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PRC MEDIA GUIDE

Overview

Sweeping social and economic changes triggered by more than two decades of reform in China have led to equally sweeping changes in China's vast, state-controlled media environment, particularly in the quantity and diversity of media sources and the development of the Internet. The Communist Party of China (CPC) not only tolerates much greater diversity in the media, but has strongly encouraged greater efforts to provide media content that resonates with the lives and interests of the population. Despite these changes, however, all pertinent information continues to be filtered through party censors to ensure that it is consistent with official policy. The party exercises especially tight control over the core mainstream media which deliver domestic and international news along with politically sensitive information. These media constitute the main vehicle for conveying the policy preferences and decisions of the central leadership.

Core Central Media. The primary function of these media is to shape popular attitudes and mobilize support for party priorities rather than to foster public debate or provide a spectrum of views on public issues. The most "authoritative" information -- that is, the information that most directly represents the policies of the CPC and government -- is carried by China's official press agency Xinhua; the central television and radio channels, China Central Television (CCTV) and China People's Radio; the official newspaper of the CPC Central Committee, Renmin Ribao (People's Daily); and Jiefangjun Bao (Liberation Army Daily) of the Central Military Commission.

Other Official Media. While these media organs constitute the core of central mainstream media, there are many other papers, journals, and websites affiliated with central party and government organs and mass associations which target broad segments of the population, such as labor, rural cadres and farmers, or state economic or public security cadres. There are also a variety of specialized central media, ranging from those associated with ministries, such as foreign trade or public security, to those associated with official think tanks and advisory bodies, science and technology institutes, universities, and key party committees. Provincial and local media replicate the pattern of the center, including: official papers, radio and television outlets, and websites of party and government organs, as well as specialized media analogous to those at the center. Finally, the military establishment has its own media system that is anchored by Jiefangjun Bao and consists of newspapers of the service arms and military regions, a variety of specialized and popular publications, and official websites. In addition, China Central Television (CCTV)-7 carries regular programs devoted to military themes and information. (See OSC Media Aid: PRC Television Channel CCTV-7, 13 Sep 05 CPF20050913000141).

Market-Based Reforms. Reforms introduced by the CPC in the mid-1990s to bring China's media into line with the rest of the rapidly developing market-based economy accelerated in 2003. The party allowed each major party organ to continue publishing

two newspapers and one journal, but removed subsidies from all other print media. Those party organs that could not generate sufficient revenues from advertising, subscriptions, and street sales were compelled to stop publishing. In television, all of which is party-owned, the longtime trend to rely heavily on advertising for the bulk of revenue continues apace. In conjunction with these reforms, the party granted considerably more leeway to editors and television producers to use content that satisfies popular tastes and meets market demand while remaining within party-imposed political limits. As a result of this party-driven commercialization of the media, the number of papers willing to test these limits, particularly "metropolitan dailies" [dushi bao] and special weekend editions of major papers, expanded in big cities while the popular "evening" [wanbao] papers enriched their content and a host of specialized new papers emerged.

In response to market requirements, the party gave the stamp of approval to a new genre of economic papers to provide the latest economic information to China's emerging entrepreneurial class and foreign businesses operating in China. These papers often publish information not found in other papers or media, including political information, and have led the effort to further liberalize media controls, especially in south China. Major cities have also begun publishing English-language newspapers to serve the growing foreign business community.

The commercialization effort has also spawned a number of glossy newsweeklies patterned after US news magazines. While still controlled within party guidelines, these newsweeklies are given leeway to cover a broader range of issues than mainstream publications such as the long-time Xinhua general affairs magazine, *Liaowang*. *Liaowang* launched its own spinoff newsweekly, *Liaowang Dongfang Zhoukan*, in 2003. These publications are aimed at an educated urban audience, especially professional and commercial elites. The leading magazines differ slightly in emphasis, with some focused primarily on world and national news (e.g. *Zhongguo Xinwen Zhoukan*), some featuring more social commentary (e.g. *Nanfeng Chuang*), and some placing more emphasis on cultural trends, human interest, and fashion (e.g. *Sanlian Shenghuo Zhoukan*). The earliest newsweeklies began publishing in the early 1990s, but the genre became commercially viable and more popular when media reforms accelerated after 1999.

Finally, the media reforms have resulted in the establishment of three privately invested national publications -- *Caijing* (Finance), *Jingji Guancha Bao* (Economic Observer), and *Shimin* (Citizen) -- which were established by investors as commercial ventures. They are all aimed at a high-end readership of urban professionals, new business elites, and government leaders. Since its founding in 1997, *Caijing* has become China's pre-eminent financial magazine, offering not only economic information, but analysis and policy suggestions. In addition, *Caijing* has acquired a reputation for hard-hitting investigative journalism and has run into political trouble a number of times for its exposés of official wrongdoing. The magazine is published weekly by the politically influential and well-funded media company, SEEC Media. The weekly economic newspaper *Jingji Guancha Bao* aims for much of the same readership as *Caijing*. Established in 2000, with a format and layout similar to London's *Financial Times*, it too has developed a reputation for

hard-hitting social commentary along with timely economic news. With a masthead motto of "rational and constructive," *Jingji Guancha Bao* has adopted a lower-profile than *Caijing*. Its license with the State Press and Publication Administration is registered to the address of a defunct publication located in the city of Jinan in Shandong province, but its director and chief editor are in Beijing where it is published. *Shimin* is a Guangdong-based weekly magazine of current events and social commentary which made its debut in 2005. Its editorial bias appears to support a civil-society agenda.

