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FEATURED ARTICLE

China's NGOs fear for the worst (August 15, 2009, Asia Times Online, by Verna Yu)

Government closures and arrests have sent a chill into China's nascent civil society, which only recently began challenging leaders on issues such as food safety, illegal detention and human rights. An emboldened China, say critics, is becoming less fearful of world opinion.

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/KH15Ad01.html>

GOVERNMENT / POLITICS / FOREIGN AFFAIRS

China bans petitioners in Beijing (August 20, 2009, BBC News)

The Chinese government has issued a new regulation to stop petitioners from travelling to the capital, Beijing. Legal officials from Beijing will now visit people with complaints in the provinces in order to hear their cases. Petitions can also be filed online and a response or solution is to be given within 60 days. Officials have previously tried to stop the thousands who go to the capital with complaints about land grabs, police beatings and legal abuses. It is the first time the highest level of the ruling Communist Party has taken such measures in order to deal with the issue.

China's defense ministry launches official website (August 20, 2009, China Daily)

China's Ministry of National Defense launched its website (www.mod.gov.cn) Thursday with both Chinese and English versions, pledging to promote the transparency of defense policy and army building. The website, approved by the Central Military Commission (CMC), "mainly releases authoritative information of China's national defense and army building," said a news release on the website. The website currently is in the process of trial operation. Its content, including defense news coverage, data and documentary materials, and special columns, will be further improved in future.

China cancels Australia visit as relations sour (August 18, 2009, Reuters)

China's cancellation of a senior ministerial visit to Australia has pushed ties to a fresh low at a time when political tensions over Beijing's arrest of an Australian mining executive had appeared to be easing. Some analysts said that while the political relationship was souring, commercial deals in the lucrative resources sector should be largely unaffected because both countries needed each other too much. Two-way trade is worth \$53 billion a year. Beijing canceled a visit by Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs He Yafei because Canberra granted a visa to exiled Uighur leader Rebiya Kadeer, blamed by China for instigating last month's ethnic riots in Xinjiang province.

China legal activist arrested in alleged tax crime (August 18, 2009, AP)

A Chinese legal activist whose rights group has tackled some of the country's most politically sensitive cases has been formally arrested on suspicion of evading taxes, though he has not yet been charged, his lawyer said Tuesday. The arrest of Xu Zhiyong comes as China appears to be widening a crackdown against activist lawyers and non-governmental organizations to stifle any possible dissent ahead of the 60th anniversary of the communist nation's founding on Oct. 1. Xu's lawyer, Zhou Ze, said Beijing police

told him the arrest was made formal last Wednesday — two weeks after Xu was taken into police custody.

China to improve access for media (August 14, 2009, BBC News)

China says it will become more open to foreign journalists by dealing with requests within 24 hours, reports say. A senior government official said ministries must designate people to deal with overseas reporters as part of this "zero refusal" policy. The new policy was laid out by Guo Weimin, from the government's State Council Information Office, in an article in the China Daily, the main state-run English-language newspaper.

China 'sacks nuclear chief' over graft probe (August 14, 2009, AFP)

China has sacked a top nuclear power official, state press said Friday, after reports he was being investigated for allegedly squandering public funds and taking bribes of up to 260 million dollars. Kang Rixin, born 1953, was removed as party secretary and general manager of state-owned China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) due to possible involvement in "grave violations of discipline", the Xinhua news agency said. Chinese authorities often refer to "discipline violations" to mean acts of corruption. Authorities are probing the possibility that Kang took bribes from French nuclear power giant Areva for it to win a contract for a project in south China, previous Chinese media reports said. Areva has denied such claims.

HEALTH

Mainland H1N1 flu cases exceed 2,700 (August 17, 2009, China Daily)

The Chinese mainland confirmed 192 new cases of the A(H1N1) influenza in the 72 hours ending 3 p.m. Monday, bringing the total to 2,729, the Ministry of Health said. Among the newly confirmed, 67 were "imported cases," and the rest were infected on the Chinese mainland, said the ministry. Close to 2,400 of the infected have recovered, the ministry said, adding that no fatal case of the disease has so far been reported.

Call for increased anti-AIDS efforts (August 15, 2009, Xinhua)

CHINA needs to upgrade its anti-AIDS efforts because the epidemic continues to spread mainly through sexual transmission from high-risk groups to average people, the country's leading AIDS-control agency warned yesterday. The accumulated number of confirmed HIV/AIDS cases on the mainland since the mid-1980s reached 295,000 by May, compared with 264,300 in September 2008, according to the National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention under the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Among them, about 91,500 infected by HIV have developed into AIDS patients and 43,400 have died. More than 52,000 people living with HIV/AIDS are receiving antiretroviral treatment.

