

OPINION: THE POWER OF DIALOGUE P.22 | CULTURE: CHERISHED FRIENDS OF THE CPC P.46

# BEIJING REVIEW

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## TRACK AND TRACE

Science should prevail in finding the origins  
of COVID-19

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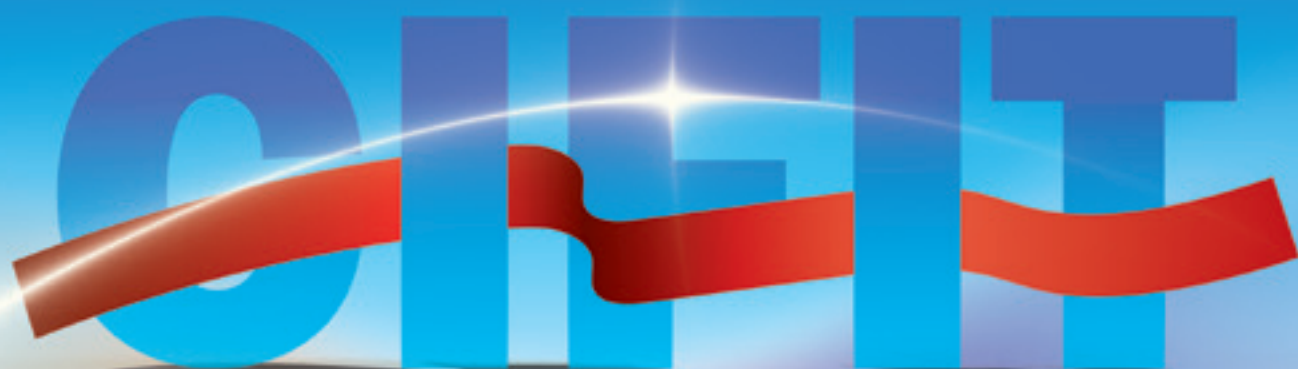


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Cover Design: Cui Xiaodong

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## Back to the Source

In tracing the origins of the novel coronavirus, the United States is acting out its own preset script dictated by a political hand, instead of scientific opinion. On May 26, President Joe Biden said he had asked the intelligence community to share its reports on the likely origins of COVID-19 within 90 days. As the deadline looms, U.S. media recently reported intelligence agencies are digging through genetic data that could prove vital to uncovering the virus' origins. The somewhat absurd approach of having these agencies investigate the source of a virus has not gone unnoticed by the international community.

China was the first to report the novel coronavirus to the World Health Organization (WHO), but later research uncovered infections in countries such as the U.S., Italy and Spain before cases emerged in Wuhan, Hubei Province, in December 2019.

Joint research on the virus' origins conducted in China by an international team of scientists headed by the World Health Organization has concluded that COVID-19 is "extremely unlikely" to have stemmed from a laboratory. This

science-based conclusion, however, is obviously not in line with the expectations of U.S. politicians who need a weapon to contain China.

The political manipulation on the part of the U.S. has undermined international teamwork in tracing the virus back to its source. China will not comply with any request for a second phase of origin tracing based on the presumption of guilt.

Previous knowledge has taught scientists that a virus may not cause an epidemic immediately upon entering human society. For instance, AIDS broke out in the U.S. in the early 1980s, but HIV, the virus behind AIDS, is thought to have jumped from animals to humans in Africa in the 1930s.

A second phase of origin tracing should therefore be conducted in countries having witnessed earlier cases. U.S. politicians will never succeed in forging evidence that will entrap China. The rational path is to work with the international community to find the true origins of the virus so that humanity will respond to future public health emergencies more effectively. **BR**