Although all three publications are privately-invested and often publish material avoided by magazines and papers under the party's formal umbrella, they are, nonetheless, closely monitored by party censors. *Caijing* and *Jingji Guancha Bao*, in particular, appear to have high-level political connections, but all three remain subject to official censure or punishment if they stray too far from politically-acceptable content. Like all other PRC media, they must secure an operating license from the State Press and Publication Administration.

Selected Statistics on the Proliferation of PRC Print Media*

Year	1978	1990	2000	2003
Newspapers	186	1444	2007	2119
Magazines	930	5751	8725	9074

Source: *PRC Statistical Yearbook (no data provided after 2004 yearbook)

Mechanisms of Control. The CPC maintains control of its media organs through a vast propaganda apparatus that provides regular guidance, carefully monitors content, and punishes those who stray from the official line. The Central Propaganda Department, which heads the apparatus, is one of the five main offices of the party's Central Committee. The department's director, a Politburo member, is responsible to a member of the Politburo Standing Committee, whose portfolio, for the first time since the 1970s, consists entirely of ideology and culture, which includes the media.

There is a CPC committee in each major media organ, and each committee includes a section responsible for propaganda work. The chief editor of a media group or the director of a newspaper is often the party committee secretary. Party members occupy most senior editorial positions and are subject to party discipline. The directors of the various party and government organizations responsible for media control often serve concurrently on key media bodies, thus providing close networks of supervision that link party and state administrative organs with media organs. For example, the party committee secretaries of major media organs are generally members of the propaganda department of the municipal or provincial administration in the jurisdiction they reside. This network of supervision is particularly evident at the center of the system. The media group chairman responsible for China's flagship state television network, CCTV, is concurrently director of the State Council administrative body responsible for licensing television stations and for the Ministry of Radio, Film, and Television; he is also a deputy director of the Central Propaganda Department.

In addition, all print media organs must receive a license from the State Press and Publications Administration in order to publish, and all broadcast media must be licensed by the Ministry of Radio, Film, and Television. Although both of these licensing bodies are State Council organizations, they are directly administered by the CPC. The consequences of violating party guidance for the media can be severe, including loss or suspension of licenses, loss of employment, or prison terms.

Media Groups. To facilitate both political control and economic efficiency in the course of commercializing the media, the party in 1996 began organizing newspapers and broadcast media into "media groups" [*baoye jituan*] or television and radio conglomerates. These groups centered on the flagship party daily [*jiguan bao*] or on the anchor television station of the central, provincial, or municipal party organ under whose jurisdiction they fell. The media group generally includes a variety of general dailies --some combination of morning and evening papers, commercial or economic papers, and a "metropolitan" paper [*dushi bao*] -- along with weekend editions and specialized magazines.

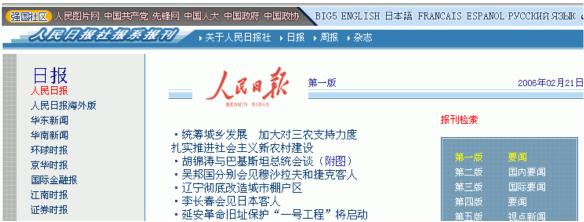
The media group director is usually concurrently the director or chief editor of the anchor newspaper and is often the group's CPC secretary. The group's chief editor has final authority over the editorial decisions made by the individual newspapers under the group's control. The group's editorial function is organizationally separate from its financial administration. Each group has a governing board which has representation from its constituent newspapers and from its party organ's propaganda office.

Print Media

Central Newspapers

A core group of official party and government newspapers carry the party's message in major issue areas and to key segments of the population. These newspapers are listed in approximate order of their importance -- Renmin Ribao, Jiefangjun Bao, Jingji Ribao, Nongmin Ribao, Zhongguo Qingnian Bao, Gongren Ribao, Guangming Ribao, and China Daily. These papers are distributed primarily through internal channels to party organs and government offices; but since 2004, Renmin Ribao, Jingji Ribao, and Guangming Ribao have been available for sale to the public on select newsstands in Beijing. All of them have their own web portals which contain unique information not carried in the paper itself and which provide links to other papers and websites.

Renmin Ribao (People's Daily) http://www.peopledaily.com.cn



The Daily Newspaper of the CPC Central Committee

Renmin Ribao is the daily newspaper of the CPC Central Committee and the flagship media organ of the CPC's vast media empire. It is considered the most authoritative "mouthpiece of the party," underscoring on its website that its "strong suit" is "commentary, theory, and propaganda." The most important Renmin Ribao editorials bear the imprimatur of the Politburo Standing Committee. "Commentator articles" are less authoritative than editorials but should be viewed as conveying the political line of the Politburo. In addition to editorials and commentator articles, the paper carries occasional anonymous "contributing commentator" articles by top leaders and features theory-focused columns and pages, such as "Renmin Luntan" [People's Forum], "Sixiang Zongheng" [Ideology From A to Z], "Guoji Luntan" [International Forum], and a longstanding doctrinal page, "Theory." The paper is available online through its official website, Renmin Wang, in a print-version format, along with an archive of past issues and links to each individual article.

