



### Symposium marks Tokyo Trial's 80th Year

Commemoration to mark 80th anniversary of Tokyo Trial's opening holds profound meaning as Japan turns increasingly right-leaning, participants said 4

### China urges EU to honor free trade stance

China's Foreign Ministry on Thursday urged the EU to view its trade ties with China comprehensively and objectively and honor its commitment to free trade 10

### Homegrown C919 transports 5m passenger trips in past 3 yrs

China's self-developed large passenger aircraft the C919 has safely transported more than 5 million passenger trips since entering commercial service three years ago, its producer said on Thursday 11

### Band of robots



A robot band plays the electric guitar and other musical instruments at the 2026 World Intelligent Industry Expo, which opened in China's Tianjin Municipality on May 28, 2026. Photo: VCG

### US and Iran exchange strikes amid mixed info on peace deal

By Wang Qi

Citing two US officials and regional source involved in the mediation efforts, US media outlet Axios claimed on Thursday that US and Iranian negotiators have reached an agreement on a 60-day memorandum of understanding to extend the ceasefire, but US President Trump has yet to give his final approval.

Before the latest development, fresh military frictions between the US and Iran have reportedly flared up again in recent days.

A Chinese analyst observes that the latest outbreak of clashes is rooted in deep-seated grievances and conflicting interests. The ceasefire was inherently precarious, he said.

### War or peace

According to a statement carried by Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency on Thursday, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said it struck an "American airbase" that it identified as the origin of the US "aggression" but did not say where it was located, per an Al Jazeera report.

The IRGC also said that any "aggression will not go unanswered," adding that further military actions will face a "more decisive" response, the media outlet reported.

Before the IRGC attack, citing US officials speaking on the condition of anonymity, the AP reported on Thursday that US Central Command forces shot down four Iranian one-way attack drones that "posed a threat" around the Strait of Hormuz. The US military also struck an Iranian ground control station in Bandar Abbas that was about to launch a

► First among domestic automakers to reach the milestone

## China's carmaker SAIC joins global '100-million-unit club'

By Chi Jingyi

Domestic carmaker SAIC Motor delivered its 100 millionth vehicle in Shanghai on the afternoon of Thursday, becoming the first Chinese automaker to surpass 100 million units in cumulative production and sales, according to the Xinhua News Agency.

Industry insiders pointed out that the landmark achievement filled the gap for Chinese automakers in the "100-million-unit club." According to Xinhua, previously, only automakers from countries like the US, Japan, Germany and the South Korea had reached the 100-million-vehicle milestone.

Industry experts believe that

SAIC Motor's achievement is underpinned by the systemic advantages accumulated by China's automotive industry over decades. These include a vast domestic market, a complete and independent industrial chain, highly clustered industrial ecosystems, mature supporting capabilities, and the advantages of opening-up and

cooperation, per the experts.

SAIC Motor's achievement as China's first "100-million-unit carmaker" symbolized the remarkable transformation of the country's automotive sector over more than 70 years – from starting from scratch to becoming a global powerhouse, according to the Xinhua report.



A large number of Chinese-made vehicles gather at the Lianyungang Port in East China's Jiangsu Province on May 28, 2026, preparing for shipment and export. Photo: VCG

## Ecosystem, innovation drive nation's automotive rise: expert

► China's, from Page 1

This landmark also represented a significant milestone for "Made in China," said Xinhua.

### Profound transformation

Industry insiders said SAIC Motor's success showcases the profound transformation of China's automotive industry.

In 1955, its predecessor, the Shanghai Internal Combustion Engine Parts Manufacturing Company, was established. In 1958, the first Phoenix-brand sedan was successfully produced, marking Shanghai's breakthrough in passenger vehicle manufacturing.

Over the decades, SAIC evolved from a small workshop-style factory to a modern intelligent manufacturing giant, Zhang Xiang, secretary-general of the International Intelligent Vehicle Engineering Association, told the Global Times on Thursday.

"From complete reliance on imported technology to mastering core technologies; from a domestic focus to building a global ecosystem. SAIC's growth over more than 70 years is a microcosm of Chinese manufacturing's remarkable rise and breakthrough," said Zhang.

What contributed to SAIC Motor's success is China's complete industrial ecosystem built over the past decades. China has built the world's most comprehensive automotive supply chain, covering everything from raw materials and power batteries to electric motors, controllers, chips, vehicle assembly, and after-sales services. This system offers unmatched efficiency, cost control, and iteration speed, Hu Qimu, a professor at

the Maritime Silk Road Institute of Huaqiao University, told the Global Times on Thursday.

In terms of the speed of research and development (R&D), major automotive clusters in Shanghai, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region have compressed new vehicle development cycles dramatically – from the global average of 36 months to under 20 months, according to industry insiders and relevant media reports.