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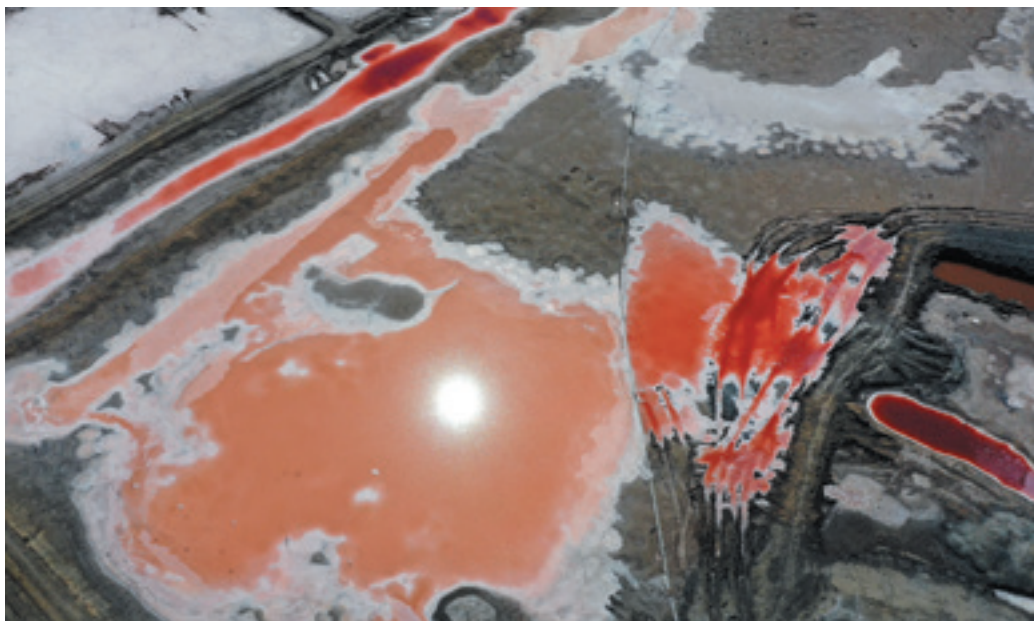
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## NEW FACILITIES

Automatic COVID-19 nucleic acid testing labs are under construction at the Yangzhou International Exhibition Center on August 10. Yangzhou, a city of 4.56 million people in Jiangsu Province, east China, reported 485 locally transmitted cases from July 28 to August 11. Mass screening has been launched to stem the spread of the virus.



## Colorful Lake

An aerial photo taken on August 7 shows a salt lake in Dingbian, a county in Shaanxi Province.

## Human Rights Progress

On August 12, China's State Council Information Office released a white paper detailing how China's recent achievement of all-round moderate prosperity not only represents comprehensive progress in ensuring universal human rights within China, but also makes a new contribution to the cause of human rights globally.

Titled "Moderate Prosperity in All Respects: Another Milestone Achieved in China's Human Rights," the white paper said that under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese people "completed the historic transformation out of poverty to secure access to food and clothing, to a decent life, and finally to moderate prosperity."

According to the document, moderate prosperity in China is evident in all respects: a buoyant economy, political democracy, flourishing culture, social equity and healthy ecosystems; balanced development between urban and rural areas to the benefit of all people; and high respect for and comprehensive protection of human rights.

China's realization of moderate prosperity serves as a solid foundation for human rights, the white paper said.

It expounded on the topic in five aspects: achieving moderate prosperity and advancing human rights; ending absolute poverty and securing the right to an adequate standard of living; boosting human rights with development and securing economic, social and cultural rights; protecting civil and political

rights with law and governance; and promoting social equity and protecting the rights of special groups.

The white paper hailed the realization of moderate prosperity in China, a country with a population about one fifth of the world's total, as a milestone in the history of global human rights.

## Improving Logistics

China's logistics network for commercial services and international trade will be improved to make the system smarter, greener and more efficient by 2025, according to an action plan jointly issued by the Ministry of Commerce and eight other government departments, Xinhua News Agency reported on August 10.

According to the plan, during

the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) period, the country will strive to establish a modern logistics system with a number of influential logistics firms competing internationally.

China also plans to establish several national cold chain logistics bases and develop a whole-process distribution system to accelerate cold chain logistics development from 2021 to 2025, according to the plan.

## Lottery-Funded Project

A total of 3,854 child patients with leukemia or congenital heart disease have received subsidies this year from a relief project funded by China's national lottery ticket revenue, Xinhua reported on August 7.

The Chinese Red Cross Foundation (CRCF), which is in charge of the project's execution, said that with an increasing budget, it is estimated that between 2021 and 2025, the project will provide aid for over 60,000 children who suffer from leukemia or congenital heart disease.

The age range of eligible patients with leukemia has also been expanded from 0-14 years to 0-18 years, said a CRCF representative.

