



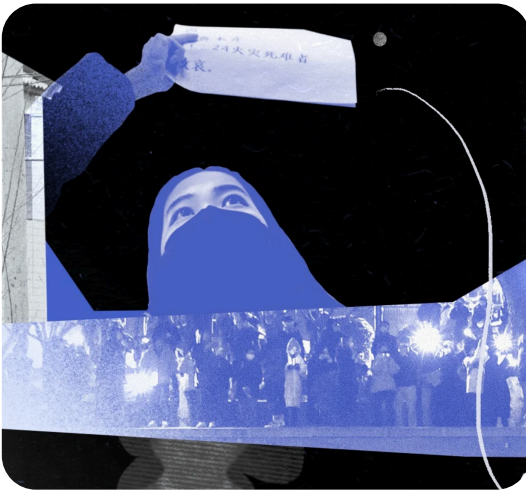
June-July 2025

Circle 19 newsletter

Issue n°6

Welcome to this monthly newsletter that presents Circle 19's latest productions and provides insights about the right to information in the People's Republic of China.

► WHAT'S NEW ON THE WEBSITE



2023: A rare account of the White Paper protesters and their aftermath, one year after the movement rocked China

WhyNot, Jiang Xue

This rare Mandarin-language article explores the 2022 White Paper protests through firsthand testimony from young participants across cities like Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu—tracing their arrests, responses, and life trajectories a year on—while sparking a broader ethical debate on the responsibilities and risks of reporting dissent under authoritarian censorship.

► CIRCLE 19 IN EVENTS



On 17 June 2025, Circle 19 spokesperson Filip Noubel led a half-day training in Dakar, Senegal, for French-speaking journalists seeking alternative sources on China and Taiwan to support more balanced coverage in Francophone Africa. Online speakers included representatives from Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Radio Taiwan International (RTI)'s French department, and Global Voices. The participants engaged in lively conversations about non-official narratives on China's impact in Africa, the perception of Chinese projects on the continent, and shared resources to improve China competence for African journalists.

A similar but online version of the training took place on 25 June 2025. Next steps will include the creation of a newsletter and a space for Sinophone and Francophone journalists to interact.



► CIRCLE 19 IN THE MEDIA



“What are overseas Chinese-language independent media professionals doing in an era of rising authoritarianism and declining democracy?”, Dasheng Media, Vivian Wu

(in Chinese)

In an unprecedented two-part interview, Vivian Wu (吴薇) from Dasheng Media invited four Circle 19 spokespersons—Chang Ping (长平), Alison Zhao Sile (赵思乐), Kris Cheng (郑乐捷) and Filip Noubel. They all shared their own experiences and gave valuable insights about what it means to be a professional reporting or researching China from the outside in terms of identity, goals, challenges and hopes. See [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) on YouTube.

► CIRCLE 19 PARTICIPANTS' WORK



Essay: “They can fill the jails, create an atmosphere of fear and re-write history and but they cannot extinguish hope”

Substack, Steve Vines

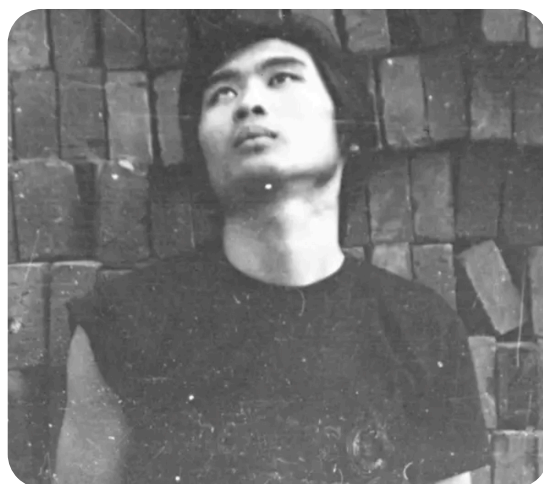
In this article, Circle 19 spokesperson and co-director of Hong Kong Media Overseas (HKMO) Steve Vines reflects on the repression of June 4 Tiananmen Massacre commemorations in Hong Kong, highlighting the diaspora's duty to preserve the memory of past and ongoing resistance against an increasingly authoritarian Chinese regime.

Feature story: “Exclusive interview with Chang Ping: If I could go back to 4 June 1989”

(in Chinese)

Deutsche Welle (DW), Chang Ping

In a deeply personal reflection, Circle 19 spokesperson, Chinese journalist and Tiananmen participant Chang Ping recounts his traumatic experiences during the 4 June 1989 crackdown, the lifelong sense of “humiliation” and survivor's guilt it left him with, and how these shaped his career, activism, and efforts to preserve historical memory across generations.





Article: "China tightens internet controls with new centralized form of virtual ID"

CNN, John Liu

In this article, Circle 19 spokesperson and research scientist at the University of California Xiao Qiang warns that China's forthcoming national internet ID system could intensify state surveillance and further restrict online freedom.