EDUCATION / CULTURE

China schools ordered to ramp up flu prevention ahead of new semester (August 16, 2009, Xinhua)

China's education and health authorities have ordered schools to quarantine students and downsize classes, and even entitled them to reschedule the new semester date, if necessary, to curb the spread of A/H1N1 influenza ahead of the new semester. Students who have close contact with A/H1N1 influenza patients are required to be quarantined at home for at least seven days and are allowed to go back to school only if they show no symptom of the disease, according to a notice jointly issued by the ministries of education and health Friday. For those students who display flu symptoms seven days ahead of the new semester, they can only go back to school after full recovery, it said. College students living in areas severely threatened by the disease are required to return a week before the new semester starts to receive medical observation.

Bird's Nest, SARS enter Chinese dictionary (August 18, 2009, AFP)

"Bird's Nest", "Water Cube" and "SARS" are some of the new phrases included in the latest edition of China's most authoritative dictionary, state media said Monday. They are among 10,000 new entries in the sixth edition of Cihai -- literally, "Sea of Words" -- which will give a snapshot of the Chinese language at the start of the 21st century, the Xinhua news agency reported. Cihai, sometimes referred to as a local equivalent of the Oxford English Dictionary, offers a condensed cultural history of China, reflecting the issues that have affected the nation in recent years. Cihai, which has 130,000 entries, has been published since 1936. The new five-volume edition is being published to celebrate the 60th anniversary on October 1 of the founding of communist China, Xinhua said.

SOCIETY / LIFE

Beijing police anti-terror patrols for anniversary (August 19, 2009, AFP)

Beijing police will step up their anti-terror efforts ahead of the 60th anniversary on October 1 of the founding of communist China, with more street patrols and checkpoints, state media said Wednesday. The massive police mobilisation will likely surpass the security clampdown seen for last year's Olympic Games in the capital, the China Daily reported. The report said the new security measures were also prompted by last month's unrest in China's far western Xinjiang region, which the government said was orchestrated by Muslim Uighur separatists and left nearly 200 people dead. Police will target residents from ethnic groups and expatriates who have only resided in the capital for a short time, the China Daily said. Security forces have been engaged in a two-month-long anti-terrorism campaign aimed at maintaining social stability ahead of the sensitive anniversary, it added.

China villagers storm lead plant (August 17, 2009, BBC News)

Hundreds of Chinese villagers have broken into a factory that poisoned more than 600 children, reports say. Villagers tore down fencing and smashed coal trucks at the lead smelting factory in Shaanxi Province. Local authorities have admitted that the plant is responsible for poisoning the children. More than 150 were in hospital. The villagers broke into the Dongling Lead and Zinc Smelting Company, near the city of Baoji in western Shaanxi on Monday, according to the state-run Xinhua news agency. About 100 police officers were sent to the plant to restore order. The villagers are angry because medical tests revealed that at least 600 children under 14 from two villages near the plant have excessive amounts of lead in their blood.

Chinese steelworkers' protest halts plant takeover (August 16, 2009, AP)

China on Sunday called off the takeover of a state-owned steel plant after workers protested and trapped an official in the factory office for four days — the second time in a month that the country's steelworkers have rallied to successfully avoid privatization. Authorities in central Henan province decided to stop the takeover of Linzhou Iron and Steel Co. Ltd. to calm workers who had protested since Tuesday against the restructuring and to demand higher compensation, the official Xinhua News Agency said. A similar protest last month in the northeast led to the general manager of a state-owned steel plant being beaten to death. That plant's merger was called off as well.

1,200 new cars hit Beijing every day: state media (August 15, 2009, AFP)

More than 1,200 new cars hit the roads of China's capital Beijing every day on average in the first seven months of the year, state media reported Sunday. The Beijing Traffic Management Bureau reported the registration of 261,000 new vehicles -- 97 percent of which were private cars -- from the beginning of January until the end of July, the official Xinhua news agency said. The figure, a nine percent increase from the same period last year, came to an average of 1,231 new cars a day.

Chinese city cracks 14 gangs: govt (August 15, 2009, AFP)

Police in the southwest Chinese city of Chongqing have cracked 14 gangs, some of them with high-level business ties, in a sweeping campaign against organised vice, the government said Saturday. Nineteen gang bosses and more than 100 junior gang members have been arrested, along with "a fair number" of bosses of legitimate companies, the Chongqing government said on its website. Three billionaires are believed to have been arrested in the course of the 50-day campaign, state-run Xinhua news agency said earlier.

