Ban—But Sparks Consent and Control Concerns," *Forbes,* January 14, 2025.

[33] Bence Kócsi and Benjamin Finn, "Investigating WeChat (Part 2): Weixin in China, Big Brother Is Watching You," *Reporters Without Borders,* August 14, 2024; Bence Kócsi and Benjamin Finn, "Investigating WeChat (Part 3): WeChat, China's Trojan Horse Outside Its Borders," *Reporters Without Borders,* August 15, 2024; Yaqiu Wang, "With All Eyes on TikTok, US Should Not Overlook WeChat," *Diplomat,* January 16, 2025; Jeffrey Knockel, Christopher Parsons, Lotus Ruan, Ruohan Xiong, Jedidiah Crandall, and Ron Deibert, "We Chat, They Watch: How International Users Unwittingly Build up WeChat's Chinese Censorship Apparatus," *Citizen Lab,* May 7, 2020.

[34] Diane Rinaldo, "Looking Beyond TikTok: The Risks of Temu," *Center for Strategic and International Studies,* October 24, 2024.

[35] Nectar Gan, Yong Xiong, and Juliana Liu, "'I've Never Seen Anything Like This': One of China's Most Popular Apps Has the Ability to Spy on Its Users, Say Experts," *CNN Business,* updated April 3, 2023.

[36] Kevin Collier, "China's DeepSeek AI Is Watching What You Type," *NBC News,* January 29, 2025; Bobby Allyn, "International Regulators Probe How DeepSeek Is Using Data. Is the App Safe to Use?," *NPR,* January 31, 2025.
[37] Arlene Getz, "In Record Year, China, Israel, and Myanmar Are World's Leading Jailers of Journalists," *Committee to Protect Journalists,* January 16, 2025; "2024 Round-up: Journalists Killed, Detained, Held Hostage, and Missing," *Reporters Without Borders,* December 12, 2024.
[38] Arlene Getz, "In Record Year, China, Israel, and Myanmar Are World's Leading Jailers of Journalists," *Committee to Protect Journalists,* January 16, 2025.
[39] "2024 Round-up: Journalists Killed, Detained, Held Hostage, and Missing," *Reporters Without Borders,* December 12, 2024.
[40] For past coverage on China's harassing and detaining journalists, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 49–50; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 51–52.
[41] "遭羁押的著名人权捍卫者张展女士的最新案情通报：被以寻衅滋事罪刑事拘留 母亲欲咨询律师法律事宜遭失联 范标文律师被非法拘禁近8小时" [The latest case report of the detained well-known human rights defender Ms. Zhang Zhan: She was criminally detained for the crime of provoking disturbances; her mother wanted to consult a lawyer about legal matters but lost contact; lawyer Fan Biaowen was illegally detained for nearly eight hours], *Rights Defense Network,* September 20, 2024; Jenny Tang, Qian Lang, and Huang Chun-mei, "Whistleblowing Pandemic Journalist Zhang Zhan Back in Detention," *Radio Free Asia,* September 9, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2020-00175, Zhang Zhan," *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed May 15, 2025.
[42] "China: Five Years after Breaking Key Stories on COVID-19, Journalist Zhang Zhan Is Dying in Detention," *Reporters Without Borders,* February 7, 2025; "遭羁押整整5个月的著名人权捍卫者张展女士狱中再次绝食抗争，被看守所强迫灌食" [Zhang Zhan, a well-known human rights defender who has been detained for five months, went on hunger strike again in prison and was force-fed by the detention center], *Rights Defense Network,* January 25, 2025; "China: Journalist Zhang Zhan Soon Facing Trial," *International Federation for Human Rights,* March 24, 2025; "Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment," *United Nations,* adopted December 10, 1984, entry into force June 26, 1987; "Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment," *United Nations Treaty Collection,* Chapter IV Human Rights. China ratified the Convention Against Torture on October 4, 1988.
[43] Qian Lang, "China Cuts off Internet, Phones of Outspoken Journalist Gao Yu," *Radio Free Asia,* August 27, 2024; "China Shuts Down Journalist's Internet, Cell Service," *Committee to Protect Journalists,* August 28, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2004-05037, Gao Yu," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025.
[44] He Ping, "Chinese Court Rejects Feminist Journalist Sophia Huang's Appeal," *Radio Free Asia,* September 16, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2019-00454, Huang Xueqin," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025. For past coverage of Huang Xueqin's case in the recent years, see also Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 49; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, May 2024, 51–52; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2022," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* November 2022, 56.
[45] Luisetta Mudie, "China Jails Journalist Dong Yuyu for 7 Years for 'Spying,'" *Radio Free Asia,* November 11, 2024; Edward Wong, "U.S. Condemns China's Harsh Sentence for a Prominent Journalist," *New York Times,* November 30, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2023-00140, Dong Yuyu," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025. For past Commission coverage of Dong Yuyu, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 59.
[46] Nectar Gan, "A Filmmaker Made a Documentary about Protests in China. Now He's Sentenced to More Than 3 Years in Prison," *CNN,* January 6, 2025; Zhou Xingchen, "他因'打脸'中共被重判 白纸运动纪录片导演陈品霖其人其事" [He was sentenced for "slapping the face" of the CCP: White Paper Movement documentary director Chen Pinlin's life story], *Voice of America,* January 8, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2024-00122, Chen Pinlin," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025.
[47] Nectar Gan, "A Filmmaker Made a Documentary about Protests in China. Now He's Sentenced to More Than 3 Years in Prison," *CNN,* January 6, 2025.
[48] "新华社老记者顾万明因向党中央、国务院发出公开信质疑李克强死因，要求彻查 被判刑一年，并遭剥夺退休待遇" [Gu Wanming, a veteran Xinhua News Agency reporter, was sentenced to one year in prison and deprived of his retirement benefits for sending an open letter to the Party Central Committee and the State Council questioning the cause of Li Keqiang's death and demanding a thorough investigation], *Rights Defense Network,* February 10, 2025; Qian Lang, "China Punishes Xinhua Journalist Who Called for Probe into Li Keqiang's Death," *Radio Free Asia,* February 11, 2025; "Prisoner Updates 2025 #2," *Dui Hua,* accessed May 15, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00098, Gu Wanming," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed August 8, 2025.
[49] Qian Lang, "China Punishes Xinhua Journalist Who Called for Probe into Li Keqiang's Death," *Radio Free Asia,* February 11, 2025; "Prisoner Updates 2025 #2," *Dui Hua,* accessed May 15, 2025.
[50] "China: RSF Calls for the Release of Independent Journalist Li Weizhong," *Reporters Without Boarders,* November 18, 2024; "湖南独立记者李原风被以涉嫌'煽动颠覆国家政权罪'予以指定居所监视居住" [Hunan independent journalist Li Yuanfeng was placed under residential surveillance at a designated location on suspicion of "inciting subversion of state power"], *Rights Defense*

