



CHINA MEDIA BULLETIN

*A biweekly update of press freedom and censorship news
related to the People's Republic of China*

Issue 85: April 17, 2013

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PHOTO OF THE WEEK: IN GOOGLE'S REAR VIEW



Credit: [Sina Tech](#)

BROADCAST / PRINT MEDIA NEWS



Media outlets differ on response to bird flu outbreak

China's mainstream media have presented varying assessments of the government's handling of a new H7N9 avian influenza virus, which has killed 17 people in China to date. The state-run *Beijing News* pointed out on April 1 that the first known human case was found in Shanghai on February 19, but that the growing outbreak was not disclosed to the public until March 31. The delay prompted speculation that the news was suppressed until after the politically sensitive National People's Congress session, held in early March. Many outlets initially praised the government's response. On April 2, the *Shanghai Oriental Morning Post*, a commercially run paper, detailed official efforts to identify and control the disease, stating, "It's quick enough to be able to diagnose a new disease in just over 20 days." However, on the same day, the city-owned *Shanghai Business Daily* demanded greater transparency to address public concerns and help stem the outbreak. On April 4, a column in the Communist Party Youth League's *China Youth Daily* said that the delays in releasing information were "hardly acceptable" to the public. The author urged the government to recognize the recent proliferation of social media and use it to spread accurate and timely information, contrasting the situation with the 2002–03 outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), which the Chinese authorities hid from the public for weeks. Nevertheless, some important outlets continued to downplay the issue. Netizens sharply criticized state broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV) after its April 5 evening news program failed to mention the bird flu virus. The government has also sought to curb any independent reporting on the topic. According to *China Digital Times*, the Central Propaganda Department issued a directive on April 10 that ordered media outlets to "give first place" to information released by government departments and the official Xinhua news agency. "Report discreetly on related issues, and do not sensationalize them," it said.

- Reuters 4/17/2013: [No poultry contact in some Chinese bird flu cases: WHO](#)
- Associated Press 4/11/2013: [China praised for transparency during bird flu outbreak](#)
- *New York Times* 4/10/2013: [China's actions in flu cases draw critics](#)
- *Beijing News* 4/1/2013 (in Chinese): [Two people died from bird flu, officials reported after 20 days](#)
- *South China Morning Post* 4/7/2013: [Questions fly thick and fast over delay in bird flu report](#)
- *China Youth Daily* 4/4/2013 (in Chinese): [How many G can the government reach facing 4G public opinion?](#)
- *China Digital Times* 4/5/2013: [Netizen voices: No word on bird flu from CCTV news](#)
- *China Digital Times* 4/12/2013: [Ministry of Truth: Epidemic situation in Shanghai](#)



New rules restrict journalists' use of microblogs, foreign sources

China's media regulator, the General Administration of Press, Radio, Film, and Television (GAPRFT), has issued new rules that tighten control on media outlets' use of foreign sources and journalists' postings on microblogs. The regulations were published on the front page of the *China Press and Publishing Journal*, a GAPRFT subsidiary, on April 16. Among the restrictions is a prohibition on "arbitrarily" using reports from overseas media agencies or websites, or relying on tips from news informants, freelancers, nongovernmental groups, or commercial organizations without full verification or official permission. A second set of rules relates to the microblog accounts of media outlets and individual journalists. Outlets must obtain official permission to set up an account, maintain a log of posts, appoint one person to be responsible for postings, and delete "harmful" information in a timely manner. Individual journalists must obtain permission from their work units before setting up professional accounts, and they are prohibited from posting information acquired through their journalistic duties without permission. As microblogs' popularity and influence have grown in recent years, the accounts of journalists and media outlets have become important—and trusted—alternative sources of news for many users. Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* noted that the "strengthened management" sought by the new regulations is "understood to be party-speak for allowing less leeway in sharing information online that couldn't have appeared in newspapers in the first place." Over the past year, several incidents have exposed internal battles between managers and staff over control of various news outlets' microblog accounts (see CMB [special feature](#): The 'Southern Weekly' Controversy). A number of individual journalists have already faced dismissal or suspension for comments made on microblogs, with three such cases recorded in 2012 (see CMB No. [55](#)). But the rules create a more solid basis for managers and regulators to take such action and could encourage self-censorship, even if enforced only selectively. Meanwhile, it is unclear what impact the new restrictions on using foreign sources will have on the existing practice of reprinting some international reports, though Britain's *Telegraph* noted that the effect could be substantial.