Chinese mainland to hold television fundraiser for Taiwan typhoon relief (August 17, 2009, Xinhua)

Five TV stations in the Chinese mainland are organizing a televised fundraiser on the coming Thursday to raise money for victims of Taiwan's deadliest typhoon in half a century. A number of the country's biggest names in the entertainment industry will be invited, such as directors Zhang Yimou, Chen Kaige and Feng Xiaogang, actors Jackie Chan and Jet Li, actresses Zhang Ziyi and Zhou Xun, as well as sports stars Yao Ming and Guo JingJing. The close-to-four-hour fundraiser are organized by the Shanghai-based Dragon TV, Jiangsu Satellite TV, Zhejiang Satellite TV, Hunan Satellite TV, and Shenzhen Satellite TV. The event will be broadcast live beginning 7:35 p.m. Thursday.

Survey: nearly 90% feel unhappy about work (August 18, 2009, China Daily)

Eighty seven point eight percent of people say they feel unhappy about their work, according to a survey conducted by zhaopin.com, a Beijing-based recruitment website, the Business Reference reported today. The survey shows that among the 87.8 percent unhappy people, 70.8 percent say they are unhappy because they cannot figure out their career path; 59.4 percent say it is because of a low salary that they do not expect to rise soon; and 45.9 percent think the work they currently do does not match their abilities.

ENVIRONMENT / SCIENCE / TECHNOLOGY

Coca-Cola, Pepsi on Beijing's worst polluter list (August 19, 2009, AFP)

The Beijing plants of US soft drink giants Coca-Cola and PepsiCo have been listed as among the top 12 factories causing major water pollution in China's capital, the city government has announced. The list issued by the Beijing Development and Reform Commission, the capital's economic planning agency, was published along with the top 15 energy users in the capital, which included the Beijing Benz-DaimlerChrysler plant. The 27 entities will be subject to increased supervision and asked to submit plans to reduce energy use and pollution emissions, the commission said. PepsiCo-Beijing and Coca-Cola-Beijing refused immediate comment on the issue when contacted by AFP on Wednesday.

China to complete eight-hour railway network around Beijing (August 15, 2009, Xinhua)

Passengers would be able to travel between Beijing and most provincial capitals in eight hours by 2012, through a nationwide express railway network, according to the Ministry of Railways. As about 10,000 km of passenger railways are currently under construction, a total of 13,000 km of passenger railways and intercity railways will be put into operation in 2012. The network would consist of four north-south and four west-east lines of railways throughout the country, which would connect most capital cities and major cities in China, including Shanghai, Guangzhou, Taiyuan and Nanjing.

Dell, China Mobile to develop smartphone (August 18, 2009, AFP)

Dell has teamed up with China's largest mobile operator to develop a smartphone, a spokeswoman for China Mobile said Tuesday, in a deal that would mark the US computer giant's debut in the market. The Dell device will support China Mobile's online application store Mobile Market, a website allowing the company's smartphone users to download applications for mobile phones, the spokeswoman told AFP. The online store, unveiled Monday, currently supports 10 smartphone models, including handsets from Nokia, Samsung Electronics, LG, Dopod and Dell, the spokeswoman said, adding it "will definitely

support more brands in future". A Beijing-based spokeswoman for Dell China said she could not give any further details about the smartphone, or say when it would be ready for purchase. A Dell smartphone could help the PC maker tap China's burgeoning 3G market.

BUSINESS / ECONOMICS / TRADE

China and Australia sign energy deal (August 19, 2009, Financial Times)

Martin Ferguson, Australia's energy and resources minister, was in Beijing to witness the signing of Petrochina's agreement to buy 2.25m metric tonnes a year of liquid natural gas from the Gorgon project off the coast of Western Australia. At current gas prices, the deal, which is with ExxonMobil, the world's largest western oil company, would be worth \$41bn over the next 20 years and is Australia's largest-ever trade deal, Mr Ferguson said. But the key terms and conditions of the deal were agreed months ago and the timing of the announcement was seen as an attempt to soothe battered relations between Australia and its most important trading partner.

China reduces holdings in US debt (August 18, 2009, BBC News)

China reduced its holdings of US government debt by the largest margin in nearly nine years in June, according to data from the US Treasury. China holds more US government debt than any other country and cut its holdings of US securities by more than 3% in June, said the BBC's Chris Hogg. Japan and the UK - second and third largest holders of US debt - increased their holdings over the same period. China's holding of US debt is about 7% higher than at the turn of the year.