Network, November 15, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00095, Li Weizhong," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed August 8, 2025.

[51] "China: Blogger Liu Hanbin Detained for One Month after Exposing a Land Seizure Scandal," *Reporters Without Borders,* December 27, 2024; "重庆自媒体人刘汉斌因为内蒙古清河县失地农民发声被跨省异地抓捕" [Chongqing self-media journalist Liu Hanbin was arrested across provinces for speaking out for landless farmers in Qinghe County, Inner Mongolia], *Rights Defense Network,* December 10, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00099, Liu Hanbin," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed August 8, 2025.

[52] For past coverage on China's detention and harassment of foreign journalists, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 50; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 52.

[53] "RSF Appalled by Threats to French Journalists, Allegedly Sent by the Chinese Police," *Reporters Without Borders,* June 25, 2024.

[54] "FCCC Statement on Pressure from Media Outlets against Journalists Joining Professional Associations," *Foreign Correspondents' Club of China,* July 18, 2024.

[55] For past coverage of China's crackdown on assembly, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 50–51; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 53–54.

[56] "China Dissent Monitor 2024, Issue 9: July-September 2024," *Freedom House,* November 21, 2024.

[57] Chris Lau, "Trump and Batman Led Away by Police? Why Chinese Authorities Are Rattled by Halloween This Year," *CNN,* October 29, 2024; "China Rounds Up Batman, Donald Trump and the Buddha," *Economist,* October 31, 2024; Qian Lang, "Chinese Police Detain Cosplayers as Many Defy Halloween Ban," *Radio Free Asia,* October 28, 2024; Christian Shepherd, Pei-Lin Wu, and Vic Chiang, "China Cracks Down on Halloween, Wary of Subversion Lurking in Costumes," *Washington Post,* October 30, 2024.

[58] Qian Lang, "Chinese Police Detain Cosplayers as Many Defy Halloween Ban," *Radio Free Asia,* October 28, 2024; Chris Lau, "Trump and Batman Led Away by Police? Why Chinese Authorities Are Rattled by Halloween This Year," *CNN,* October 29, 2024.

[59] Qian Lang, "Shanghai Police Plan Crackdown on Halloween Cosplayers This Year," *Radio Free Asia,* October 21, 2024.

[60] Qian Lang, "Shanghai Police Plan Crackdown on Halloween Cosplayers This Year," *Radio Free Asia,* October 21, 2024.

[61] "Bike Trek by Thousands of Chinese Students Sparks Tough Response," *Voice of America,* November 13, 2024.

[62] Shen Lu and Clarence Leong, "In Shanghai, Halloween Passes Quietly a Year after Boisterous Celebrations," *Wall Street Journal,* October 31, 2024. See also Yuchen Li, "Is China Headed for New White Paper Protests?," *Deutsche Welle (DW),* November 24, 2024.