While traditional giants like SAIC, FAW, Dongfeng, and GAC continue to transform, new carmakers such as BYD, NIO, XPeng, Li Auto, Zeekr, and Xiaomi are emerging as powerful innovation engines.

BYD became the first domestic automaker to fully transition to electrification, halting fuel vehicle sales in 2022. New forces such as Nio and Xpeng have created differentiated advantages in battery technology, battery swapping, high-level intelligent driving, and smart cabins, observers noted.

As BBC reported on Thursday, Chinese tech giants like Xiaomi, Huawei and Alibaba are now making EVs, bringing consumer technology into the car industry. As cars increasingly rely on software, from driver assistance to entertainment systems, these companies are giving Chinese carmakers yet another edge. "They're not racing the West anymore. They are racing each other," per BBC report citing an analyst.

Industry insiders have said that the automotive industry is experiencing transformative changes. Technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and big data are deeply integrating

with vehicle manufacturing, fundamentally reshaping the competitive landscape and the entire value chain.

### New-era cooperation

For SAIC, in November 2024, it signed an extension for the joint venture contract with Volkswagen Group until 2040, further strengthening their long-term partnership, both companies said in their statements.

Foreign brands are now actively seeking partnerships with Chinese companies in new energy and intelligent technologies. Volkswagen is also collaborating with XPeng to jointly develop new-energy vehicles, while Audi is partnering with SAIC and Huawei to advance high-level intelligent driving technologies. Mercedes-Benz has upgraded its Shanghai R&D center into a global core innovation hub. Foreign automakers are now increasingly embracing China's intelligent electric vehicle (EV) technologies, achieving mutual benefit and win-win outcomes.

This shift from "learning through joint ventures" to "joint innovation and leadership" reflects the growing technological confidence of Chinese automakers, said Hu.

"China's advantages in the complete industrial chain, cost optimization, and its leadership in the intelligent EV sector have enabled domestic brands to accelerate their globalization efforts," said Hu.

Industry insiders said that SAIC Motor's milestone is not only a celebration of past achievements but also a new starting point. As China's auto industry continues to advance in intelligence, electrification, and globalization, Chinese brands will play an even more influential role.

## Fighting-and-talking mode may continue as hostilities persist: analyst

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fifth drone.

The US strike, according to Iran's Tasnim news agency, came after the IRGC confronted a US oil tanker trying to transit the Strait of Hormuz, citing military sources. The US Central Command claimed its latest strikes were "measured, purely defensive, and intended to maintain the ceasefire," Axios reported.

The latest exchange of fire marks the second such skirmish in 48 hours, said Axios. On Monday, US Central Command said that it conducted "self-defense strikes" in southern Iran to protect troops from "threats posed by Iranian forces," while Iran accused the US of committing a "gross violation" of the ceasefire, per the BBC.

The latest round of clashes stems from deep-seated disputes over core interests and a critical breakdown of mutual trust between the US and Iran, with frictions intensified most acutely over the pressing Strait of Hormuz issue, Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times on Thursday.

"They are right now in between this very dangerous zone of war and peace, and it is not in anybody's interest that this war continues," Kaja Kallas, the European Union's foreign policy chief, told media at a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Cyprus on Thursday, Al Jazeera reported.

### Back-and-forth

Hours before the latest round of clashes, US President Donald Trump on Wednesday dismissed a report from Iranian state media saying that Iran and Oman would jointly manage shipping through the Strait of Hormuz as part of a peace deal, Reuters reported.

Earlier, citing Iran's state-run IRIB TV, several media outlets reported Wednesday that Iran has a draft of an initial, unofficial framework for a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the US, which demands US military withdrawal and lifting of its naval blockade.

In return, Iran has committed to restoring commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz to pre-war levels within one month and managing ship traffic through the strait with Oman, the reports said, adding military vessels are not included in the agreement.

Similarly, Trump told media on Wednesday at a cabinet meeting that he was not yet satisfied on a deal with Iran, adding that the US was not discussing easing sanctions on it, Reuters reported.

"Nobody's going to control (the strait)," Trump told media on Wednesday. "It's international waters and Oman will behave just like everybody else or we'll have to blow them up. They understand that, they'll be fine," he said, per Reuters.

On the same day, the US Treasury announced that Iran's Persian Gulf Strait Authority, which was recently set up to manage requests for ships looking to transit the Strait of Hormuz, has been added to its Specially Designated Nationals sanctions list.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Tuesday called for the advancement of negotiations between the US and Iran, after he presided over a high-level open debate of the Security Council, Xinhua reported.

A longstanding issue cannot be resolved overnight, Wang said. However, every step forward in the negotiations brings more hope for peace, he said, adding that the earlier the conflict ends, the fewer civilian casualties there will be.