Since 2009, the relief project has helped over 54,000 children with leukemia or congenital heart disease.

## Karaoke Under Scrutiny

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism announced on August 10 it plans to create a blacklist for karaoke songs, banning those that contain harmful content from karaoke venues across the country.

On the list are songs containing content that endangers



national unity, sovereignty or territorial integrity; violates China's religious policies, promotes cults or spreads superstitions; or advocates obscenity, gambling, violence and drug-related crimes or instigating crimes, according to a set of interim regulations issued by the ministry.

The regulations will take effect on October 1.

China has nearly 50,000 entertainment venues such as karaoke bars, which each have a basic music library of over 100,000 songs.

## Coin Workshop

The world's oldest coin minting workshop, which dates back approximately 2,500 years, has been uncovered in Henan Province, Xinhua reported on August 9.

Using radiocarbon dating, Chinese archaeologists have confirmed that the bronzeware casting workshop had begun minting coins around 640-550 B.C. The workshop was discovered in the ruins of Guanzhuang, an ancient city that was built in approximately 800 B.C. during the Western Zhou Dynasty (1046-771 B.C.). The remains of the city are located close to Zhengzhou, the capital of central China's Henan Province.

## Luggage Tracking

According to China's civil aviation authorities, major airports in China will enhance their luggage management service capabilities by using radio frequency identification (RFID) technology to track luggage tracking.

Within the year, all major airports with annual passenger throughputs exceeding 10 million will begin applying RFID, according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China. As of June, 27 of these airports were in the process of implementing RFID projects.

Many Chinese airlines are now capable of providing services allowing passengers to check the conditions of their luggage throughout their journey.

## Homecoming

Authorities in Yunnan Province have evacuated more than 150,000 residents to avoid conflict between people and the famous migrating elephant herd, a local official said on August 9.

The herd of 14 wild Asian elephants is now approaching its traditional habitat, a nature reserve in southern Yunnan's Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, after



## Leisure Time

Tourists take selfies at a resort in Nanshan, a village in Huzhou, Zhejiang Province, on August 10. Taking advantage of the beautiful scenery, the village has been building hotels and homestays to develop tourism and promote rural vitalization.

roaming the province for nearly a year and half.

"At about 8 p.m. on August 8, the herd crossed the Yuanjiang River and has since continued heading south," said Wan Yong at a press conference on August 9. Wan leads the team in charge of tracking and

monitoring the elephants.

Wan said the elephants are in stable condition. Wild Asian elephants are under A-level state protection in China. Thanks to stronger environmental and wildlife protection efforts, their population in China has grown to about 300.



## A Relaxing Place

People visit a shop converted from a shipping container at an art street that was transformed from old factories in Hefei, capital of Anhui Province, on August 7. The art street was built by integrating creative designs and industrial culture. Offering fitness, dining and retail services, it has become a place for locals to relax.

## Steady Inflation

The consumer price index (CPI), a main gauge of inflation, rose 1 percent year on year in July, lower than the 1.1-percent growth recorded in June, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed on August 9.

The producer price index (PPI), which measures costs for goods at the factory gate, expanded 9 percent in the month, slightly higher than the 8.8-percent growth in June.

In July, the country's food prices declined 3.7 percent while non-food prices increased 2.1 percent, NBS data showed.

On a monthly basis, the CPI increased 0.3 percent, reversing a decline in June.

China has set its consumer inflation target at approximately 3 percent for 2021.

On the industrial side, sharp price hikes in crude oil and coal lifted year-on-year PPI growth in July, but month-on-month data

showed that government policies to stabilize commodity prices have taken effect, with mild price declines seen in industries including steel and non-ferrous metals, senior NBS statistician Dong Lijuan said.

## Soaring Sales

Retail sales of new-energy passenger cars reached 222,000 units in China in July, up 169.4 percent year on year, according to the China Passenger Car Association.

The wholesale volume of such vehicles grew 202.9 percent year on year to 246,000 units.

BYD, Tesla China, SAIC-GM-Wuling, SAIC Passenger Vehicle Branch and GAC Aion all sold more than 10,000 units of new-energy passenger vehicles in July.

In the month, retail sales of passenger vehicles, including sedans, sport utility vehicles and

multipurpose vehicles, dropped 6.2 percent year on year to 1.5 million units.