China stocks drop most in 9 months (August 18, 2009, Bloomberg)

China's benchmark stock index fell the most in nine months as foreign direct investment plunged, Ping An Insurance (Group) Co.'s profit missed estimates and Yunnan Copper Industry Co. said there are "no clear signs" of a recovery. Ping An, the nation's second-biggest insurance company, fell 3.9 percent after first-half net income dropped 45 percent. Yunnan Copper sank the 10 percent daily limit after posting a first-half loss and the metal dropped by the maximum in Shanghai. Foreign direct investment fell 35.7 percent in July as companies stalled expansion plans amid the global financial crisis. The Shanghai Composite Index, tracking the bigger of China's exchanges, fell 176.34, or 5.8 percent, to 2,870.63 at the close, the worst day since Nov. 18 and the lowest since June 18. The gauge has declined 17 percent from this year's high on Aug. 4 on concern a slump in exports and new loans will damp economic growth. It remains 58 percent higher this year.

China to appeal WTO ruling on book, movie imports (August 17, 2009, AP)

China will appeal a World Trade Organization ruling that ordered it to ease restrictions on imports of movies, music and books in a case brought by Washington, a Commerce Ministry spokesman said Monday. The appeal will be filed within two months in line with WTO rules, Yao said. A WTO panel concluded Wednesday that Beijing is violating its free-trade commitments by forcing imported media products to be routed through Chinese state-owned companies. The WTO said Beijing should allow foreign companies to import and distribute master copies of books, magazines and newspapers and to receive the same conditions and charges as Chinese companies for distributing reading materials.

Hong Kong emerges from recession (August 14, 2009, BBC News)

The economy of Hong Kong has emerged from recession, posting growth of 3.3% in the three months from April to June. The seasonally adjusted figures were better than had been expected and the government has raised its forecast for growth in the whole year. The growth of 3.3% compares with a revised contraction of 4.3% for the first three months of 2009.

LINKS TO DETAILED ARTICLES AND ANALYSIS

‘Chimerica’ is Headed for Divorce (August 15, 2009, Newsweek, by Niall Ferguson)

For a time Chimerica seemed like a marriage made in heaven: both economies grew so fast that they accounted for about 40 percent of global growth between 1998 and 2007. The big question now is whether or not this marriage is on the rocks.

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/212143>

It'll take a lot more than the internet to change China (August 17, 2009, Foreign Policy, by Damien Ma)

The sheer numbers are overwhelming: There are about 300 million internet users, at least half a billion cell phones, and 70 to 80 million blogs in China. Yet the proliferation of information technology during the last decade has not ushered in a Twitter revolution or propelled China toward democratic change, and it probably won't in the foreseeable future.

http://eurasia.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/08/17/itll_take_a_lot_more_than_the_internet_to_change_china

Rio Tinto arrests reveal China has growing-up to do (August 14, 2009, Financial Times, by Arthur Kroeber)

But the case serves as a timely reminder to enthusiasts inside and outside China who have been busy trumpeting the “Chinese century” that China has a tremendous amount of growing-up to do before it can begin to be taken seriously as a true leader in the global economic order.

<http://blogs.ft.com/dragonbeat/2009/08/18/rio-tinto-arrests-reveal-china-has-growing-up-to-do/>

The Next Step in the Taiwan-China Dance (August 16, 2009, The Wall Street Journal, by Richard Allen)

Given that relations between Taiwan and the mainland have warmed considerably since the election of Mr. Ma, the U.S. should continue to work to improve relations with the PRC, while solidifying its historic relationship with Taiwan. The window of opportunity is within the next months and year, and U.S. commitments under the Taiwan Relations Act could be met by proceeding with the pending arms sale and initiating free-trade discussions with Taiwan.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204409904574351020457106270.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

Hackers clash over China's rule in Muslim province (August 16, 2009, PC World, by Owen Fletcher)

Pro-China and pro-Muslim hackers have clashed online in a series of attacks on Web sites triggered by deadly ethnic riots in China's Muslim region last month. Messages left on defaced Web sites have either supported or condemned China's rule over Xinjiang, the western province where rioting killed nearly 200 people. Chinese government Web sites have become the latest targets, adding to online attacks against an Australian film festival and a Turkish government site.

http://www.pcworld.com/article/170206/hackers_clash_over_chinas_rule_in_muslim_province.html

Reform in the Air for Chinese Broadcasters (August 13, 2009, Caijing)

TV and radio broadcasters are preparing to buy privately produced entertainment as state control undergoes a gradual change.