While *Renmin Ribao*'s primary focus is to cover top leaders' activities and pronouncements and the propagation of party ideological doctrine, policies, and decisions, the paper, like other media, has taken a number of measures in recent years to increase its readership, including greatly expanding the number of pages, adding special interest features, and offering more timely, relevant, and factual news reporting. The paper devotes the first several of its 16 pages to current news, followed by pages featuring deeper news analysis and internal regional developments. Additional sections feature such themes as culture, education, science and technology, and even include cartoons. Its coverage of international news and developments, while still subject to the party's ideological strictures, is broader, deeper, and more timely than in the past. The paper also carries a number of specialized weekly columns on economics, "democracy and law," human interest topics, and entertainment, as well as weekly pages on current core propaganda themes such as "party building" or "creating a new socialist countryside."

Renmin Ribao publishes an overseas edition tailored to overseas Chinese, Renmin Ribao Haiwan Ban, and issues regional supplements for East and South China -- Renmin Ribao Huadong Xinwen and Renmin Ribao Huanan Xinwen -- edited in Shanghai and Guangzhou, respectively. It also sponsors a number of market-oriented mass circulation and specialized newspapers and magazines. These include a daily metropolitan paper, Jinghua Shibao [The Beijing Times], targeted at the Beijing region; a nationalistic daily, Huanqiu Shibao, which claims to be "China's most authoritative newspaper for international news"; a metropolitan daily published in Nanjing for Yangzi valley readers, Jiangnan Shibao; a paper of international finance published in Shanghai, Guoji Jinrong Bao; a paper for stock market news, Zhengquan Shibao; a magazine of ideological and theoretical commentary, Renmin Luntan; a professional journalism magazine, Xinwen Zhanxian; and a variety of general interest publications featuring stories on health, fashion, entertainment, and pop culture, including "Qiche Bao," a magazine geared toward China's emerging automobile sub-culture.

Renmin Ribao maintains 38 bureaus in China and 32 abroad and has a circulation of 3 million, including distribution to over 100 countries and regions. In a bid to boost the paper's image among the public, party leaders in 2004 directed that it be sold on select newsstands in Beijing, but it is distributed primarily through internal channels. It is transmitted by satellite to 33 stations throughout China for simultaneous printing and distribution. The paper, its website, and affiliated publications are supported by more than 100 subsidiary organizations that manage its finances, advertising, publishing, circulation, and other administrative functions.

For a description of the *Renmin Ribao* portal, see "Internet" section below.

Renmin Ribao Haiwai Ban (People's Daily Overseas Edition) http://www.peopledaily.com.cn/haiwai/home.html

Renmin Ribao's overseas edition is targeted at Chinese living abroad, whether PRC citizens or not, especially those in the United States and Europe. There are some differences in content between this edition and the domestic version since the former is designed to appeal to overseas Chinese interests and tailors the party's propaganda message to this audience. The paper is described on Renmin Ribao's website as "China's most authoritative and comprehensive Chinese newspaper for foreign audiences."

Renmin Ribao WWW-Text in English http://english.peopledaily.com.cn

Renmin Ribao's English-language version appears only in an online edition. It carries some translations from the vernacular version as well as some unique material geared to the party's propaganda message for English-speaking audiences, primarily the United States. The English-language version is much smaller than the vernacular version.

Jiefangjun Bao (Liberation Army Daily) http://www.chinamil.com.cn

The daily newspaper of the Central Military Commission (CMC) of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), *Jiefangjun Bao*, reports on a wide range of military affairs. It is the most authoritative media organ in the PLA, the military equivalent of the CPC Central Committee daily *Renmin Ribao*. As the official paper of the CMC, its editorials and commentator articles represent the views of the military's top leadership.

Jiefangjun Bao carries a diverse selection of military-related articles and news reports, including policy pronouncements, political and ideological commentary, and a wide variety of professional and technical military issues and events. It also features analysis of global geopolitical developments, including US foreign and defense policy and stories on international current events. The paper's website carries original content not available in the print version.

While *Jiefangjun Bao*'s content has become increasingly diverse in recent years, the 50th anniversary of the paper's founding in January 2006 brought new changes that make it more commercially appealing. Beginning 1 January 2006, the paper began featuring entire pages devoted to colorful photos and stories of Chinese and world sports news, health advice, and cultural and entertainment news. Interspersed through the pages are Chinese and world human interest stories and photos. Although military and political topics continue to receive extensive coverage, there are new features for a specifically military readership, such as occasional excerpts from military region newspapers.

For a description of the *Jiefangjun Bao* portal, see "Internet" section below.

For details on other Chinese military media, see OSC Media Aid: Chinese Media Offering Information on PRC Military Affairs, 28 Jul 05, CPF20050728000216.

Jiefangjun Bao WWW-Text in English

Jiefangjun Bao's English-language version, like *Renmin Ribao*'s English-language version, appears only in an online edition. It carries some translations from the vernacular version as well as some unique material geared to the party's propaganda message for English-speaking audiences, primarily the United States. The English-language version is much smaller than the vernacular version.