[63] Cindy Carter, "On Second Anniversary of Sitong Bridge Protest, Lone Protester Peng Lifa's Fate Remains Unknown," *China Digital Times,* October 16, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2022-00176, Peng Lifa," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025. For more coverage of Peng Lifa, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 57.

[64] Yitong Wu and Kit Sung, "Protest in China's Hunan Calls for Democracy, End of Xi Jinping's Rule," *Radio Free Asia,* August 1, 2024; Wen Xiao Ping and Sun Cheng, "Hunan Banner Protester Was Also in 'White Paper' Movement, Video Says," *Radio Free Asia,* August 5, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2024-00158, Fang Yirong," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025.

[65] Wen Xiao Ping and Sun Cheng, "Hunan Banner Protester Was Also in 'White Paper' Movement, Video Says," *Radio Free Asia,* August 5, 2024.

[66] "成都高架桥悬挂要求政改标语条幅义士、冲塔行动者梅世林的案情及简历" [The case and background information on Mei Shilin, the hero who hung a banner demanding political reform on the Chengdu overpass], *Rights Defense Network,* April 28, 2025; Yalkun Uluyol, "Another 'Bridge Man' in China Forcibly Disappeared," *Human Rights Watch,* April 29, 2025; Qian Lang, "Chinese Man Who Displayed Pro-Democracy Banners in Detention: Sources," *Radio Free Asia,* April 28, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00043, Mei Shilin," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025.

[67] Cindy Carter, "On Second Anniversary of Sitong Bridge Protest, Lone Protester Peng Lifa's Fate Remains Unknown," *China Digital Times,* October 16, 2024; "方艺融悬挂标语被抓 吴青春转发视频被刑拘" [Fang Yirong was arrested for hanging a banner, Wu Qingchun was detained for forwarding a video], *Civil Rights & Livelihood Watch,* August 3, 2024; Qian Lang, "Chinese Man Who Displayed Pro-Democracy Banners in Detention: Sources," *Radio Free Asia,* April 28, 2025.

[68] "昝爱宗邹巍因海祭刘晓波被刑拘" [Zan Aizong and Zou Wei were detained for paying tribute to Liu Xiaobo at sea], *Civil Rights & Livelihood Watch,* July 23, 2024; "因悼念刘晓波去世7周年遭刑事拘留的浙江民主党人邹巍、独立作家昝爱宗均已遭批捕" [Zhejiang rights advocate Zou Wei and independent writer Zan Aizong, who were detained for mourning the 7th anniversary of Liu Xiaobo's death, have both been formally arrested], *Rights Defense Network,* August 29, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00005, Zan Aizong," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2023-00252, Zou Wei," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025.

[69] For past coverage of China's control over online spaces, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 51–52; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 54–55.

[70] "公安部　　国家互联网信息办公室关于'国家网络身份认证公共服务管理办法(征求意见稿)'公开征求意见的公告" [Public Security Department and the Cyberspace Administration of China announcement on public consultation on the "Management Measure on National Network Identity Authentication (Draft for Comment)"], *Cyberspace Administration of China,* July 26, 2024; Meaghan Tobin and John Liu, "China Wants to Start a National Internet ID System," *New York Times,* July 31, 2024; Arthur Kaufman, "Censors Delete Critiques of Proposed National Internet ID System," *China Digital Times,* August 1, 2024.

[71] Cindy Carter, "Critics of China's Proposed National Internet ID System Hit with Online Bans, Censorship, Harassment," *China Digital Times,* August 9, 2024; "【敏感词库】网号网证要来了、网络身份证要来了" [[Sensitive lexicon] Internet ID is coming, Internet personal identification card is coming," *China Digital Times,* August 1, 2024; Cissy Zhou, "China's Cyberspace ID Proposal Triggers Fear of Stricter Social Control," *Nikkei Asia,* August 1, 2024; Katsuji Nakazawa, "Analysis: Xi Jinping's Draft Internet ID Law Sparks '1984' Fears," *Nikkei Asia,* August 8, 2024.

[72] Cindy Carter, "Critics of China's Proposed National Internet ID System Hit with Online Bans, Censorship, Harassment," *China Digital Times,* August 9, 2024; Arthur Kaufman, "Censors Delete Critiques of Proposed National Internet ID System," *China Digital Times,* August 1, 2024.

[73] "【敏感词库】网号网证要来了、网络身份证要来了" [[Sensitive lexicon] Internet ID is coming, Internet personal identification card is coming], *China Digital Times,* August 1, 2024; "【404文库】劳东燕｜'网号网证'是给每个网民安上的监视器" [[404 Article] Lao Dongyan | The "Internet ID and Internet Certification" is a surveillance camera installed for every Internet user], *China Digital Times,* July 29, 2024; "【404文库】剑客写字的地方｜'网号''网证'来了，一点个人看法" [[404 Article] Where the swordsman writes | "Internet ID" and "Internet Certification" is here, some personal opinions], *China Digital Times,* July 30, 2024; "【404文库】阿喀琉斯与龟｜我担心哪天我的上网证被吊销了" [[404 Article] Achilles and the Tortoise | I worry that my Internet Certification will be revoked one day], *China Digital Times,* August 1, 2024; John Liu, "China Tightens Internet Controls with New Centralized Form of Virtual ID," *CNN,* June 20, 2025.