## Forex Reserves

China's foreign exchange reserves rose to more than \$3.23 trillion at the end of July, up \$21.9 billion from a month earlier, official data showed on August 7.

The volume went up 0.68 percent from the end of June, according to the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE).

The foreign exchange market saw balanced supply and demand in July, with market expectations remaining stable, Wang Chunying, Deputy Director of the SAFE, said.

Wang attributed the increase in foreign exchange reserves in July to the combined impact of currency translation and changes in asset prices.

In the month, non-dollar currencies strengthened slightly

and the prices of global financial assets went up as a result of factors such as the resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the monetary policy expectations and macroeconomic data of major economies, she added.

Despite uncertainty and instability in the global economic and financial situation triggered by the evolving pandemic, the Chinese economy continued its stable recovery and high-quality development, which will shore up the overall stability of foreign exchange reserves, Wang said.

## Internet Growth

Major Internet companies reported double-digit growth in business revenues and profits in the first half of the year, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT).

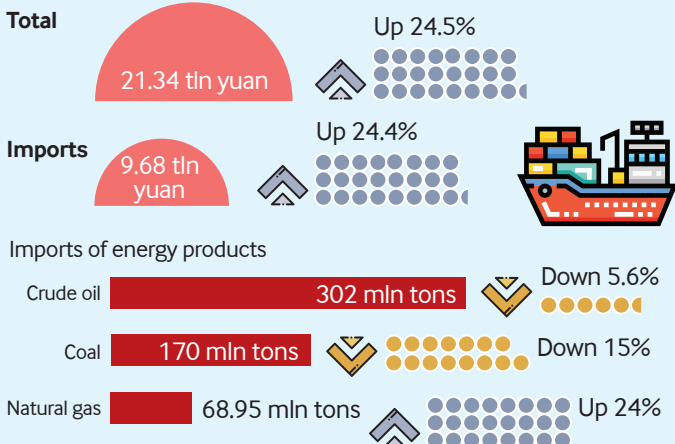
Their business revenues of major Internet companies totaled 695.1 billion yuan (\$107.2

## NUMBERS

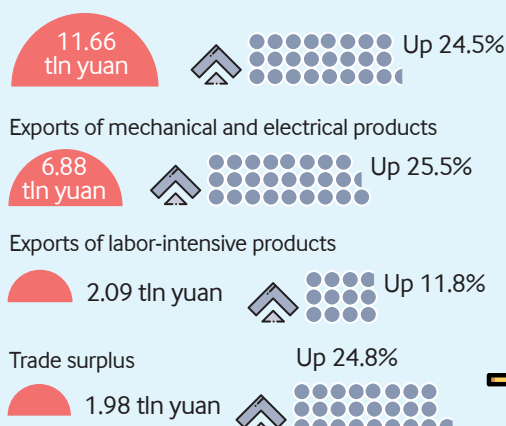
(\$1=6.5 yuan)

### China's Foreign Trade in January-July

(All growth rates are y.o.y.)



### Exports





billion), up 25.6 percent year on year, MIIT data showed.

During the period, the companies raked in 65.86 billion yuan (\$10.1 billion) in operating profits, climbing 27.4 percent from the same period a year earlier, the ministry said.

Overall research and development expenditure of these companies maintained rapid growth during the period, up 13.9 percent year on year. The growth rate was 3.2 percentage points higher than the 2020 level.

## Panda Bonds

The issuance of panda bonds—yuan-denominated debts sold by overseas issuers in China—reached 57.9 billion yuan (\$8.9 billion) in the first six months of 2021, jumping 42.6 percent year on year, according to data from the China Chengxin International Credit Rating Co. Ltd.

During the period, 37 such bonds were issued by 17 market

entities, figures demonstrated.

Chinese-funded enterprises were the major market participants in terms of issuance volume, while financial institutions accounted for the largest proportion as compared with other groups.

Companies such as GLP Holdings, BMW and Daimler view panda bonds as an important financing platform. The three companies' issuance volume hit 20.4 billion yuan (\$3.1 billion) in the first half of the year, the data showed.

## Overseas Investment

China's outbound mergers and acquisitions (M&As) more than doubled year on year in the first quarter of 2021, and are likely to go up further over the rest of the year, according to a report from the global rating firm Fitch Ratings.