- *Caijing* 4/16/2013: [China tightens press controls, in particular on Weibo](#)
- *A Big Enough Forest* 4/16/2013: [SARFT to enhance control over editors' online activities](#)
- *South China Morning Post* 4/17/2013: [New regulations in China ban journalists from quoting foreign media](#)
- *Telegraph* 4/17/2013: [Chinese journalists banned from quoting foreign media](#)
- China Press and Publishing Net 4/16/2013 (in Chinese): [Journalists must obtain official permission to set up accounts](#)



State media cautiously note Hu Yaobang death anniversary

On April 15, several official media outlets commemorated the 24th anniversary of former Chinese Communist Party leader Hu Yaobang's death. After he was purged from the party in 1987 for his liberal stance, Hu was long perceived by the leadership as a sensitive figure. His death in 1989 led to public mourning that morphed into the prodemocracy protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square,

which were eventually crushed in a violent crackdown. Hu was an ally of Xi Zhongxun, the late father of current Chinese president Xi Jinping, and this year's unusual media coverage of his death anniversary prompted speculation that it was a signal of the new leadership's intention to enact some sort of reforms (see CMB No. [84](#)). The Shanghai party newspaper *Liberation Daily* published a commentary authored by its former editor in chief, Zhou Ruijin, who praised Hu for his reform efforts. A link to the article was posted on the website of Communist Party mouthpiece *People's Daily*. However, a different version appeared on the Hong Kong-based Phoenix news portal, with some passages—including one in which Zhou explicitly praised Hu's attempts to “advance freedom of expression”—that were omitted from the *Liberation Daily* version. On April 16, the party-controlled newspaper *Global Times* reported that thousands of people had visited Hu's tomb in Jiangxi Province, and that netizens posted online messages to pay tribute to him. In an interview with Radio Free Asia, Beijing-based activist Hu Jia said the state media articles were likely planned and preapproved by the Chinese authorities. Another activist, Qi Zhiyong, said police in the capital had increased security around the Hu family's residence, presumably to deter unauthorized gatherings by reform advocates. According to *China Digital Times*, terms such as “Yaobang,” “Secretary-General Hu,” and “reformist” were blocked on the microblogging platform Sina Weibo—another indication of the government's cautious attitude on calls for reform.

- *South China Morning Post* 4/15/2013: [Remembering Chinese party leader Hu Yaobang still no easy task](#)
- *China Digital Times* 4/16/2013: [Sensitive Words: Hu Yaobang remembered and more](#)
- Radio Free Asia 4/16/2013: [Tiananmen protest reappraisal 'still unlikely'](#)
- *New York Times* 4/16/2013: [Cautious call for political reform in China](#)



Daring exposé on labor camp spurs outcry before censors descend

In its April issue, *Lens Magazine*, a small publication from the same media group as the better-known *Caijing*, published a hard-hitting, 20,000-word investigative piece detailing torture and violence at the Masanjia women's reeducation-through-labor (RTL) camp in Liaoning Province. The article, written by reporter Yuan Ling, draws on the accounts of petitioners recently released from the camp, a diary that was secretly smuggled out, and interviews with current and former staff members. It describes horrific conditions including long days of forced labor, solitary confinement, and routine torture with electric batons and customized instruments with names like “tiger bench” and “death bed.” Former detainees held at the camp for adherence to Falun Gong, the banned spiritual group, have long reported systemic abuse at the facility. But the *Lens* article marked the first time such testimony has appeared in a formal mainland publication. The article does not mention Falun Gong by name—the term is strictly prohibited by censors—though it does refer at one point to a “special group” of inmates who are singled out for abuse. The report caused a stir online and via microblogs, generating shock even among Chinese who were already aware of the brutality often meted out by the authorities. According to the Associated Press, on April 8 the report became the “most read story” on China's “four biggest news sites.” However, the censorship apparatus soon kicked in, and the report began disappearing from the Chinese internet. *China Digital Times* reported that on April 9 the Central Propaganda Department issued a directive stating, “Without exception, do not reuse,

report, or comment on the article,” and that the camp’s name was blocked in the search function of Sina’s Weibo microblogging platform. The *Lens* article strengthened calls for abolition of the RTL camp system, which allows police to jail people for up to four years without trial (see CMB No. [75](#)). Officials have floated such a proposal since January, but its fate remains unclear. Speaking to a publication of the Communist Party’s All-China Women’s Organization, Yuan said he had been interviewing victims for five years, but only attempted to publish his article after talk of RTL reform began to accelerate. The Liaoning authorities responded to the publication with an announcement that a special investigation team had been formed to look into abuses at Masanjia. However, Radio Free Asia reported that police had tried to detain petitioners who were quoted in the story, and Chinese activists and commentators said provincial institutions involved in the new inquiry were long aware of, and therefore complicit in, the systemic torture at the camp.