Jingji Ribao (Economic Daily) http://www.economicdaily.com.cn

Jingji Ribao is the official daily newspaper covering economic affairs run by the PRC State Council under the leadership and supervision of the Propaganda Department of the CPC Central Committee. Other than *Renmin Ribao*, *Jingji Ribao* is the leadership's most authoritative voice on economic policy. Directly controlled by the premier's office, it frequently carries interviews and articles by PRC officials. The paper, founded in

January 1983, has 60 bureaus throughout China and 20 overseas. The *Jingji Ribao* media group was established in June 1998 and includes 18 publications, two publishing houses, an economic news website, a printing plant, and an economics and management correspondence school.

Nongmin Ribao (Farmer's Daily) http://www.farmer.com.cn/wlb/nmrb

Nongmin Ribao publishes investigative reporting within the limits allowed by the CPC and is China's most authoritative daily newspaper dealing with agriculture and rural policy issues. In the 1980's, the paper was affiliated with the highly influential Rural Research Institute of the party Central Committee. The Rural Research Institute had spearheaded the sweeping rural reforms of the party's then paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping. The institute also had close ties to then-party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang. However, when Zhao was purged in 1989, that institute was abolished, and control of the paper was transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture to serve as China's "national, comprehensive, central-rank newspaper to implement party and state guidance on rural work." Consistent with the paper's declared objective of "speaking for the peasants," it often plays the role of defender of peasant interests against the interests of local officialdom and new commercial interests in the countryside.

The eight page paper maintains bureaus in all provinces and 30 countries and regions and manages several subsidiary newspapers dealing with township enterprises, animal husbandry, and aquaculture. According to *Nongmin Ribao*'s website, it has also been designated as the "authoritative media for propagating China's rural policies abroad."

Nongmin Ribao's portal is titled "The Three Rural Issues Online" [San Nong Zai Xian] and contains descriptions of and links to Nongmin Ribao's subsidiary papers.

Zhongguo Qingnian Bao (China Youth Daily) http://www.cyd.com.cn

As the daily newspaper of the Communist Youth League of the CPC Central Committee, *Zhongguo Qingnian Bao* publishes articles on political, economic, and social issues and often carries surveys of youth attitudes. In an effort to retain its core readership in the face of expanding sources of information available to Chinese youth, the party has given the paper increasing license to broaden the range and style of its coverage. This expansion includes periodic publication of provocative articles on sensitive political, military, or social themes -- sometimes bordering on sensationalism -- and interviews with high-level party or military leaders that do not appear in other mainstream media. The paper's editors have occasionally crossed the line of party-permitted content and have been censured or even removed. For example, the chief editor of a popular supplement of the paper, *Bingdian Weekly*, was fired in late 2005, and the supplement was suspended from January to March 2006 for running afoul of Propaganda Department censors. It is not for sale in public newsstands.

Gongren Ribao (Worker's Daily) http://www.grrb.com.cn/

Gongren Ribao is the official daily of the All China Federation of Trade Unions, the CPC's mass association for workers. The newspaper carries political commentary, news, and commentary about workers. Its name belies its political importance, as it is sometimes used to sound provocative political messages. It is not for sale in public newsstands.

Guangming Ribao

http://www.gmw.cn

The CPC's primary daily newspaper for intellectuals and professionals, *Guangming Ribao*, is one of two national dailies considered to be official newspapers of the CPC Central Committee, the other being *Renmin Ribao*. As such, it is fully subsidized by the party. Prior to 1949, when the CPC took power in China, it was a prominent noncommunist paper aimed at intellectuals. It has since evolved over the years to become a major vehicle for addressing ideological issues from the party's perspective among educated Chinese. Like *Renmin Ribao*, it is sold only on select newsstands in Beijing, and is distributed primarily through internal channels to party organs and government offices.

China Daily (English) http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/

As China's official English-language newspaper, *China Daily* is an all-purpose paper aimed at propagating the party's message to China's ever-expanding foreign community and English-speaking overseas Chinese living in China and at providing general information, sports, and entertainment to these audiences. Local Chinese studying English read the paper, especially its portal, which includes an English-language instruction section.

China Daily is often used to send political messages and signals to the United States. For example, on the eve of the 2004 US presidential election, the paper ran an "opinion" piece with a harsh assessment of US China policy by a former Politburo member and foreign minister, Qian Qichen.

In a departure from its past practice, *China Daily* has been unusually candid since the late 1990s publishing criticism of some government policies, noting controversial public policy issues, or airing divergent views on these issues, presumably to buttress leadership claims of allowing greater transparency in the media. In 2006, the paper began carrying some material from foreign news sources, including commentator columns from foreign newspapers. It is widely available in public newsstands.

China Daily Hong Kong Edition (English)

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/hkedition/hktop.html

As the Hong Kong edition of China's official English-language newspaper, the daily carries most of the content of the Beijing edition but adds coverage tailored to Hong Kong affairs.

Central Magazines

Qingnian Cankao (Elite Reference)

http://www.qnck.net.cn

Qingnian Cankao is a semi-weekly journal affiliated with Zhongguo Qingnian Bao, the daily paper of the CPC Communist Youth League. The journal was established in July 1984 and provides reports and analyses on international political, military, economic, and social developments by Chinese and foreign experts and officials, Zhongguo Qingnian Bao correspondents and commentators, and some foreign media. The journal describes itself on its website as the only comprehensive national weekly to provide a "window on the world" for China's "elite youth," defined as college-educated, 20-45 year-old professionals.