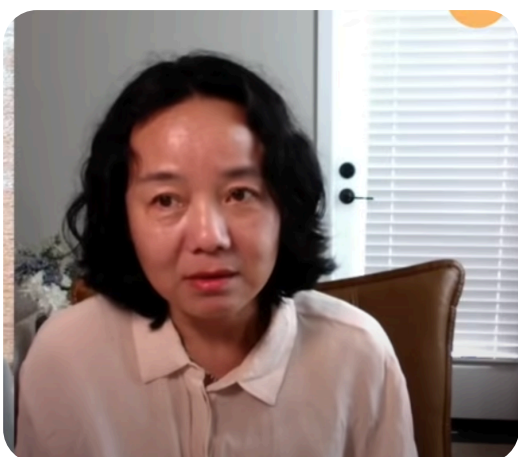
Translation: Chai Jing's interview with Chinese Civil War survivor Gao Binghan ([Part 1](#), [Part 2](#)) **China Digital Times, Cindy Carter**

China Digital Times is translating a powerful interview by journalist and former CCTV host Chai Jing, who revisits her 2012 conversation with Chinese Civil War survivor Gao Binghan to explore personal and historical trauma amid ongoing China-Taiwan tensions. Chai—known for her censored documentary *Under the Dome*—reclaims suppressed narratives and to defend the public's right to historical truth in the face of China's pervasive censorship. China Digital Times decided to translate and archive it to preserve censored content.



Interview: Thirty million overseas Chinese, but good books do not even sell 500 copies? Yi Jia Publishing Editor-in-chief Liu Yan (in Chinese) **Dasheng Media, Vivian Wu**

In this Mighty Talk interview (大声访谈), seasoned publisher Liu Yan (刘雁) talks about the publishing house Yi Jia Publishing she founded in the United States in 2015, which is dedicated to providing high-quality Chinese-language publications for overseas Chinese and promoting cultural exchange with China. The interview delves into the challenges and possibilities currently facing the overseas Chinese-language independent publishing market.





► FOCUS: CHINA UNOFFICIAL ARCHIVES



Analysis: What we talk about When We Talk About "Sensitivity": Chinese Politics Through the Lens of Political China

This article uses the case of Mei Shilin's 2025 protest and the history of the banned book *Political China* to explore how the once-legitimate concept of political system reform in China became a politically "sensitive" taboo, revealing the entrenched interests and systemic resistance that have blocked democratic progress for decades.



Feature story: A woman warrior who defended memory: Eyewitness of laogai Jiabiangou, He Fengming, passes away.

This obituary honours He Fengming—a survivor of China's 1957 Anti-Rightist Campaign for her decades-long effort to preserve historical memory and bear witness to political persecution through writing and documentary, making her a symbol of moral courage in the face of authoritarian erasure.



Editors' Note: Don't Let Workers' Voices Be Silenced — China Labour Bulletin Forced to Close; China Unofficial Archives Now Offers Its Reports

The article highlights the sudden closure of the China Labour Bulletin amid increasing political pressure, underscores its vital role in defending Chinese workers' rights, and calls for preserving its reports through the China Unofficial Archives to ensure workers' voices are not silenced.



Commentary: "Four Years Without Apple Daily: The End of Hong Kong's Press Freedom Under the National Security Regime"

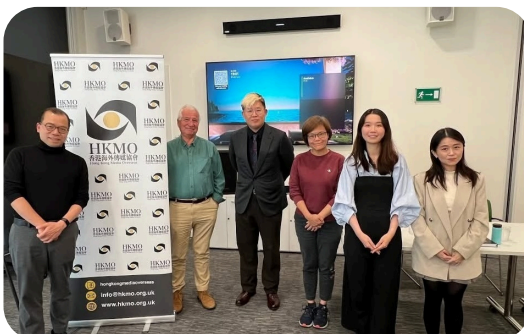
Marking the fourth anniversary of Apple Daily's forced shutdown, this piece reflects on how the Hong Kong government's use of the National Security Law to silence critical media not only ended press freedom in the city but also revealed the regime's use of "national security" as a tool to suppress dissent and consolidate authoritarian rule.



Memoir: The Land Drenched in Tears

The Land Drenched in Tears is a seminal Uyghur-language exile memoir by Söyüngül Chanisheff that documents her personal ordeal and the broader persecution of Uyghur intellectuals under Chinese Communist rule from 1957 to 1982.

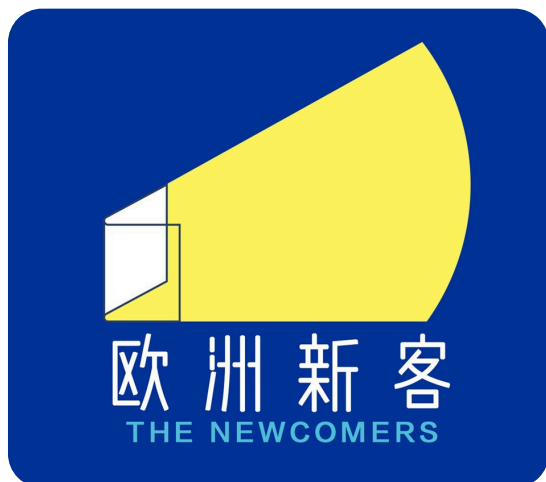
► PARTNERS' INITIATIVES



HKMO Seminar: "Challenges and opportunities for the Hong Kong diaspora media"

(in Cantonese)

With great support from Gloria Chan, editor of Green Bean Media; Jacky Fung from Simonglobal; Glacier Kwong from Flow HK; and Shirley Leung from Photon Media as honourable speakers, Hong Kong Media Overseas (HKMO) organised a seminar in June that aimed to explore the landscape of Hong Kong local and overseas media. As media within the city comes under increasing control and independent voices are eliminated, the role of the diaspora becomes ever more vital. But how is the demand for free information to be fulfilled?



The Newcomers (欧洲新客)

The Newcomers is an independent Chinese-language media initiative serving Chinese communities across Europe, which aims to bridge the information gap between Chinese diaspora communities and European society through original reporting, practical integration resources, and community dialogue to help Chinese immigrants better understand and participate in European democratic life. If you are interested in contributing, please reach out to eunewcomers@proton.me.