[74] Arthur Kaufman, "Critics of China's Proposed National Internet ID System Hit with Online Bans, Censorship, Harassment," *China Digital Times,* August 9, 2024.

[75] Cyberspace Administration of China, "国家网络身份认证公共服务管理办法" [Measures on the Management of the National Online Identity Authentication Public Service], May 23, 2025; John Liu, "China Tightens Internet Controls with New Centralized Form of Virtual ID," *CNN,* June 20, 2025.

[76] "国家互联网信息办公室关于'网络信息内容多渠道分发服务机构相关业务活动管理规定（草案稿）'公开征求意见的通知" [Notice of the Cyberspace Administration of China on soliciting public opinions on the Draft Provisions on the "Management of Content Multi-channel Network Distribution Service Agencies"], *Cyberspace Administration of China,* January 10, 2025; David Bandurski, "China Unveils New MCN Rules," *China Media Project,* January 13, 2025.

[77] "国家互联网信息办公室关于'网络信息内容多渠道分发服务机构相关业务活动管理规定（草案稿）'公开征求意见的通知" [Notice of the Cyberspace Administration of China on soliciting public opinions on the Draft Provisions on the "Management of Content Multi-channel Network Distribution Service Agencies"], *Cyberspace Administration of China,* January 10, 2025; David Bandurski, "China Unveils New MCN Rules," *China Media Project,* January 13, 2025.

[78] For more information on China's crack down on speech on overseas platforms, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 54.

[79] Amy Hawkins and Chi-hui Lin, "How China's Internet Police Went from Targeting Bloggers to Their Followers," *Guardian,* September 1, 2024.

[80] "'推墙大联盟'颠覆国家政权案五人获刑：任建平获刑10年、姚锡锐获刑6年、杨林鹏获刑5年、顾海英、彭海明获刑4年" [Five people associated with "League for Tearing Down the Wall" were sentenced to prison for subversion of state power: Ren Jianping was sentenced to 10 years, Yao Xirui was sentenced to 6 years, Yang Linpeng was sentenced to 5 years, Gu Haiying and Peng Haiming were sentenced to 4 years], *Rights Defense Network,* December 21, 2024; 推墙大联盟（LTDW）(@LTDW2025), *X,* accessed July 7, 2025.

[81] "'推墙大联盟'颠覆国家政权案五人获刑：任建平获刑10年、姚锡锐获刑6年、杨林鹏获刑5年、顾海英、彭海明获刑4年" [Five people associated with "League for Tearing Down the Wall" were sentenced to prison for subversion of state power: Ren Jianping was sentenced to 10 years, Yao Xirui was sentenced to 6 years, Yang Linpeng was sentenced to 5 years, Gu Haiying and Peng Haiming were sentenced to 4 years], *Rights Defense Network,* December 21, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00049, Ren Jianping," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed June 30, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00050, Yao Xirui," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed June 30, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00051, Lin Yangpeng," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed June 30, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00052, Gu Haiying," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed June 30, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2025-00053, Peng Haiming," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed June 30, 2025.

[82] "Ruan Xiaohuan," *Committee to Protect Journalists,* accessed on May 15, 2025; Samuel Wade, "Quote of the Day, as Blogger's Prison Sentence is Confirmed: 'Before You Can Plant Crops, You Must Improve the Soil,'" *China Digital Times,* December 16, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2023-00101: Ruan Xiaohuan," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed May 15, 2025. For more coverage of Ruan Xiaohuan, see our reporting in Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 55.

[83] Samuel Wade, "Quote of the Day, as Blogger's Prison Sentence Is Confirmed: 'Before You Can Plant Crops, You Must Improve the Soil,'" *China Digital Times,* December 16, 2024.

[84] For past coverage on China's online censorship, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 52–54;

Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 55–58.

[85]Amy Hawkins and Chi-hui Lin, "How China's Internet Police Went from Targeting Bloggers to Their Followers," *Guardian,* September 1, 2024; Shunsuke Tabeta, "China Launches 3-Month Crackdown on Online News Providers," *Nikkei Asia,* October 4, 2024.

[86]"China Launches Online Crackdown on Video Apps and Social Media Platforms over 'Harmful' Content Targeting Children," *Agence France-Presse,* reprinted in *Hong Kong Free Press,* July 13, 2024.

[87]See, e.g., "China Media Bulletin 186," *Freedom House,* January 2025; Alexander Boyd, "Censors Delete Claim That China's Bad Economy Is Packing Jails," *China Digital Times,* October 7, 2024; "What a Censored Speech Says about China's Economy," *Economist,* December 12, 2024.