Qiushi

http://www.qsjournal.com.cn

The semimonthly official journal of the CPC Central Committee, *Qiushi*, is primarily a theoretical and ideological journal that elaborates the doctrinal rationale for party policies and boosts the ideological authority of select leaders. It covers a broad array of political, economic, cultural, scientific, and social issues, publishes the texts of important party and government decisions, and occasionally carries articles by top leaders.

Beijing Review

www.bjreview.com.cn

The CPC's official general affairs weekly magazine for foreign audiences, *Beijing Review*, is issued in many different languages. The magazine includes major party documents and leadership speeches along with commentary on foreign affairs and features on domestic developments. The magazine often publishes translations of articles that have appeared in domestic media that are not otherwise available in English.

Press Agencies

China operates two state news agencies. One is the PRC's official news service, Xinhua, with domestic and international casts. The other news agency, Zhongguo Xinwen She, is targeted specifically at overseas Chinese in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia.

Xinhua Tongxun She (New China News Agency)

Xinhua is China's official news agency and is one of the three pillars of the Chinese Communist Party's propaganda system along with the party daily *Renmin Ribao* and the official television network Chinese Central Television (CCTV). Established in 1931 in the Chinese Communist Party's guerilla base areas, it is now the largest news-gathering organization in China and provides virtually all international and national news carried in PRC media. It files news in seven languages 24 hours a day (Chinese, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, and Russian). Although formally under the authority of the State Council, Xinhua is the news service of the CPC Central Committee and is managed directly by the party's Propaganda Department, billing itself as "the eyes, ears, and mouthpiece of the party and people." The agency also serves as the PRC Government's interface with foreign news organizations operating in China.

Xinhua's staff of over 7,000 makes it one of the largest news agencies in the world. In addition to its 31 provincial bureaus, 15 branch offices, and 14 reporters stationed nationwide, Xinhua has developed a robust international presence, managing an extensive network of over 100 overseas news bureaus, including regional hubs in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, the Americas, and Africa. It has some 400 news staffers in Hong Kong and Macao alone and maintains three bureaus in the United States, including a news editing desk in New York. It has agreements on news exchanges with news agencies or media organizations in nearly 100 countries. Although still operating within the confines of party-controlled strictures on content, Xinhua has increasingly adopted the operating style, professional norms, and competitive outlook of the major international news services, including establishing training and research centers to increase the professionalism of its journalists.

Xinhua hosts one of China's largest Internet portals, Xinhuanet, and manages the day-today operations of the PRC Government's official website (see descriptions of both websites in the Internet section below). Xinhua also presides over a vast news, publishing, and business conglomerate that includes China's main bookstore chain and nearly 40 magazines and newspapers. Among the more prominent of these are the weekly current affairs magazine, Liaowang (Outlook), and its sister newsweekly in Shanghai, Liaowang Dongfang Zhoukan; Banyue Tan (China Comment), a magazine for mid-level cadres; *Huanqiu* (Globe), a glossy monthly pictorial for popular consumption; and Zhongguo Jizhe (Chinese Journalist), a professional journal for reporters. Newspapers include *Xinhua Meiri Dianxun* (Xinhua Daily Telegraph), Xinhua's news bulletin (in English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian); Cankao Xiaoxi (Reference News), which, according to Xinhua's website, is the daily with the largest circulation in China; Jingji Cankao Bao (Economic Information Daily); Guoji Xiangu Daobao (International Herald Leader); and two securities dailies, Zhongguo Zhengquan Bao (China Securities) and Shanghai Zhengquan Bao (Shanghai Securities). Xinhua also publishes Zhongguo Nianjian (The China Yearbook) in Chinese and English versions.

Xinhua has increasingly turned to commercial ventures to make up for lost revenue as its state subsidies declined following market-based media reforms in the late 1990s. It

established a Planning and Financial Management Bureau in 2005 to oversee its business operations, which include a wide variety of investment, marketing, public relations, advertising, and other affiliates. Xinhua has begun to offer business services such as online shopping, ticket booking, and travel information through its website.

For more detailed information on Xinhua, see *OSC Media Aid China's Xinhua News Agency*, 29 Jan 07, CPF20070129008001

Xinhua English

Xinhua English is China's official news service for English-language audiences. Its routine reporting usually provides more context and background than the vernacular counterpart for the benefit of foreign audiences; but, in general, its reports are shorter and lack the detail found in Xinhua's domestic service. Xinhua English often, but not always, carries the official English-language texts of important party or government documents and leaders' speeches.

Xinhua Asia-Pacific Service

As one of Xinhua's international casts, Xinhua Asia-Pacific Service is China's official news service to the Asia-Pacific region. The service includes material targeted more broadly at the Asia-Pacific region and material tailored to a Hong Kong audience, which in the past was disseminated through Xinhua's now-defunct Hong Kong Service.

