



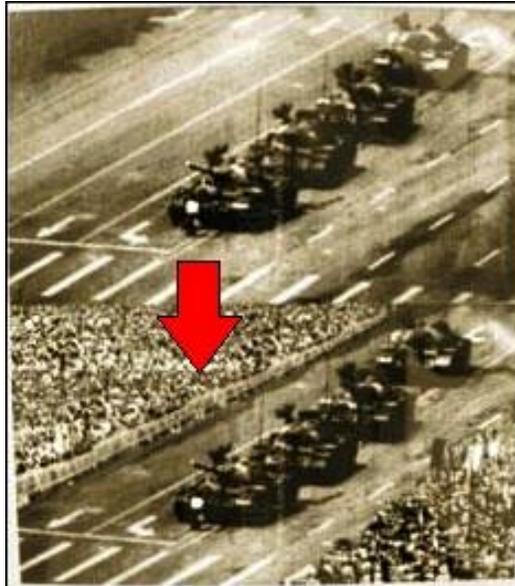
CHINA MEDIA BULLETIN

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

Issue No. 73: November 8, 2012 Headlines

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PHOTO OF THE WEEK: 'THE CENSOR'S ART



Credit: [Epoch Times](#)

BROADCAST / PRINT MEDIA NEWS



Propaganda, censorship reach fevered pitch before party congress

As the Chinese leadership prepared for the opening of the 18th Communist Party Congress on November 8, military publications produced a stream of propaganda calling for loyalty to the party (see below, CMB No. [70](#)). On November 2, an opinion article in the *People's Liberation Army Daily* proclaimed, “[We] should strongly oppose the arguments for separation of the army from our party, a politically neutral army or the nationalization of the PLA and other incorrect political ideas.” On the same day, a web portal operated by state broadcaster China Central Television reposted a commentary first published in September in the *People's Liberation Army Daily*, urging continued loyalty to the party as the only way to ease factional and ideological tensions. Beyond the military, photos posted online showed schoolchildren and volunteers engaging in elaborate celebrations to mark the beginning of the congress. Meanwhile, according to the *New York Times*, the authorities went to extreme lengths to remove any possible source of disruption or negativity ahead of the gathering. Kitchen knives were removed from store shelves, conferences and concerts were canceled, and internet traffic mysteriously slowed. English-language news channels such as the Cable News Network (CNN) and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) were removed from television sets in upscale health clubs in Beijing, and books on Chinese politics and history at a popular English-language bookstore disappeared. Chinese musician Gao Xiaosong wrote on his microblogging account on October 28 that songs containing the negative words “die” and “down” were banned from television. The Culture Ministry denied the claim, but an official told the Shaanxi Province newspaper *Hua Shang Daily* that the ministry had recently increased its censorship of songs.

- **BBC 11/8/2012: [China media: Party congress opens](#)**
- ***South China Morning Post* 11/3/2012: [Fear over PLA loyalty before party congress sees propaganda frenzy](#)**
- ***China Digital Times* 11/7/2012: [Photos: Getting ready for a party in Beijing](#)**
- ***New York Times* 11/1/2012: [From toys to TV News, jittery Beijing clamps down](#)**
- ***Hua Shang Daily* 11/1/2012 (in Chinese): [Cultural ministry calls Gao Xiaosong tweet about songs being banned exaggerating](#)**



Party congress crackdown on dissidents continues, with long-term costs

In the two weeks leading up to the 18th Communist Party Congress, human rights groups and overseas Chinese-language media continued to report cases of dissidents, activists, petitioners, and religious believers being harassed, detained, or in some cases sentenced to long prison terms (see above, CMB No. [72](#)). In a *New York Times* op-ed published on November 6, the husband of prominent Tibetan blogger Woesser, himself a Han Chinese writer, described how security agents had pressured him and his wife to leave Beijing, even though it would mean abandoning his 90-year-old mother. It was widely reported on November 1 that Cao Haibo, a cybercafé worker from Yunnan Province, had been sentenced to eight years in prison for starting online forums to discuss democracy and the possible formation of a political party. Similarly, adherents of the persecuted

Falun Gong spiritual movement have faced intensified abductions and prison sentences of over 10 years after questionable trials, according to the Falun Dafa Information Center and human rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong. Freedom House researcher Sarah Cook outlined the long-term impact of the crackdown on November 6 in the *International Business Times*, warning that some of the latest restrictions will not expire after the party congress ends, and that “the overall effect of the crackdown could be felt for years.” Beyond its toll on individual dissidents, Cook argues that such repression fuels broader self-censorship and—by compounding the regime’s crimes and reinforcing arbitrary judicial practices—will make it more difficult for the Communist Party’s new leaders to move in a more tolerant direction, even if they wish to do so.