- *Ministry of Tofu* 4/9/2013: [Torture methods at a Chinese gulag, or reeducation-through-labor camp, are exposed by Chinese media](#)
- Associated Press 4/9/2013: [Chinese report on labor camp fuels reform debate](#)
- *New York Times* 4/11/2013: [Story of women’s labor camp abuse unnerves even China](#)
- Radio Free Asia 4/15/2013: [Police target labor camp whistleblowers](#)
- Falun Dafa Information Center 4/11/2013: [FDIC: Even more to Masanjia Camp than Chinese news report reveals](#)
- *China Digital Times* 4/9/2013: [Ministry of Truth: Masanjia women’s labor camp](#)
- *China Digital Times* 4/10/2013: [Sensitive words: Labor camp, bird flu, and more](#)
- *Epoch Times* 4/28/2013: [Chinese authorities muzzle labor camp victims after exposé](#)



‘Southern Weekly’ censor expresses regrets before death

Zeng Li, an in-house censor who had just retired on March 31 from *Southern Weekly*, a Guangzhou-based paper known for outspoken reporting on corruption and other sensitive issues, died on April 3 at age 61, apparently of intestinal bleeding. He left a letter for his colleagues, dated March 28, that detailed his regrets about enforcing government censorship regulations. In the letter, which was widely circulated online, Zeng admitted that he had made many “mistakes,” including deleting content that should have been published. However, he said he eventually decided that he could no longer act against his conscience, because he did not want to be a “sinner against history.” Zeng played a significant role in January when journalists at Southern Weekly mounted a large-scale protest against their managers and the government for having arbitrarily altered the content of the paper’s New Year editorial (see CMB [special feature](#): The ‘Southern Weekly’ Controversy). He wrote a crucial blog post on January 6 that exposed the role of provincial propaganda officials in rewriting the editorial, and detailed their growing interference over the previous year. His confessional March 28 letter generated an outpouring of grief on the internet over his death. “When this thing happened some time ago, he behaved beautifully. Now that he’s gone, he will continue to edit this country in heaven,” wrote prominent writer Li Chengpeng.

- *Economist* 4/13/2013: [Contradictions among the people](#)
 - *South China Morning Post* 4/4/2013: [Confessional last letter of Southern Weekly's in-house censor days before he died](#)
 - CPJ 4/4/2013: [Zeng Li: A rueful look at how censorship works in China](#)
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Independent film fest canceled as state-backed event goes ahead

An independent film festival in Kunming, Yunnan Province, was forcibly canceled before the opening of its weeklong program, which had been scheduled to begin on March 21. The event, which would have featured independent documentary films, was shut down after many participants had already arrived in the city. According to prominent blogger and professor Cui Weiping, the Yunnan Multicultural Visual Festival—so named to avoid the attention from authorities that a “film festival” would likely draw— “is an important platform for independent documentary filmmakers in China. It began in 2003 and has already gone on for 10 years.” This is the first year it has been completely canceled, though other such events have been closed under pressure in recent years (see CMB Nos. [21](#), [37](#)). By contrast, the state-sponsored Beijing International Film Festival kicked off in the capital city on April 14 and has raised its profile with increased participation from Hollywood celebrities.