Zhongguo Xinwen She (China News Service or CNS)

Zhongguo Xinwen She is a Beijing news service targeted at overseas Chinese in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. At times, this news service provides more detail than Xinhua's official domestic and international casts and sometimes carries material deemed too provocative for the Xinhua services. Zhongguo Xinwen publishes one of the more popular and commercially successful newsweeklies, *Zhongguo Xinwen Zhoukan* [China Newsweek].

Television

China Central Television (CCTV) is the flagship network of the PRC's state-controlled television system and has been on the leading edge of China's rapidly changing media environment for over a decade. CCTV has led a move from single-channel, narrowly-focused programming dominated by party propaganda to a proliferation of channels throughout China's television system with diverse programming and news-packaging and with viewer-friendly formats and styles modeled after those of the West. As in other areas of China's changing media landscape, market forces have played a significant role in transforming television. The network reaches over 90 percent of China's population.

The center and the provinces increasingly compete for television ratings and revenue. Contributing to the competition, all provinces have satellite channels and permission

from central authorities to broadcast in other provinces. Hong Kong television is now available legally in China's neighboring Guangzhou city, and China's new urban elites increasingly have access to foreign television through illegal satellite dishes or in upscale neighborhoods with majority foreign populations where pay-for-view cable television is now offered. To retain younger urban Chinese who increasingly get their news and other programming from the Internet, CCTV in 2004 launched Internet TV programming and is making aggressive efforts to develop online video services and digital pay-for-view programming.

For a detailed listing of CCTV's various channels and programs, see *OSC Media Aids Review of CCTV News Channel*, 27 Oct 06, CPF 20061026066002; *CCTV Dominates PRC Television Landscape*, 3 Feb 06, CPF20060203077001; *PRC Television Station CCTV-1*, 1 Feb 06, CPF20060201077001; *PRC Television Channel CCTV-7*, 13 Sep 05, CPF20050913000141; *PRC's International Chinese-Language Television Station CCTV-4*, 23 Jun 05, CPF20050623000208; and *Guide to Beijing CCTV's 'Legal Report*,' 9 Nov 04, CPF20040911000289.

Internet

The Internet in China has expanded rapidly in recent years and is becoming a major medium of communication for party and state leaders and for China's educated urban population in general, particularly youth. The party began putting its mainstream newspapers and selected central ministries online in the 1990s; and today, people can find websites not only for all major papers and journals, television stations, central and local government-organs, universities and think tanks, and related associations, but for a myriad of other organizations as well. Many key organizations feature Bulletin Boards (BBS), chat rooms, and weblogs ("blogs"), and individual citizens and semi-private groups have their own websites and blogs.

The geometric rise in the number of Internet users and their technical skills presents a significant challenge to the CPC's efforts to control Internet content. Chinese netizens are increasingly using the Internet, particularly BBS, blogs, and chat rooms, to acquire and disseminate information that the party has tried to suppress. They use the Internet as a forum to publicly discuss sensitive issues or to air controversial views in spite of party-imposed taboos. To counter this threat, the party blends technological savvy with regulatory power, employing tens of thousands of censors and "Internet police" to target those who openly challenge party authority and skirt information taboos. Phone numbers and email addresses are provided to report violators.

Internet usage is difficult to measure, and there may be a great deal more usage than has been captured in official statistics. According to statistics compiled by China's official China Internet Network Information Center, there were 137 million Internet users in China by the end of 2006. The number of users may well be 150-200 million, as these statistics are based on polls conducted via fixed line phones rather than mobile phones, the medium of choice for most young people. Chinese netizens spent an average of 15.9 hours per week online in 2006, far more than their US counterparts; and over 60 percent

of them, access the Internet at home. Many recent surveys and articles in Western media indicate that most of this time, particularly among the young, is spent on entertainment and gaming. As of the end of 2006, there were 20 million Chinese bloggers.

Despite the rapid expansion of Internet use and the large numbers of people involved, official statistics suggest that less than 12% of China's population is online and this user population is concentrated in large cities and coastal provinces. Over one quarter of the residents of Beijing and Shanghai are users, while 18 percent of coastal Guangdong and 11 percent of coastal Shandong's population are online. By contrast, only 5 percent and 4 percent, respectively, of residents in the inland provinces of Hunan and Henan use the Internet. User demographics are changing as well, even though young people still account for the majority of users. In 1998, 91 percent of all netizens were between the ages of 18 and 30; but by 2004, this number had dropped to 51.3 percent, with 18.8 percent being younger than 18 and 17.8% older than 35.

Growth of Internet Use (Data from China Internet Network Information Center)

Year	1997	2003	2004	2005	2006
Users	620,000	80 million	103 million	111 million	137 million
% of Pop.		6.2%	8%	8.6%	11.7 %
Growth Rate			29%	8%	18.9%
Broadband			43 million		52 million
Access					

Key Internet Portals

Chinese Government Portal

http://www.gov.cn

The PRC Government's portal, launched on 1 January 2006, serves as a central repository of information on the Chinese government's policies and services. The General Office of the State Council has overall responsibility for the website, and the official news agency Xinhua is responsible for its operations and content.



Although PRC media touted the portal as a significant step forward in PRC government transparency when it was launched, the portal appears to contain little unique information and carries primarily reporting and information collected from other PRC official and government sources available through other websites and publications. According to Xinhua, of the about 1,000 news items the portal releases each day, about 40 percent come from Xinhua, another 40 percent from the State Council and other government websites, another 10 percent from local government websites, and the remaining 10 percent from other central PRC media.