- *International Business Times* 11/6/2012: [China: Dissent crushed as Communist Party leaders gather for 18th Party Congress](#)
- CHRDR 11/2/2012: [China human rights briefing October 25–November 2, 2012](#)
- *New York Times* 11/1/2012: [China: Cafe owner sentenced over online messages](#)
- Falun Dafa Information Center 11/4/2012: [Abductions, long prison sentences or Falun Gong ahead of party congress](#)
- *New York Times* 11/6/2012: [Unwelcome at the party](#)



Historic news photos, before and after manipulation, go on display

The exhibition *Unseen Art*, which recently opened at the Guangdong Museum of Art in Guangzhou, features over 100 original news photographs alongside versions that were altered and published by state-run media outlets. Many of the images touch on politically sensitive subjects, including the Tiananmen Square crackdown of 1989. The iconic “Tank Man” image, in which an unidentified civilian stands in the street to block a line of tanks on the morning after the massacre, was edited by the official Xinhua news agency to fabricate crowds of people who seem to be welcoming the tanks. Another notable photo shows a gathering of the Chinese Communist Party’s senior members in 1992, with current president Hu Jintao and former party secretary general Deng Xiaoping shaking hands in the foreground. In the version published by Xinhua, the crowd of other leaders, including Hu’s predecessor, Jiang Zemin, are cropped out. Beijing-based artist Zhang Dali, who collected the photos shown at the exhibition, said he wanted to bring the images back to life and restore them to their rightful place in history. Information on the Tiananmen Square crackdown is tightly restricted in mainland China, and many younger Chinese know little about the episode, but museum representatives said that all the items in the exhibit had been approved by Guangdong provincial authorities before being shown to the public. Guangdong party chief Wang Yang is considered a relative “liberal” within the Communist hierarchy, and observers have speculated on his future as a major party congress opens in Beijing (see above). It remains common for state-controlled media to publish altered images, but Chinese internet users are growing adept at exposing and mocking such manipulation (see, inter alia, CMB Nos. [28](#), [67](#)).

- *Epoch Times* 10/31/2012: [Chinese photo exhibit exposes years of meticulous propaganda](#)
- *Want Daily* 11/3/2012: [Unseen Art: Original tank man photo goes on display in Guangzhou](#)

- *New York Times* 11/5/2012: [As China awaits new leadership, liberals look to a provincial party chief](#)
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‘New York Times’ blocked for exposé on premier’s family wealth

The Chinese authorities took multiple actions in response to an October 25 *New York Times* article describing vast wealth accumulated by the family and close associates of Chinese premier Wen Jiabao. According to the investigative report, Wen’s relatives, including his wife and mother, controlled at least \$2.7 billion in assets, ranging from investments in jewelry to stakes in government infrastructure projects. The paper’s English and Chinese-language websites were both blocked in China within hours of the article’s publication, and search terms related to Wen and the *New York Times*, including some censor-evading Chinese homonyms like “Twist Times,” were restricted on the popular microblogging platform Sina Weibo. The article was released just two weeks before the crucial 18th Communist Party Congress, which has put both official and commercial censors on unusually high alert (see above). On October 29, an opinion article on People’s Daily Online, the website of the Chinese Communist Party’s official newspaper, denounced the *New York Times* as a “propaganda tool” of the U.S. government that had a history of faking news. However, according to Hong Kong’s *South China Morning Post* on November 5, Wen himself had requested a formal inquiry into the article’s claims, though it remained unclear whether the results would be released publicly. Chinese authorities have consistently suppressed information about the leadership’s personal wealth. In June, the website of Bloomberg News was blocked after it reported on the assets of Vice President Xi Jinping’s relatives (see CMB No. [63](#)). But the revelations about Wen are particularly damaging in light of his official image as a down-to-earth and honest leader, which contrasts sharply with the aloof formality of most of his colleagues. Netizens who circulated the story expressed frustration with the ruling elite’s apparent misuse of public positions for personal gain. Some netizens, *Times* readers, and overseas Chinese outlets like Boxun and the *Epoch Times* also discussed theories that the story had somehow been instigated by hardline factions in Beijing to weaken Wen, and the reformist ideas associated with him, ahead of the party congress. However, the article’s author, David Barboza, said he worked independently and relied on publicly available business records.