Chinese investors will continue to seek overseas M&As

as they have seen recovering corporate earnings and strong investment demand, the report said.

In the January-March period, China's outbound M&A value scaled up to \$17.2 billion, up 136 percent year on year, the data showed.

The massive increase was driven by several deals in the consumer, technology, logistics, and media and telecom sectors in Europe and Asia.

Fitch expects the country's outbound M&As to increase steadily in 2021 as foreign investment regulations in some countries may loosen to revive economic growth after the pandemic.

## Financial Opening Up

The China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) has approved the establishment of a wholly foreign-owned fund management firm amid the

country's financial opening-up efforts.

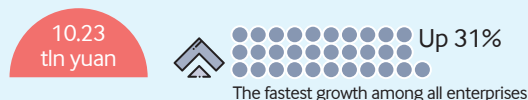
The Shanghai-based company, with a registered capital of \$30 million, was fully funded by FIL Asia Holdings Pte. Ltd, according to the commission. It will conduct businesses including management of publicly offered funds, fund sales, and private equity asset management.

The new firm is required to abide by Chinese laws and regulations, including the cybersecurity law, and strengthen compliance management in terms of the cross-border flow of business data and investors' personal information, the CSRC said.

China has been widening access to its financial sector for foreign investors, attracting global asset management giants such as BlackRock and Fidelity International to set up companies.

### Imports and exports

Private enterprises



Foreign-funded enterprises



State-owned enterprises



### China's top three trading partners

Association of Southeast Asian Nations



European Union



United States



Trade with countries along the Belt and Road



(Source: General Administration of Customs of China)

# THIS WEEK **WORLD**



## JAPAN

Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo waves the Olympic flag during the closing ceremony of Tokyo 2020 on August 8. Paris will host the Olympic Summer Games in 2024, 100 years after they last took place in France



## EGYPT

Airport staff in the resort town of Hurghada welcome arriving Russian tourists on August 9. Russia has recently resumed direct flights to Egypt's Red Sea coastal resorts, ending a six-year ban that followed the explosion of a Russian airliner that killed all onboard



## UNITED STATES

The mascot of the 2021 Chicago Ducky Derby waves from the festival's official boat in downtown Chicago on August 5. Organizers dumped 70,000 rubber ducks into the Chicago River that day to raise funds for the Special Olympics Illinois





## SINGAPORE

Helicopters carry the flag of Singapore during National Day celebrations on August 9



YONHAP

YONHAP



## GREECE

A resident helps firefighters extinguish a wildfire in the north of Evia island on August 8. Thousands of people have been evacuated from the area due to the blaze, which has destroyed thousands of hectares of land in recent days



## ZAMBIA

President Edgar Lungu opens the China-built second terminal of the Kenneth Kaunda International Airport in Lusaka on August 9



YONHAP



# THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

## ↓ DIVING TALENT WINS THE NATION'S HEART

Chinese diver **Quan Hongchan** claimed her first gold medal with an overwhelming victory in the women's 10m platform event on August 5 at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

During her international competitive debut, Quan collected full marks in her three out of five dives, putting her in the No.1 spot all the way to the finish line. First learning how to dive at the age of 8 at a local sports school, the talented athlete from rural Guangdong Province won her first national title in 2020.

"I'm clumsy, and I'm no good at academic studies. I just know how to dive," the 14-year-old, the youngest member of the Chinese Olympic delegation, said at a press conference. She hopes to make more money to get her mother, who was injured in a car accident, better treatment.

Both Quan's perfect performance in Tokyo and her personal experiences have made her a trending tag on social media.



## Same Train, Different Temperatures

**Beijing Youth Daily**  
**August 9**

Subways in many Chinese cities have introduced carriages of different temperatures on the same train recently. Passengers are happy with the more personalized services.

Most people are trying to escape the sweltering summer heat. However, whereas the set air conditioning (AC) temperature can meet the cooling-off needs of most people, it cannot satisfy

customized requirements. Children, the elderly, pregnant women and those afraid of the cold may feel this AC temperature is too low.

To cater to passengers' need for different temperatures on the subway, cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Chengdu offer different temperature settings in subway cars. Most carriages are set to high-cool mode, while the remaining ones are in low-cool mode.