- China Media Project 4/9/2013: [Authorities cancel indie film festival](#)
 - Yunnan Multicultural Visual Festival 3/19/2013 (in Chinese): [Closure notice](#)
 - [Beijing International Film Festival](#)
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NEW MEDIA / TECHNOLOGY NEWS



Netizens and censors grapple with bird flu outbreak

Unlike during the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic in 2003, the prevalence of social media like the microblogging platform Sina Weibo has enabled Chinese people to circulate news and information about the current H7N9 avian influenza outbreak and drive greater transparency from the government and state media. On April 1, faced with widespread suspicions among netizens that the flu virus was linked to the recent appearance of thousands of pig carcasses in a Shanghai river, the authorities denied any such connection, reporting that tests had found no H7N9 in the pigs (see CMB No. [83](#)). On April 2, a netizen who claimed to be an employee at Nanjing Gulou Hospital posted an image of a document dated March 30—purportedly a diagnosis of H7N9 in a local chicken butcher. The posting was quickly removed by censors, but the flu case was confirmed in a report by the official Xinhua news agency on April 3. As of April 7, topics related to H7N9 had generated almost four million postings on Weibo, including a photograph of dead sparrows taken by a user called Mao Xiaojiong in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. In an interview with Agence France-Presse published on April 16, Mao said the photo had been reposted 20,000

times since early April, but she voluntarily deleted the original and switched her account name to avoid causing panic. Despite netizen efforts to post responsibly, state media reported on April 10 that at least 11 people had been detained in six provinces for posting unverified information about the outbreak. According to Reuters, the Florida-based FluTrackers website, which documents emerging diseases around the world, has experienced denial-of-service attacks that it said originated in China. A March 7 posting on the website was among the first to mention H7N9 cases in Shanghai.

- *China Digital Times* 4/12/2013: [Ministry of Truth: Epidemic situation in Shanghai](#)
- *Global Voices* 4/8/2013: [Outbreak of new avian flu kills six in China](#)
- Agence France-Presse 4/16/2013: [Social media pushes China into dealing with bird flu outbreak](#)
- *Time* 4/3/2013: [Social media pushes China into dealing with bird flu outbreak](#)
- *China Digital Times* 4/10/2013: [Sensitive words: Labor camp, bird flu, and more](#)
- China Central Television 4/10/2013 (in Chinese): [H7N9 avian flu rumors widespread in multiple locations, 11 people detained](#)
- Reuters 4/2/2013: [New bird flu strain creates fear and surveillance](#)



Shaanxi propaganda official urges more aggressive internet controls

On April 11, *Red Flag Journal*, a semimonthly publication run by the Chinese Communist Party, printed an article in which Shaanxi provincial propaganda deputy chief Ren Xianliang called for better party control of online media as a basis for stronger Communist leadership. In the opinion piece, entitled “Coordinate Two Spaces for Public Opinion, Concentrate the Positive Energy of Society,” Ren, who is also vice chairman of the state-run All-China Journalists Association, criticized influential bloggers in the country for sabotaging party rule through their writing, especially those who published on foreign-registered websites. Calling internet-based new media the “new battlefield for public opinion,” he urged the authorities to “warn those who must be warned, silence those who must be silenced, shut down those who must be shut down.” Ren’s article was widely circulated online before it was removed without explanation. Popular microblogging platform Sina Weibo also deleted related discussions among users, and reportedly put Ren’s full name and “Shaanxi Propaganda Department” on the list of blocked keyword searches. Separately, in the latest sign that the government is working to shape public opinion on the internet rather than simply removing problematic content, Beijing-based *Caixin* magazine reported that as of December 2012, Chinese government agencies had opened 176,700 Weibo accounts—a 250 percent increase since the end of 2011.

- *Atlantic* 4/15/2013: [China’s Communist Party isn’t really afraid of the internet](#)
- China Media Project 4/12/2013: [Party must grab the agenda, says official](#)
- *China Digital Times* 4/13/2013: [Sensitive words: Call to clamp down on Weibo VIPs](#)
- *Caixin* 3/28/2013: [Number of gov’t Weibo accounts soars](#)



Baidu developing device to rival ‘Google Glass’

Chinese search-engine giant Baidu announced on April 3 that it is developing a digital eyewear device that immediately drew comparisons to Google Glass, created by the company’s U.S.-based rival Google. In an interview with Reuters, Baidu spokesman Kaiser Kuo said the device, internally known as “Baidu Eye,” consisted of a headset with a small LCD screen and would allow users to search by voice command and employ facial-recognition software using images captured with a built-in camera. Kuo did not present a picture of Baidu Eye, but popular news portal Sina Tech reported that a leaked image of a Baidu employee wearing a headset matching the description was circulated online on April 1, leading many netizens to believe it was a prank for April Fool’s Day. Kuo said it remained unclear whether the experimental eyewear would become commercially available. However, Baidu has a history of producing clones of Google’s services (see CMB No. [69](#)). The authorities have generally favored domestic alternatives to Google in the Chinese market (see CMB No. [82](#)), in part because the U.S. company has resisted compliance with government censorship rules.