- *South China Morning Post* 11/5/2012: [Premier Wen Jiabao calls for party probe into claims of family’s ‘hidden fortune’](#)
 - *New York Times* 10/26/2012: [China blocks web access to Times after article](#)
 - *People’s Daily Online* 10/29/2012 (in Chinese): [New York Times: Scandals multiply and reputation deteriorates](#)
 - Quartz 10/26/2012: [How Chinese internet users are getting around censorship of the ‘Cattle Times’ story on Wen Jiabao](#)
 - *China Digital Times* 10/26/2012: [Sensitive words: Wen Jiabao’s family wealth](#)
 - *Epoch Times* 11/7/2012: [Willingly or not, New York Times used in Beijing](#)
 - *Epoch Times* 11/3/2012: [New York Times Wen Jiabao story: Independent, or used by Beijing faction?](#)
 - *New York Times* 10/29/2012: [David Barboza answers reader questions on reporting in China](#)
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NEW MEDIA / TECHNOLOGY NEWS



Netizens watch U.S. elections and hurricane, lament protest censorship at home

Chinese netizens avidly followed the November 6 U.S. presidential election and the impact of Hurricane Sandy on the northeastern United States at the end of October, with discussions on the two events going viral on the popular microblogging platform Sina Weibo (see CMB No. [71](#)). According to the site, there were more than 3.4 million relevant postings about the presidential race on election day. Among many congratulatory notes to President Barack Obama on his victory, a user based in Guangdong said, “I suddenly realize that the number of Chinese paying attention to the US election far outstrips those paying attention to 18 big,” a reference to the upcoming 18th Communist Party Congress. Beijing-based entrepreneur Xu Xiaoping similarly expressed frustration over China’s closed political system, saying he would not follow the party congress as avidly as he did the U.S. voting. “I’d be wasting my energy,” he said. During the week of October 28, many microbloggers criticized state broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV) for excessive coverage of Hurricane Sandy, with some accusing the station of relishing the U.S. disaster or catering to Chinese leaders who have sent their children to live or study in the United States. CCTV was also scolded for neglecting important events at home, such as week-long protests in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, that began on October 27 over government plans to expand a chemical factory. State media were reportedly warned not to cover the unrest, as dozens of protesters were detained by police. One netizen asked, “Why don’t they have time for Ningbo, but plenty for America?” Foreign journalists covering the protests were abused by Chinese authorities, in a repetition of similar incidents in recent months (see CMB No. [67](#)). For example, on October 29, plainclothes police forcibly removed a television crew from Britain’s Sky News as they attempted to report on the demonstrations.

- *Atlantic* 11/7/2012: [How the U.S. elections went down in China](#)
- *Tea Leaf Nation* 11/7/2012: [Chinese internet users congratulate Obama, lament lack of voting at home](#)
- *Quartz* 11/7/2012: [Chinese netizens react to Obama win: Some cried, while others long for democracy or Hillary Clinton](#)
- *Want Daily* 11/1/2012: [Netizens blast CCTV for ‘excessive’ Hurricane Sandy coverage](#)
- NBC News 11/1/2012: [Wall-to-wall coverage of superstorm Sandy provokes controversy in China](#)
- Associated Press 10/28/2012: [Chinese protest over chemical factory](#)
- Sky News 10/29/2012: [China: Journalists dragged away from protest](#)
- IFEX 10/29/2012: [China censors foreign news coverage before party congress](#)



Chinese search engines sign code of conduct amid fierce competition

A group of Chinese internet search companies, including Baidu, Qihoo, Tencent, and Sina, signed a code of conduct on November 1 with the government-backed trade group Internet Society of China,

having reached a consensus on fair competition in the country's increasingly dynamic online search market. The agreement, which was first drafted under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology in August, called for the protection of user privacy and data security, but the main aim was apparently to avoid rancorous disputes between the companies. The final agreement came after Baidu sued Qihoo on October 16 for allegedly using "crawler" software to gather information from Baidu's search engine. Qihoo's chief financial officer denied the accusation, saying the company had only indexed information from Baidu's own content, as opposed to its search results. According to an analysis released on November 5, Qihoo held almost 10 percent of the country's online search market in October, just three months after it introduced its search engine. The company was accused in early 2012 of using unfair tactics to gain market share for its popular web browser (see CMB No. [46](#)), and feuded with Tencent in 2010 over the latter's alleged poaching of user data (see CMB No. [19](#)). Separately, the mobile mapping application of U.S. technology giant Google, which has suffered setbacks in China since a dispute with the authorities over search censorship in 2010 (see CMB No. [69](#)), continued to lose its market share in the country, slipping from second to sixth position in the third quarter of 2012. In a potentially complicating development, a government body recently threatened to confiscate devices with maps that did not reflect all of China's territorial claims (see CMB No. [72](#)).