[88]Lingling Wei, "Xi Jinping Muzzles Chinese Economist Who Dared to Doubt GDP Numbers," *Wall Street Journal,* January 8, 2025; See also Cindy Carter, "Frank Speeches by Economists Gao Shanwen, Fu Peng Result in Mass Online Censorship, WeChat Bans," *China Digital Times,* December 6, 2024.

[89]Yuanyue Dang, "Play Up Economic Success, China's Ideology Tsar Cai Qi Tells Propaganda Chiefs," *South China Morning Post,* January 6, 2025; Cindy Carter, "Frank Speeches by Economists Gao Shanwen, Fu Peng Result in Mass Online Censorship, WeChat Bans," *China Digital Times,* December 6, 2024;

[90]Xinlu Liang, "Chinese Commentator Hu Xijin Returns to Social Media after More Than 3 Months of Silence," *South China Morning Post,* November 1, 2024; Cindy Carter, "Frank Speeches by Economists Gao Shanwen, Fu Peng Result in Mass Online Censorship, WeChat Bans," *China Digital Times,* December 6, 2024; Alex Colville, "Hu Xijin Quietly Returns," *China Media Project,* November 8, 2024.

[91]"China Moves to Quash Viral Phrase to Describe Economic Malaise," *Bloomberg,* July 17, 2024.

[92]Vivian Wang, "China Censors Hashtags Mentioning '104%,' the Size of Trump's Tariffs," *New York Times,* April 9, 2025; Farah Master and Jessie Pang, "China Censors Some Tariff-Related Content on Social Media," *Reuters,* April 9, 2025.

[93]Farah Master and Jessie Pang, "China Censors Some Tariff-Related Content on Social Media," *Reuters,* April 9, 2025; Arthur Kaufman, "Censors Dampen Online Commentary on Spiraling U.S.-China Trade War," *China Digital Times,* April 13, 2025.

[94]Samuel Wade, "Different Armies, Same Hole: Hangzhou Jobseekers Compared with Terracotta Warriors," *China Digital Times,* March 11, 2025; "【图说天朝】西安兵马俑 VS 杭州牛马俑" [[Illustrations of Imperial China] Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an vs. job seekers in Hangzhou], *China Digital Times,* March 3, 2025; "China Deletes Warning That Youth Unemployment Is Tanking Economy," *Radio Free Asia,* December 4, 2024.

[95]Alexander Boyd, "Weibo Censors Hashtags 'Taiwan Election,' 'Frozen Garlic,' More," *China Digital Times,* January 16, 2024.

[96]Stephen McDonell (@StephenMcDonell), "#China censors pull the plug on CNN's coverage of Vice Presidential debate I'm guessing because the issue of Walz's time in #China is being raised and the bloody #Tiananmen Square crackdown an issue," *X,* October 1, 2024, 9:42 p.m.

[97]Alexander Boyd, "Call for Biden to 'Exit the Political Stage' Censored, Likely Over Xi Parallels," *China Digital Times,* July 19, 2024.

[98]William Zheng, "Exclusive | Chinese Internet Censors Ban Anti-West Firebrand Sima Nan for a Year," *South China Morning Post,* November 9, 2024; Arthur Kaufman, "Nationalist Sima Nan Banned from Weibo; Hu Xijin Returns," *China Digital Times,* November 13, 2024.

[99]Cindy Carter, "Netizen Voices on Mass Censorship of Beijing's $6.5 Million Annual Support for Olympian Eileen Gu: 'Why Are They So Afraid the Taxpayers Will Find Out?,'" *China Digital Times,* February 27, 2025.

[100]Cindy Carter, "Netizen Voices on Mass Censorship of Beijing's $6.5 Million Annual Support for Olympian Eileen Gu: 'Why Are They So Afraid the Taxpayers Will Find Out?,'" *China Digital Times,* February 27, 2025.

[101]Manya Koetse, "Story of Chinese Female MA Graduate Going Missing for 13 Years Sparks Online Storm," *What's on Weibo,* December 10, 2024; Manya Koetse, "Explaining the Bu Xiaohua Case: How One Woman's Disappearance Captured Nationwide Attention in China," *What's on Weibo,* December 14, 2024; Vivian Wang, "The Secret Campaign in China to Save a Woman Chained by the Neck," *New York Times,* March 5, 2025.

[102]Manya Koetse, "Story of Chinese Female MA Graduate Going Missing for 13 Years Sparks Online Storm," *What's on Weibo,* December 10, 2024; Manya Koetse, "Explaining the Bu Xiaohua Case: How One Woman's Disappearance Captured Nationwide Attention in China," *What's on Weibo,* December 14, 2024.

[103]Beijing Daily is a CCP-controlled newspaper under the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. See "北京日报报业集团" [Beijing Daily Group], *Beijing Daily,* accessed May 15, 2025.