The more significant categories of information hosted on the portal include transcripts of government news conferences and interviews with PRC officials; State Council documents -- including white papers -- issued since 1991; government bulletins and communiqués; documents released by various State Council organs and local governments; texts of major laws and regulations; and the National Bureau of Statistics' annual statistical communiqués from 1978-2004. The site also carries information on China's overall plans for emergency response management, including 18 national-level plans for handling such events as natural disasters, nuclear accidents, food safety, and environmental problems.

The website also provides access to information on a variety of government services. In a 1 January 2007 report, Xinhua claims that 1,100 services provided by 71 government departments -- including civil service examination services and consumer rights protection services -- can be accessed through the portal. One page of the portal provides access to instructions for applying for over 60 types of administrative permits from 11 State Council ministries and departments.

Chinese Government Portal English-Language Site http://www.gov.cn/English/

The portal has a less robust English version aimed at English-speaking audiences. It provides English texts of a limited number of the government documents available on the Chinese site, including translations of the State Council Information Office and Foreign Ministry press conferences, white papers, government work reports, and a small selection of PRC laws and regulations. It also carries Xinhua and *China Daily* news reports and information on business, trade, and investment.



Chinese Government Portal English-Language Home Page (english.gov.cn, 11 December 2006)

Websites of Key Central Media

Renmin Wang

http://www.people.com.cn



Renmin Wang is the website of the CPC Central Committee daily *Renmin Ribao*. The site, claiming to be one of the largest Chinese language news portals on the Internet, was established in January 1997. According to its "About Us" section, Renmin Wang aims to serve as China's "key news website" and "voice to the world," maintaining the "authoritativeness" of *Renmin Ribao* while offering greater "appeal" and "readability." The site attracts an average of over 4,000 visitors per million Internet users daily, according to the internet tracking firm Alexa (www.alexa.com).

Renmin Wang carries reporting on a wide range of topics, including international and domestic news, economics and finance, entertainment, sports, and lifestyle issues. The site also has a section devoted to Chinese Communist Party news, leadership statements, party history and theory, party publications, and party member forums and blogs. While the majority of Renmin Wang's reports are repostings from mainstream media such as *Renmin Ribao*, the official news agency Xinhua, and other domestic media, a separate "Viewpoint" [*guandian*] section of the site regularly carries unique commentaries not published in *Renmin Ribao*. Moreover, Renmin Wang and *Renmin Ribao* occasionally carry different versions of the same commentary. The Renmin Wang versions are

generally longer, including entire paragraphs omitted from the *Renmin Ribao* versions, and sometimes including sensitive sentences or paragraphs dropped from *Renmin Ribao*. Renmin Wang also reposts commentaries from provincial party papers. The portal periodically creates special sections to commemorate important anniversaries or events, such as the 70th anniversary of the Long March in 2006 and the 100th anniversary of the birth of Deng Xiaoping in 2004.





Logos for Special Sections on Long March [left] and Deng Xiaoping [right]

Renmin Wang's Qiangguo Luntan [Strong Nation Forum]

Renmin Wang set up the popular BBS, Qiangguo Luntan [Strong Nation Forum], in 1999 in response to the bombing of the PRC embassy in Yugoslavia. While Qiangguo Luntan remains the centerpiece, the site later expanded its BBS section to form the Qiangguo Shequ [Strong Nation Community], offering over 30 forums with unique material on topics such as cross-Strait issues, Sino-Japanese relations, IT developments, rule of law, anti-corruption, rural problems, party member issues, and current cultural trends. The forums allow considerably more leeway for discussion of provocative political topics than the site's parent newspaper, *Renmin Ribao*, or other mainstream party papers. The forums frequently invite Chinese and foreign officials, academic experts, and journalists to host live web chats; the transcripts of which are then posted on the site.



Qiangguo Shequ Masthead

In November 2006, Qiangguo Shequ received a "facelift" to make the site "livelier" and more "interactive" (*Renmin Ribao*, 7 November 2006). The site introduced the following features: 1) a "Forum for Registered Authors" [*Shiming Luntan*], requiring users to register in true name, but allowing them to post with a penname; 2) a "Debate Room" [*Bianlun Dating*] in which users are invited to argue in favor or against proposals such as using Confucianism to reform criminals and whether mine accidents are natural or manmade disasters; and 3) a "Summary" [*Wangzhai*] section. The site also added a group SMS dissemination service and a link to report misconduct on the site.



Renmin Wang's Qiangguo Boke [Strong Nation Blogs]

On 15 February 2006, Renmin Wang officially launched Qiangguo Boke [Strong Nation Blogs], hosting close to 300 blogs written by low level party members and government officials, academics, journalists, and members of the general public. Some of the first bloggers were deputies to the National People's Congress (NPC) who wrote on their experiences during the annual "two sessions" of the NPC and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in March 2006.