- *Wall Street Journal* 11/1/2012: [Chinese internet firms agree to code of conduct](#)
- *Tech in Asia* 11/2/2012: [Chinese search engines sign code of conduct, agree to ease up on the back-stabbing](#)
- ZDNet 11/2/2012: [Chinese internet search players sign code of conduct](#)
- *South China Morning Post* 11/6/2012: [Online search: Qihoo, Sogou continue to grow](#)
- CNZZ: [Qihoo 360 takes 10% of China's October search traffic](#)
- *Tech in Asia* 11/6/2012: [Google Maps app is lost in China, loses half market share in Q3](#)



Ai Weiwei begins repaying donations, makes dance video

In an interview with the Associated Press published on October 31, Chinese dissident artist and blogger Ai Weiwei said he had started returning donations to his supporters, having lost a final legal challenge against his art studio's alleged \$2.4 million tax bill in September (see CMB No. [70](#)). In order to file his lawsuit, Ai had been obliged to pay \$1.3 million as a deposit, and did so with the help of tens of thousands of small donations. He has refused to pay the remainder of the tax claim, but had promised to treat the donations as loans and repay them as soon as possible. According to the *China Digital Times*, the State Council Information Office had reportedly sent out a censorship notice in November 2011, as the donations began to come in, instructing all websites in China to remove references to the artist's fundraising (see CMB No. [40](#)). Meanwhile, Ai has continued to mock the ruling Communist Party and its repressive policies. On October 24, he released a video clip entitled "Grass Mud Horse Style" that pokes fun at Chinese censorship. In the music video, Ai dances to the Korean pop song "Gangnam Style"—which has become a global obsession on the internet—while cavorting with Chinese and foreign friends and sometimes swinging a pair of handcuffs. Ai said he simply wanted to lift people's spirits, and particularly cheer up a friend whose family's home had been demolished. The carefree images also seem to defy the authorities' varied efforts to silence and isolate Ai, which have ranged from months of incommunicado detention in

2011 to ongoing surveillance and travel restrictions. The video circulated among Chinese netizens on popular web portals, but was quickly scrubbed by censors the next day.

- *China Digital Times* 11/2/2012: [Censorship vault: Ai Weiwei's tax donations](#)
 - *Associated Press* 10/31/2012: [Ai Weiwei returns money to supporters](#)
 - *Wall Street Journal* 10/25/2012: [Ai Weiwei takes on 'Gangnam style'](#)
 - *Associated Press* 10/25/2012: [Ai Weiwei goes 'Gangnam Style'—with handcuffs](#)
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TIBET



Gansu region's communications cut, monk tied to film detained

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) reported on November 5 that the Chinese authorities have imposed an information blockade on Kanlho (Gannan), a Tibetan autonomous prefecture in Gansu Province, after seven Tibetans self-immolated to protest Chinese rule over the previous month (see CMB No. [71](#)). Mobile-telephone signals and internet access were blocked in the area, internet cafés were forced to shut down, and shops in the prefecture's Sangchu County were banned from selling mobile SIM cards. Separately, according to the overseas Tibetan news site Phayul, Golog Jigme Gyatso, a Tibetan monk who assisted filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen in shooting the documentary *Leaving Fear Behind* in 2008, was reportedly taken by Chinese police on September 20. While the reason for his detention was unknown, he had been ordered to move out of his monastic quarters on September 5, and the dwelling was then demolished by the government. The monk had been arrested multiple times and tortured in custody. Dhondup Wangchen is currently serving a six-year prison sentence for secretly making the documentary, which features a series of interviews that reveal details of Beijing's oppression of the Tibetan people (see CMB No. [41](#)).

- *Radio Free Asia* 11/6/2012: [Ban on gatherings, internet](#)
 - *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy* 11/5/2012: [China impose near-total information blockade after series of burning protests](#)
 - *Phayul* 11/5/2012: [Tibetan filmmaker Golog Jigme Gyatso rearrested](#)
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HONG KONG



Beijing implicated in radio station takeover

Hong Kong's Digital Broadcasting Corporation (DBC) radio station stopped airing original programming on October 21, succumbing to financial and alleged political pressure despite a display of public support. Thousands of residents had staged a three-day sit-in protest outside the Hong Kong government headquarters and accused the central government in Beijing of undermining the station. One of DBC's shareholders, Bill Wong Cho-bau, a Beijing-friendly property developer, had refused to fulfill his investment agreement or sell his stake, essentially starving the station of funds. Station hosts and activists accused Wong of colluding with the Chinese government. The allegation

was supported by a leaked audio recording that was played at the rally on October 20. In the conversation, a man said to be Wong is heard opposing the hiring of Lee Wai-ling as a radio host, arguing that she would be “too provocative” and would “stir up a lot of anger” from the Chinese Liaison Office, which represents the central government in Hong Kong. DBC cofounder and host Albert Cheng King-hon, Wong’s rival in the dispute, told demonstrators that until the conflict was resolved, the station would air music to preserve its license, which requires 24-hour-a-day broadcasting. According to the *South China Morning Post*, Wong has obtained a court order that would allow him to take control of the station’s operations, along with an injunction barring Cheng from speaking in detail about the boardroom rift.