[104]Manya Koetse, "Explaining the Bu Xiaohua Case: How One Woman's Disappearance Captured Nationwide Attention in China," *What's on Weibo,* December 14, 2024; "China Media Bulletin 186," *Freedom House,* January 2025; Cindy Carter, "Translations: Shanxi Woman's 13-Year Ordeal Evokes Disturbing Parallels with Xiaohuamei Trafficking Case," *China Digital Times,* December 23, 2024.

[105]Manya Koetse, "Story of Chinese Female MA Graduate Going Missing for 13 Years Sparks Online Storm," *What's on Weibo,* December 10, 2024; Manya Koetse, "Explaining the Bu Xiaohua Case: How One Woman's Disappearance Captured Nationwide Attention in China," *What's on Weibo,* December 14, 2024.

[106]Peidong Sun, "The Roots of 'Revenge Against Society' Attacks in China," *Foreign Affairs,* December 25, 2024; Alexander Boyd, "Word of the Week: 'Xianzhong,' The Ming Rebel Cited as Emblem of Modern Massacres," *China Digital Times,* November 13, 2024;

[107]Xiaofei Xu, Simone McCarthy, and Shawn Deng, "Two Dead, 21 Injured in Hospital Knife Attack in China," *CNN,* May 8, 2024.
[108]Kelly Ng, "China Honours Woman Who Died Saving Japanese Family," *BBC News,* June 28, 2024; Cindy Carter, "Translations about the Speedy Executions of Perpetrators of 'Revenge on Society' Attacks: 'Open Public Disclosure Is More Important than Harsh, Expedited Punishment,'" *China Digital Times,* February 7, 2025.
[109]"'Education of Hatred': Killing of Japanese Boy Sparks Soul Searching in the Country over Rising Nationalism," *CNN,* September 25, 2024.
[110]"Beijing Stabbing Wounds Five in Rare Knife Assault, Chinese Police Say," *Reuters,* October 28, 2024.
[111]Helen Davidson, "As China Mourns, Some Question Delay in Release of Information about Deadly Car Attack," *Guardian,* November 13, 2024.
[112]"Knife Attack at a Vocational School in Eastern China Leaves 8 Dead and 17 Injured," *Associated Press,* November 17, 2024.
[113]Vivian Wang, "Man Drives Car into Crowd Outside Primary School in China," *New York Times,* November 19, 2024.
[114]Helen Davidson, "As China Mourns, Some Question Delay in Release of Information about Deadly Car Attack," *Guardian,* November 13, 2024; Vivian Wang, "After Deadly Car Rampage, Chinese Officials Try to Erase Any Hint of It," *New York Times,* November 13, 2024.
[115]Peidong Sun, "The Roots of 'Revenge Against Society' Attacks in China," *Foreign Affairs,* December 25, 2024; Vivian Wang, "After Deadly Car Rampage, Chinese Officials Try to Erase Any Hint of It," *New York Times,* November 13, 2024.
[116]"【年终专题】校车引导员，外籍教师，散步的市民，日裔学生 . . . 2024年度人物：无差别袭击案受害者" [[Year-end special reporting] School bus driver, foreign teachers, citizens taking a walk, Japanese students . . . Person of the Year 2024: Victims of indiscriminate attacks," *China Digital Times,* December 28, 2024; "厚启刑辩丨相比从重从快，公开更重要" [Houqi Criminal Defense | Openness is more important than swift and severe punishments], *China Digital Times,* January 21, 2025; "【404文库】水瓶纪元丨拼图无锡职校凶犯：学生工，多头借贷者，'宅左'与'浪人'" [[404 Article] Aquarius Era | Piecing together Wuxi Vocational School murderer: student worker, multiple debts, 'Zhai Zuo' and 'Ronin'], *China Digital Times,* February 1, 2025; "【404文库】有病要讀書plus丨江苏职校那位刀手的'自白书'问题" [[404 Article] If you are sick, you need to study plus | The 'confession' of