- Reuters 4/3/2013: [China’s Baidu developing digital eyewear similar to Google Glass](#)
- BBC 4/3/2013: [‘China’s Google’ Baidu is making smart glasses](#)
- Sina Tech 4/2/2013 (in Chinese): [Baidu conducts internal testing of eyewear device Baidu Eye](#)



Netizen anger staves off fees for free service WeChat

Users of WeChat (Weixin), a popular mobile messaging application operated by the private company Tencent, appear to have won the initial round in a closely watched battle with China’s powerful state-owned telecommunications firms. On March 28, an official from the National Development and Reform Commission had endorsed the idea of imposing fees on the free service, which is used by more than 300 million people for its voice-messaging and photo-sharing features. Three days later, state broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV) reported on its microblog account that the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology was considering whether to require Tencent to implement a fee and had already asked the firm to submit a plan. While Tencent kept a low profile, a backlash from Chinese WeChat users ensued, with millions posting messages that fiercely condemned the proposed fees. Many vowed to stop using the service if a fee were introduced. Finally, on April 7, Tencent president Liu Chiping announced that WeChat would remain free, though some insiders said fees might be imposed on application service providers rather than on users. Analysts and internet users voiced suspicions that China’s three state-owned telecom carriers—China Mobile, China Telecom, and China Unicom—were pushing for fees to help defray their costs arising from customers’ use of WeChat. Guo Ying, founder and chief executive of VIVA Wireless New Media, said the free application placed a substantial traffic burden on the carriers’ networks. According to Yan Xiaojia of the research institute Analysys International, free mobile services like WeChat have also allowed users to circumvent “traditional” forms of communication like phone calls and text messaging, both prime revenue sources for telecom service providers. David Wertime and Rachel Lu of *Tea Leaf Nation* argued that imposition of a fee would mark a

notable departure by the government “from a relatively laissez-faire approach toward Chinese internet companies and hark back to the bad old days of planned economy.”

- Xinhua 4/7/2013: [Tencent president: Wechat will remain free](#)
- *Tea Leaf Nation* 4/5/2013: [WeChat war escalates, becomes showdown between government and internet users](#)
- *South China Morning Post* 3/28/2013: [Outcry after official urges Wechat to charge a fee](#)
- *Tea Leaf Nation* 3/31/2013: [With China’s hottest social network in danger, netizens cry: Hands off!](#)

TIBET & XINJIANG



Tibetans imprisoned for sharing information about immolations online

According to the Dharamsala-based Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), the Chinese authorities recently imposed prison sentences of up to six years on four Tibetans who had shared information related to self-immolations with contacts outside China or engaged in online conversations about Tibet. The verdicts were first reported by the Qinghai provincial newspaper *Qinghai Daily* on April 12. According to the article, the local court in Qinghai Province’s Malho Prefecture sentenced defendant Choepa Gyal to six years in prison on charges of “inciting separatism” after he posted content related to Tibet online and participated in discussion forums on the Chinese messaging platform Tencent QQ. Defendant Namkha Jam received a six-year prison term for distributing images of self-immolators to overseas Tibetan organizations. A third defendant, Chagthar, received a four-year prison term for producing photographs and texts on self-immolations that he allegedly knew about beforehand. The fourth man, Gonbey, was sentenced to three years in prison for distributing photographs and “separatist” content. Each of the men’s sentences also included “deprivation of political rights” for one to two years upon release. According to Radio Free Asia, a total of 115 Tibetans have set themselves on fire since 2009 to protest the Chinese authorities’ repressive policies in Tibet. As the number has grown, the government has increasingly resorted to punishing acquaintances of the immolators, or those who transmit information about them to contacts outside China. It is unusual for state media to report on Tibetan imprisonment cases; the purpose in this instance may have been to deter other Tibetans from communicating online about the self-immolations.