Foreign Language Versions of Renmin Wang

The English-language version of Renmin Wang primarily carries reports from Xinhua's English-language feed and China's official English-language paper, *China Daily*, occasionally posting reports from foreign news agencies. The site rarely publishes original articles. Most of the unique articles are contributed by *Renmin Ribao* reporters stationed in the United States or other countries. The site posts translations of some articles -- usually international in focus -- from *Renmin Ribao*, the *Renmin Ribao*-sponsored paper *Huanqiu Shibao*, the Communist Youth League daily *Zhongguo Qingnian Bao*, and some Hong Kong media. The articles generally appear on the English site one to two days after their initial publication.



Renmin Wang also offers sites in Japanese, French, Spanish, Russian, and Arabic, but with substantially less content than the Chinese site.





Termini Wang milinasi

Xinhua Wang

http://www.xinhuanet.com http://www.xinhua.org http://www.news.cn



Xinhua Wang Home Page, 7 December 2006

Xinhua Wang is the website of China's official news service, the Xinhua News Agency, and describes itself as "an important online media front for the party and the state." Established in November 1997, it assumed its current name "Xinhua Wang" in March 2000 and moved to its current primary domain (www.xinhuanet.com) in July of that year. Xinhua Wang has its own editorial board handling online content. The site attracts around 8,000 visitors per million Internet users daily according to the Internet tracking firm Alexa (www.alexa.com).

A Xinhua subsidiary company, Xinhua Network Company Limited, handles the website's business and marketing operations. The site's home page is now accessible under three domain names listed above, but the remainder of the site's content is organized under the primary domain.

Xinhua Wang Content Overview. In addition to a web interface for subscribers to the news agency's services, Xinhua Wang offers a large number of news items and commentaries for non-subscribers. This free content includes reports on domestic and international affairs, defense news, business news, entertainment, and sports. Items posted on Xinhua Wang rarely differ from those on the same topics released by the Xinhua News Agency's subscription service. Aside from links to current events and issues on its home page, Xinhua Wang divides its offerings into more than 30 regional sections and over 50 topical sections, as well as special sections devoted to current propaganda themes being promoted by the party -- such as the "new socialist countryside."

Material originating with the news agency itself is augmented by content from periodicals affiliated with Xinhua and a large number of national and local newspapers. The video section offers video clips drawn primarily from China's official state television network, CCTV. Xinhua Wang "updates more than 4,500 news items every day," according to an English-language introduction on the site.

Xinhua Wang Special Sections. The site occasionally creates special sections devoted to major party and government events such as plenary sessions of the CPC Central Committee, annual sessions of the National People's Congress, or commemorative events such as the 70th anniversary of the Long March in October 2006. In April-May 2005, a special section was created for the first visit to the mainland by Taiwan politician Lien Chan [Lian Zhan], then-chairman of Taiwan's opposition Guomindang [KMT] party. Such sections may disappear from the home page after a period of time, but they generally remain available on the site.



Special Section on 16th CPC Central Committee's Sixth Plenum in October 2006



Special Section on Lien Chan's visit in April-May 2005

Xinhua Wang Links to Party and Government Sites. Xinhua Wang's home page also contains links to party and government sites such as the PRC Central Government website (www.gov.cn), which was built by Xinhua Wang. Xinhua Wang has built and provided support for many other government-sponsored websites, including the 2001 Shanghai APEC summit website, the Boao Forum website, and websites promoting special industrial zones and trade events.

Xinhua Wang Forums. Xinhua Wang set up its forum section in February 2001. It currently features more than 30 forum categories, including current affairs, international issues, economic topics, reunification with Taiwan, and the rule of law. The forum opens

new threads to announce upcoming interviews with government officials and to collect questions and comments from viewers regarding the interviews. The interviews are published on the central government website which, in turn, features links to relevant threads on Xinhua's forums. The forum section also carries some discussions on provocative issues such as Japan and Taiwan.



Masthead of Xinhua Forums Page, 12 December 2006

Foreign Language Versions of Xinhua Wang. The English-language version of Xinhua Wang primarily features reports from the Xinhua News Agency's English-language service and sometimes carries reports compiled from foreign news agencies. The video section mostly features clips from CCTV-9, the English-language channel of CCTV. The home page and index pages of the English version are organized under a separate domain name, www.chinaview.cn, but the remaining English content is placed under Xinhua Wang's primary domain www.xinhuanet.com.



Xinhua Wang in English, 13 December 2006

Xinhua Wang also features sites in Spanish, French, Russian, and Arabic, but they contain substantially less content than the Chinese site.

Jiefangjun Bao Website http://www.chinamil.com.cn



As the official website of the People's Liberation Army, this portal is analogous to Renmin Wang, the portal of the CPC Central Committee's official paper, *Renmin Ribao*. It offers unique information not available in the hard copy version of the newspaper, including news reports and commentary on world developments and strategic and military issues. It includes links to *Jiefangjun Bao*-affiliated papers and other military-related media and sites. While providing coverage of all services and regions of the PLA, the website's content typically avoids sensitive details such as locations and names of units.

The site also offers a series of online forums, including a BBS for enlisted soldiers, "Enlisted Soldier Forum," and one on general defense issues, "PLA Daily Defense Forum." These seem to attract postings from military enthusiasts and military personnel seeking information on aspects of military life (http://bbs.chinamil.com.cn/forums/).

The site has a link to an English-language version, but this version offers translations of only a small fraction of the articles in the vernacular portal and often does not include the full text of the Chinese language articles.