the knifeman in Jiangsu Vocational School], *China Digital Times,* November 18, 2024; "张3丰的世界丨日本母子遇袭案被告获死刑：他又是如何养成的？" [Zhang 3 Feng's World | The defendant in the Japanese mother and child attack case was sentenced to death: How was he made?], *China Digital Times,* January 23, 2025; Liu Yi, "失意的中年人, 社会怨气, 以及 '火速办案'和死刑—2000到2024, 我们从中国的无差别袭击事件看到什么？" [Frustrated Middle-aged People, Social Grievances, and "Speedy Trials" and Death Penalty—2000 to 2024, What Do We See in China's Indiscriminate Attack Incidents?], *Wainao,* March 21, 2025; Cindy Carter, "Sympathy, Soul-Searching, and Censorship Follow Fatal Stabbing of Japanese Boy in Shenzhen," *China Digital Times,* September 27, 2024; Katsuji Nakazawa, "Analysis: Tragedy Shows China's Anti-Japan Social Media Fire Burns Out of Control," *Nikkei Asia,* July 4, 2024; "Killing of Japanese Boy Sparks Soul Searching in the Country over Rising Nationalism," *CNN,* September 25, 2024; "China Takes a Step to Curb Anti-Japanese Rhetoric Online," *Economist,* July 4, 2024.
[117]Vivian Wang, "After Deadly Car Rampage, Chinese Officials Try to Erase Any Hint of It," *New York Times,* November 13, 2024.
[118]Amy Hawkins, "China Reels from Spate of Suspected 'Revenge Against Society' Attacks," *Guardian,* November 22, 2024.
[119]Alexander Boyd, "Word of the Week: 'Xianzhong,' The Ming Rebel Cited as Emblem of Modern Massacres," *China Digital Times,* November 13, 2024; 李老师不是你老师 (@whyyoutouzhele), "过去一年我们收录的献忠事件汇总 . . ." [Collected list of all the Xianzhong events over the past year . . .], *X,* November 19, 2024, 11:13 a.m.
[120]Alexander Boyd, "Word of the Week: 'Xianzhong,' The Ming Rebel Cited as Emblem of Modern Massacres," *China Digital Times,* November 13, 2024.
[121]Cindy Carter, "Words of the Week: 'Revenge on Society' Attacks Lead to Government Monitoring of 'Individuals with "Four Lacks and Five Frustrations"'" (四无五失人员, sìwú wǔshī rényuán)," *China Digital Times,* November 25, 2024; Cindy Carter, "Fierce Online Backlash to Predictive Policing Tool Described as 'Crowd Mood Monitoring and Early Warning System,'" *China Digital Times,* November 22, 2024.
[122]Joe Leahy, Kai Waluszewski, and Sun Yu "Can Xi Keep a Lid on China's Mounting Social Strains?," *Financial Times,* July 14, 2024.
[123]Peidong Sun, "The Roots of 'Revenge Against Society' Attacks in China," *Foreign Affairs,* December 25, 2024.
[124]For more information on China's censorship on entertainment, arts, literature, and history in recent years, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 54–55; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 59–60.
[125]"Freedom to Write Index 2024," *PEN America,* April 24, 2025.
[126]Nick Marsh, "Chinese Artist Detained for 'Insulting' Mao Sculptures," *BBC,* September 3, 2024; Clarence Leong, "China Detains Two Activists, Adding to Tension with U.S.," *Wall Street Journal,* September 6, 2024; Jo Lawson-Tancred, "Artist Gao Zhen Detained in China over Sculptures Criticizing Mao Zedong," *Artnet News,* September 2, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2024-00161, Gao Zhen," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed June 12, 2025.
[127]Clarence Leong, "China Detains Two Activists, Adding to Tension with U.S.," *Wall Street Journal,* September 6, 2024.