Small changes result in better services. In the long run, the low-cool mode car system could be applied not only on subways, but also on high-speed trains. Passengers can choose their desired car when buying tickets.



## Cautious and confident

**China Newsweek**  
**August 9**

Given severe pandemic situations worldwide, China needs to remain on alert. Any slacking in COVID-19 control and prevention could have major consequences.

The recent spread of the highly

"The Chinese people will never allow the act of flagrantly engaging in official interactions with the Taiwan authorities and even endorsing those seeking 'Taiwan independence' while paying lip service to the one-China principle."

Foreign Ministry spokesperson **Hua Chunying**, commenting on Lithuania's decision to allow the Taiwan authorities to open a "representative office" in its capital Vilnius under the name of "Taiwan" on August 11

"The Belt and Road Initiative will not only create trade opportunities for Asian, African and European countries, but also pave the way for Africa to become an important part of the global supply chain and attract more international investments."

**Hisham Abu Bakr Metwally Mohamed**, an economist with the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Trade and Industry, in an article published by *China Daily* on August 11

infectious Delta variant of the novel coronavirus in many parts of China is putting the country's epidemic control system to the test. The current clusters are more complicated and have put some strain on response efforts since they have multiple sources overseas, affecting a wide range of people and places.

Based on the previous effective epidemic control measures, China is prepared, cautiously and confidently, to bring the new spread under control. Vaccines administered across the country had surpassed 1.8 billion doses by August 11. They demonstrated good preventive and protective effects against the Delta variant.

A good policy finds the dynamic balance between public health and the normal social and economic order. Every country must develop a long-term strategy that is realistic for their conditions. Some countries may have huge domestic markets to support their trade and tourism, and they may decide to continue to aim for "zero infection." In general, most will not be able to shut down their borders without hugely impacting their economies.

## Real Economy

### *Economic Daily*

August 9

A total of 143 Chinese companies have been listed as the world's top 500 enterprises measured by business revenue, according to the *Fortune* Global 500 list for 2021 released on August 3. China ranks No.1 on the list.

Meanwhile, Chinese technology and Internet companies have performed well. Many companies have not only made the list consecutively but have also improved their rankings. The country's digital economy hit 39.2 trillion yuan (\$6.1 trillion) last year, accounting for 38.6

percent of the GDP.

The rising ranking of Chinese technology companies is rooted in the country's solid economic foundation. As a developing country, China's growth must rely on the real economy. Greater financial openness should better serve the real economy, which is of great importance to maintaining economic stability. Further, more efforts should be made to increase competitiveness of the digital economy and promote the in-depth integration of digital technologies with the real economy.

With tens of thousands of offline stores, some Internet companies are buoying the overall real economy and have made great strides upward on the list.



## CANADIAN DRUG SMUGGLER'S DEATH SENTENCE

The appeal of Canadian drug smuggler **Robert Lloyd Schellenberg** was rejected by the high court in Liaoning Province, which upheld his death sentence, on August 10.

The Canadian citizen was given the death penalty by the Dalian Intermediate People's Court in the province for trafficking more than 222 kg of methamphetamines in early 2019. His property and assets were also confiscated in line with the judgment. Schellenberg did not agree with the ruling from the intermediate court, so he appealed to the high court.



After a review, the high court said on August 10 that the facts of the case were clear. According to China's Criminal Law, those who produce, smuggle or transport 50 grams or more of methamphetamines are punishable by death.

"While some people and nations are still afraid of offending the West, China should get the U.S. and other Western countries used to being the target of legitimate and constructive criticism."

**Markku Siira**, a Finnish geopolitical analyst, commenting to CGTN on August 9

"China's development achievements and ability to cope with crises are attributed to the high level of public trust in the government, which shows that China has found a model of democratic governance that suits its national conditions and people."

**Charles Onunaiju**, Director of the Center for China Studies of Nigeria, in an interview with Xinhua News Agency



A police officer peers out of a minivan before entering Fort Detrick in Maryland following a shooting on April 6

**COVER STORY**

# IN WITH SCIENCE, OUT WITH POLITICS

The issue of COVID-19 origin tracing should be handled as a scientific one  
without political influence By Ma Miaomiao