- **NTDTV 10/22/2012: [HK protest over mainland meddling in broadcaster closure](#)**
- **Global Voices 10/21/2012: [Beijing’s intervention on radio license in Hong Kong leaked](#)**
- ***South China Morning Post* 10/22/2012: [Protest rally denounces digital radio stations closure](#)**

BEYOND CHINA



Confucius Institutes crop up in Bahamas, Colombia, and even Macon, Ga.

On October 15, ABC News reported parents’ concerns about a decision by the city of Macon in the U.S. state of Georgia to allow China’s Confucius Institute (CI) program to teach elementary school students Mandarin Chinese. Confucius Institutes are Chinese government-sponsored facilities that offer language training and other educational programs in countries around the world (see CMB No. [69](#)). While supporters of the Macon program expressed hope that it would benefit pupils in the city, which has only a 51 percent graduation rate, several scholars and members of Congress have warned that the CI system essentially delivers propaganda to foreign students. In response, Bibb County school superintendent Romain Dallemand said American teachers were always present in the Macon classes and were in charge of the curriculum. There are currently nearly 400 CIs functioning in more than 100 countries, including presences in 75 U.S. universities and nearly 300 primary and middle schools. A new institute, upgraded from a smaller Confucius Classroom established in 2009, was launched at the College of the Bahamas on October 17, and another is scheduled to open in mid-2013 at Jorge Tadeo Lozano University in Bogota, Colombia.

- **ABC News 10/15/2012: [Chinese-funded language classes: Motives questioned](#)**
- ***Tribune* (Bahamas) 10/22/2012: [COB launches Confucius Institute](#)**
- **Xinhua 10/31/2012: [Colombian dean sees closer China ties with new Confucius Institute](#)**

NOTABLE ANALYSIS



U.S. think tank examines China’s military cyberwarfare units

On October 26, the Virginia-based think tank Project 2049 Institute released a report identifying Chinese military cyberwarfare units that may be responsible for targeting U.S. government, industrial,

and think tank computer networks (see CMB No. [70](#)). According to the report, entitled *Countering Chinese Cyber Operations: Opportunities and Challenges for U.S. Interests*, most Chinese military cyber activities take place within the Third Department of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) General Staff Department. The Third Department's central unit, also known as the Beijing North Computing Center (BNCC), appears to be the leading agent tasked with coordinating PLA computer network operations, such as defense of classified networks and exploitation of foreign databases. The report noted that a dozen hacker groups had been linked to the Chinese military, while others worked on behalf of academic institutions and information security companies in the country.

- *Washington Free Beacon* 11/7/2012: [Cyber spies spotted—Report: Chinese military cyber warfare units identified](#)
- Project 2049 Institute 10/26/2012: [Countering Chinese cyber operations: Opportunities and challenges for U.S. interests](#)



American journalist recounts two years at Chinese magazine

Foreign Policy magazine on October 26 published the first-person account of a Chinese American journalist named Eveline Chao who spent two years in Beijing working at *China International Business*, an English-language business magazine sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce. Chao said she had been offered red envelopes stuffed with cash at various events, and complying with government censorship was a daily routine. According to Chao, several publications staffed by and aimed at foreign expatriates in China had in-house censors reviewing their articles to remove references to sensitive topics, while Chinese news outlets often relied on their editors, who knew how to self-censor properly. She was warned by her supervisor to be extremely cautious when it came to Chinese sovereignty. A map of China, for example, must include Taiwan and various disputed territories. Chao also learned that many words and images could allude to topics deemed sensitive to the Chinese government. She began to question the morality of her position, earning money as part of a system that restricts free speech. Before leaving the magazine, she noticed that the trend of censorship had gradually veered into the “realm of absurdity,” and grew alarmed as her censor increasingly took Chao under her wing. She writes, “I found myself in the odd position of having acquired an ally who was a censor for the Chinese government.”

- *Foreign Policy* 10/26/2012: [Me and my censor](#)
- [Eveline Chao](#)

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

[Freedom on the Net 2012](#)
[Freedom of the World 2012](#)
[Freedom of the Press 2011](#)

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