[128] Qian Lang, "Chinese Police Detain Artist Who Supported Democracy in Hong Kong," *Radio Free Asia,* January 9, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2014-00379, Fei Xiaosheng," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed August 8, 2025.
[129] Qian Lang and Liu Bangyu, "民间歌词曲作者徐琳涉'寻衅滋事'被检方批捕" [Folk lyricist Xu Lin arrested by procurators for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble"], *Radio Free Asia,* June 24, 2024; "CECC Record Number: 2017-00310, Xu Lin," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed June 12, 2025.
[130] Qian Lang and Liu Bangyu, "民间歌词曲作者徐琳涉'寻衅滋事'被检方批捕" [Folk lyricist Xu Lin arrested by procurators for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble"], *Radio Free Asia,* June 24, 2024; "231: 徐琳" [231: Xu Jin], *Independent Chinese PEN Center,* updated March 20, 2025.
[131] William Zheng, "Taiwan-Based Publisher Li Yanhe Convicted on Secession Charges in Mainland China," *South China Morning Post,* March 18, 2025; Huang Chun-mei, "Detained Taiwanese Publisher Stood Trial Last Month for 'Secession,'" *Radio Free Asia,* March 17, 2025; "Taiwanese Publisher Sentenced for 'Secession' in Mainland China," *Human Rights in China,* March 18, 2025; "CECC Record Number: 2023-00241, Li Yanhe," *CECC Political Prisoner Database,* accessed June 12, 2025.
[132] William Zheng, "Taiwan-Based Publisher Li Yanhe Convicted on Secession Charges in Mainland China," *South China Morning Post,* March 18, 2025; Huang Chun-mei, "Detained Taiwanese Publisher Stood Trial Last Month for 'Secession,'" *Radio Free Asia,* March 17, 2025; "Taiwanese Publisher Sentenced for 'Secession' in Mainland China," *Human Rights in China,* March 18, 2025.
[133] Huang Chun-mei, "Detained Taiwanese Publisher Stood Trial Last Month for 'Secession,'" *Radio Free Asia,* March 17, 2025; "Taiwanese Publisher Sentenced for 'Secession' in Mainland China," *Human Rights in China,* March 18, 2025.
[134] Qian Lang, "China Pulls Plug on 'Wild Child,' a Movie about Troubled Street Kids," *Radio Free Asia,* July 8, 2024.
[135] Congressional Research Service, "China Primer: China's Political System," updated January 29, 2024.
[136] Qian Lang, "China Pulls Plug on 'Wild Child,' a Movie about Troubled Street Kids," *Radio Free Asia,* July 8, 2024;
[137] Qian Lang, "China Axes Hundreds of TV Dramas Depicting Family Tensions," *Radio Free Asia,* April 16, 2024.
[138] Qian Lang, "China Axes Hundreds of TV Dramas Depicting Family Tensions," *Radio Free Asia,* April 16, 2024.
[139] Alex Colville, "China's Fastest-Growing App," *China Media Project,* January 22, 2025.
[140] Hongguo Micro-Drama Official Account, "红果短剧关于打击违规微短剧的公告（24年12月）" [Hongguo Micro-Drama's Announcement on Cracking Down on Illegal Short Dramas (December 2024)], *Weixin,* January 10, 2025; Alex Colville, "China's Fastest-Growing App," *China Media Project,* January 22, 2025.
[141] Connor O'Keefe, "Marvel Rivals Censorship Explained," *Game Rant,* January 9, 2025; German Lopez, "Censoring Games," *New York Times,* February 23, 2025.
[142] Yaqiu Wang, "China Media Bulletin 183," *Freedom House,* September 2024; German Lopez, "Censoring Games," *New York Times,* February 23, 2025.
[143] Erich Schwartzel and Brian Spegele, "How Disney's Deadpool Danced around China's Censors—Cocaine, F-Bombs and All," *Wall Street Journal,* August 2, 2024; Vivian Wang, "China's Censors Are Letting Ye Perform There. His Fans Are Amazed," *New York Times,* September 15, 2024; Shuli Ren, "Xi's Genius Plan to Empower Consumers, with John Wick," *Bloomberg,* March 5, 2025.
[144] Erich Schwartzel and Brian Spegele, "How Disney's Deadpool Danced around China's Censors—Cocaine, F-Bombs and All," *Wall Street Journal,* August 2, 2024; Cissy Zhou, "U.S. Rapper Ye's China Concerts Bring a Windfall and a Little Chaos," *Nikkei Asia,* September 22, 2024.
[145] Yaqiu Wang, "China Media Bulletin 182," *Freedom House,* July 2024.
[146] 小写的离人sd (@小写的离人sd), "豆瓣被删备份|豆瓣于昨日整体移除了何伟Other Rivers的条目，包括大约495条短评和几十篇长评和笔记全部消失。叹气，除了及时个人备份，也没啥更好的办法：. . ." [(@ Xiao Xie De Li Ren sd), Douban deleted the entire entry of Peter Hessler's Other Rivers yesterday, including about 495 short reviews and dozens of long reviews and notes. Sigh, there is no better method other than [creating] a personal backup in time: . . .], *Weibo,* September 27, 2024, 12:11 p.m.; Yaqiu Wang, "China Media Bulletin 185," *Freedom House,* November 2024.
[147] For more information on China's censorship of academia in recent years, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2024," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* December 2024, 55–56; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Annual Report 2023," *U.S. Government Publishing Office,* May 2024, 60.
[148] "Foreign Professor Fired from Chinese University after Interview with VOA," *Voice of America,* July 2, 2024.
[149] "Foreign Professor Fired from Chinese University after Interview with VOA," *Voice of America,* July 2, 2024.
[150] "Xi Jinping Wants to Stifle Thinking at a Top Chinese Think-Tank," *Economist,* September 26, 2024; Helen Davidson, "Top Chinese Economist Disappears after Criticising Xi Jinping in Private Chat—Report," *Guardian,* September 25, 2024; Chun Han Wong and Lingling Wei, "Top Economist in China Vanishes after Private WeChat Comments," *Wall Street Journal,* September 24, 2024.
[151] "Xi Jinping Wants to Stifle Thinking at a Top Chinese Think-Tank," *Economist,* September 26, 2024.
[152] Joe Leahy, Sun Yu, and Kana Inagaki, "Xi Jinping Tightens Stranglehold on China's Academia," *Financial Times,* October 22, 2024.

[153] Zhu Liye, "上海法学教授被限制出境'边控'正在被滥用" [Shanghai Law Professor Restricted from Leaving the Country, "Border Control" Being Abused], *Radio Free Asia,* November 4, 2024.
[154] Zhu Liye, "上海法学教授被限制出境'边控'正在被滥用" [Shanghai Law Professor Restricted from Leaving the Country, "Border Control" Being Abused], *Radio Free Asia,* November 4, 2024.