- Radio Free Asia 4/15/2013: [Chinese court jails four Tibetans on ‘separatism’ charge](#)
- TCHRD 4/15/2013: [China confirms sentencing four Tibetans for ‘inciting separatism’](#)
- *Qinghai Daily* 4/12/2013 (in Chinese): [Malho Intermediate People’s Court made final ruling on serial ‘subversive’ cases](#)

BEYOND CHINA



China release of ‘Django Unchained’ quashed without explanation

Chinese film authorities abruptly canceled the release of the American thriller *Django Unchained* on April 11, the day of its planned debut (see CMB No. [84](#)), citing unspecified technical reasons. The Sanlitun Megabox cinema in Beijing reportedly pulled the plug after the film went on for less than a minute. According to a microblogger nicknamed Xue Yi Dao, “Staff then came in and said [film censors] ... had called to say it had to be delayed!!” Theaters in Shanghai were also ordered to halt screenings of the movie and provided refunds to the audiences. A cinema chain manager told the *Hollywood Reporter* that the industry was warned that showing the film would be a “serious breach of regulations.” Some observers speculated that the cancellation stemmed from censors’ second thoughts about previously overlooked scenes of nudity. While many films had been censored on various grounds in the past, it was highly unusual for a major feature to be pulled at the last minute, particularly after it had been widely promoted; one of the film’s stars, Leonardo DiCaprio, had participated in a series of interviews with local media. An editorial published by the Communist Party–controlled newspaper *Global Times* on April 14 criticized the seemingly arbitrary decision, saying it “confirms the negative image of China’s film censorship.” *Django*’s publicists in China told reporters they were in the process of negotiating a new date for release.

- *Global Times* 4/14/2013: [Django unclothed does less harm to audiences than screeners’ whims](#)
- *Hollywood Reporter* 4/12/2013: [Sony China ‘working to reschedule’ Chinese release of ‘Django Unchained’](#)
- *Guardian* 4/15/2013: [Django Unchained’s China release may be back on](#)



Philippine newswire site defaced by ‘Chinese’ hackers

Suspected Chinese hackers defaced the website of the Philippine government newswire Philippines News Agency (PNA) on April 14. Agence France-Presse reported that the website temporarily displayed the Chinese flag and the text: “China Hacker EvilShadow Team, We are evil shadow. We are the team. We have our own dignity China Hacker Lxxker,” followed by an apparent e-mail address. The PNA website was reportedly back to normal after about an hour. The hacking occurred less than one week after Philippine authorities arrested 12 Chinese fishermen for alleged poaching when their vessel ran aground on the Tubbataha Reef, a UNESCO World Heritage site near the South China Sea. The incident adds to escalating tensions between China and the Philippines over rival territorial claims in the area, though the reef is located in undisputed Philippine waters. In April 2012, a small “war” between hackers from the two nations broke out following an incident in which Philippine warships were confronted by Chinese patrol vessels in a standoff over the disputed Scarborough Shoal. Suspected Chinese hackers attacked several government and university websites at the time, and Filipino hackers retaliated, in some cases defacing Chinese government or university

websites with jingoistic messages (see CMB No. [54](#)). The Philippines was rated as Partly Free in Freedom House's 2012 *Freedom of the Press* index and Free in its 2012 *Freedom on the Net* index.

- Agence France-Presse 4/14/2013: [‘Chinese hackers’ deface Philippines news website](#)
- GMA News Online 4/14/2013: [PNA site defaced by ‘Chinese’ hackers](#)
- PTV News 4/14/2013: [PNA website briefly defaced by China hackers](#)
- CNN 4/12/2013: [Philippines arrest Chinese ‘poachers’](#)

NOTABLE ANALYSIS



‘Economist’ publishes special report on China’s internet

In its April 6 edition, the *Economist* magazine featured a special report on China and the internet, authored by correspondent Gady Epstein. The report consists of nine articles on topics including how censorship works, the role of microblogs, the e-commerce ecosystem, and unabashed hacking. Reflecting on the long-term political implications of the Chinese Communist Party’s nuanced controls, Epstein notes, “When history books about this period come to be written, the internet may well turn out to have been an agent not of political upheaval in China but of authoritarian adaptation before the upheaval, building up expectations for better government while delaying the kind of political transformation needed to deliver it.”

- *Economist* 4/6/2013: [China and the internet: A giant cage](#)

For additional information on human rights and free expression in China, see:

[*Freedom in the World 2013*](#)
[*Freedom on the Net 2012*](#)
[*Freedom of the Press 2012*](#)

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