<http://english.caijing.com.cn/2009-08-13/110223939.html>

Chinese Christmas exports hit by global recession (August 15, 2009, The Guardian, by Tania Branigan)

International Trade City – a gargantuan wholesale market selling everything from buttons to golf bags – should be bustling. But walk down the long aisles of Christmas outlets, past the fibre optic trees and boxes of baubles, and you hear a chorus of the same complaints: too few customers, spending too little.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/aug/14/china-exports-christmas-toys>

China to roll out the big guns (August 14, 2009, Asia Times Online, by Willy Lam)

Military modernization tops the agenda of Chinese President Hu Jintao. More hardware, including jets and missiles, will soon be unveiled as Beijing tries to narrow the gap between China's and the United States' combat capabilities.

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/KH14Ad01.html>

BLOG POSTS

China's Fractured Web Part III – Myths and Realities (August 19, 2009, China Solved)

As of the time of this writing, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are still unavailable in Mainland China. YouTube has been blocked since March of 2009, and Facebook and Twitter have been dark for almost a month. There is no indication about when or even if the blockade of these sites will be lifted. First, let's put a couple of myths to rest.

<http://www.chinasolved.com/blog/2009/08/19/china%E2%80%99s-fractured-web-part-iii-%E2%80%93-myths-and-realities/>

Drugged up drivers on the coal road (August 20, 2009, Danwei)

This is a summary and partial translation of a news story from *New Culture* newspaper.
http://www.danwei.org/front_page_of_the_day/drugged_up_drivers_on_the_coal.php

Representative Offices in China. Things just got more difficult and expensive (August 18, 2009, China Law Blog)

I thought of all that today when I read in the highly respected Economic Observer of how China is cracking down big time on China Rep Offices.

http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/ChinaLawBlog/~3/zDkoalialqA/representative_offices_in_chin.html

China and the “crisis” of public opinion (August 17, 2009, China Media Project)

Below is a piece published in a recent issue of *China Press Journal* (中华新闻报), a publication of the All-China Journalist's Association. The article was reposted at (http://media.nfdaily.cn/content/2009-08/13/content_5553979.htm) *Nanfang Daily*, the online *China Journalism Review* and other places on August 13. In language typical of the thinking we've seen recently, the article talks about public opinion in terms of “crisis.”

<http://cmp.hku.hk/2009/08/17/1706/>

The geostrategic implications of China's growth (August 14, 2009, East Asia Forum)

It is easy to underestimate the geostrategic implications for the international order of China's rise. China's relative economic strength has grown remarkably, and yet its place in the international order has not yet changed nearly as much. It is tempting to conclude that China's economic growth has little geostrategic impact. This assumes however that geostrategic change follows steadily and smoothly as economic weight shifts. That is not necessarily so.

<http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2009/08/13/the-geostrategic-implications-of-chinas-growth/>

Are China's leaders becoming more responsive? (August 13, 2009, China Media Project)
Are China's leaders becoming more responsive to the concerns and demands of the public? Is China, thanks to the Internet, moving toward a more "deliberative" and participatory political culture (<http://rconversation.blogs.com/rconversation/2009/04/cybertarianism-china-and-the-global-internet.html>)?
<http://cmp.hku.hk/2009/08/13/1702/>

LINKS IN CHINESE

中国少数民族教会与福音事工亟需代祷 (August 18, 2009, Gospel Herald)
http://www.gospelherald.cn/template/news_view.htm?code=gen&id=386

《华传路》今期探讨姊妹宣教角色及贡献 (August 13, 2009, Gospel Herald)
http://www.gospelherald.cn/template/news_view.htm?code=mis&id=213

中国宗教问题怎么样怎么看、怎么办？ (August 20, 2009, Pacific Solutions)
<http://www.pacilution.com/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1975>

LINKS FOR RESEARCHERS

元代回回人的宗教制度与伊斯兰教法 (August 20, 2009, Pacific Solutions)
<http://www.pacilution.com/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1987>

明清北帝祀典及其对民间信仰的影响 (August 20, 2009, Pacific Solutions)
<http://www.pacilution.com/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1986>

Chinese in North America Research Committee (Bainbridge Island, Washington)
<http://www.cinarc.org/>

RESOURCES

Modern Art Asia Online Magazine
<http://modernartasia.com/>

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