

FEATURES: TRADE WITH LAC COUNTRIES P.26 | CULTURE: BUDDHIST REINCARNATION P.46

# BEIJING REVIEW

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## CHECKING IN

The CIIE, a gateway to global prosperity



第六届中国国际进口博览会  
THE 6<sup>th</sup> CHINA INTERNATIONAL IMPORT EXPO



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# EDITOR'S DESK

北京周报

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## Expo Revival

The China International Import Expo (CIIE), the world's first national-level exposition dedicated to imports, has made a post-COVID comeback. More than 3,400 exhibitors and 394,000 professional visitors registered for this year's edition of the signature event, which was held on November 5-10 in Shanghai, representing a full recovery to pre-pandemic levels.

In particular, over 200 U.S. exhibitors in industries including semiconductors, medical devices, new-energy vehicles and cosmetics attended, marking the largest U.S. presence in the CIIE's six-year history. Among the exhibitors were 17 from the agricultural and food industry, led by the U.S. Government for the first time.

Compared with previous editions, the 2023 event featured a larger business exhibition area and higher numbers of participating *Fortune* 500 companies and industry leaders as well as innovative small and medium-sized enterprises. It was a display of not only new products and services, but also the confidence of the international business community in the Chinese economy.

With a population of 1.4 billion and a middle-income group of 400 million people, China boasts huge demand. First held in 2018, the annual CIIE has leveraged the strengths of China's

enormous market, contributing to international procurement, investment promotion, and people-to-people exchange.

The Sixth CIIE took place against the backdrop of uneven post-COVID global economic recovery. It enabled government officials, entrepreneurs and economists to understand and take part in China's vision for global growth: sharing the benefits of China's development with other countries, and creating new economic opportunities through access to its enormous market.

Official data showed China's imports increased 6.4 percent year on year in October. In the first 10 months of this year, its total imports and exports of goods expanded 0.03 percent year on year, reversing a 0.2-percent decrease in the first three quarters. In the next five years, China's trade in goods and services is projected to reach \$32 trillion and \$5 trillion, respectively, creating enormous market opportunities.

Forty-five years after the launch of China's landmark reform and opening-up policy, the Chinese economy remains as and will continue to be an engine of global growth. China's commitment to further opening up as illustrated by initiatives such as the CIIE is conducive to building an open world economy. **BR**



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# SPORTY STUDENTS

Torchbearers Huang Yaqing (left) and Lan Xingyu jointly light the cauldron during the opening ceremony of the first China Student (Youth) Games in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, south China, on November 5.

The Games, which ran from November 5 to 15, featured 805 events in 39 sports and brought together some 18,000 young athletes.

Organized by the Ministry of Education, the General Administration of Sport of China and the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, the Games aimed to deepen the integration of sports and education to promote the healthy development of China's youth.





## Moving and Grooving!

Acrobats interact with the audience at the opening ceremony of the Seventh China International Circus Festival in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, on November 4. Nearly 200 acrobats from 18 countries and regions participated in the event.

## Methane Action Plan

China released an action plan on November 8 to control methane emissions, promising a series of specific targets in different sectors.

The use of methane, a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, captured in the process of oil and gas exploration and coal mining will be strengthened, according to the document issued by 11 national government agencies, including the Ministry of Ecology and Environment.

By 2025, the coal mining sector is expected to collect 6 billion cubic meters of methane-rich coalbed methane for use, it read.

The action plan also pledges to increase the use of manure from the livestock sector, another

major emitter of methane. The country aims to utilize at least 80 percent of manure from the livestock sector by 2025, it said. By 2030, this is expected to increase to more than 85 percent.

## Science and Technology Initiative

China for the first time proposed an international science and technology cooperation initiative at the Belt and Road Science and Technology Exchange Conference in Chongqing Municipality on November 6.

The initiative calls for advocating and practicing the concept of open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory international cooperation in science and technology, adhering to the principle that

“science has no borders and benefits all of humanity,” and joining hands to build a global science and technology community.

The initiative calls for improving the global governance of science and technology, strengthening the protection of intellectual property rights, as well as global cooperation in technological innovation and building a global innovation network.

According to official data released at the conference, which concluded on November 7, China has signed intergovernmental agreements on science and technology cooperation with more than 80 Belt and Road partner countries.

It has also jointly built more than 50 Belt and Road

laboratories in fields such as health, transportation, materials and energy, and established more than 20 agricultural technology demonstration centers and more than 70 industrial parks in Belt and Road partner countries.

The Belt and Road Initiative was first proposed by China in 2013 and aims to boost global connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes.

## World Internet Conference

The 2023 World Internet Conference (WIC) Wuzhen Summit took place in Wuzhen, Zhejiang Province from November 8 to 10. Themed “Creating an Inclusive and Resilient Digital World Beneficial to All—Building a Community with a Shared Future in Cyberspace,” this year’s summit featured exhibitions, sub-forums, awards, the launch of a Global Youth Leadership Program and the debut of the World Internet Science and Technology Museum.

Since its inception in 2014, the WIC has been held annually in Wuzhen. Over the years, the summit has produced several outcomes, such as a concept paper and an initiative on jointly building a community with a shared future in cyberspace, with China’s proposals for and ideas on cyberspace being recognized by more people around the world.

The WIC Wuzhen Summit is a vivid example of China’s efforts to actively participate in global Internet development and governance.

## Access to Health Records

China has built a platform for citizens’ health information that

links related networks at the national, provincial, city and county levels, a health official said on November 7.

Mao Qun'an, head of the planning department of the National Health Commission, said at a press conference that hospitals in 25 provincial-level regions are currently able to receive their patients' medical records in digital form from other hospitals in their respective regions.

In 17 provincial-level regions, patients' medical records are accessible to all hospitals in the region, Mao said.

An identity verification system covering all citizens' health identities has also been built. This will allow people to seek medical services with any of their identity certificates, rather than having to go through the process of repeatedly registering their identities, Mao said.

## New Entry-Exit Policies

New entry and exit policies for residents of China's Taiwan Province have been introduced to deepen integrated cross-strait development, including promoting personnel exchanges between southeast China's Fujian Province and Taiwan, and facilitating the residence and

daily life of Taiwan compatriots in Fujian, Xinhua News Agency reported on November 6.

The guidelines, issued by the Exit and Entry Administration of China's Ministry of Public Security, consist of 10 specific measures and will take effect on January 1, 2024.

In September, China issued a circular supporting the establishment of Fujian as a demonstration zone for integrated cross-strait development.

According to the new policies, the application process for travel passes for Taiwan residents to enter or leave the mainland will be streamlined, with additional application channels introduced.

## Millennium-Old Yew

A wild Himalayan yew tree, believed to be over 1,000 years old, was discovered in Yunnan Province in southwest China, Xinhua News Agency reported on November 4.

The living tree is located in the Fengqing area of the Lancang River nature reserve in Lincang City. It is about 12 meters tall and has a trunk diameter of 1.32 meters, Shi Songlin, a professor at the Chengdu University of Technology, said.



## A Cool Start

A rider braves the snow in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province in northeast China, on November 6. It was the first snow in the city since early fall. Blizzards recently hit China's northeastern region.

"The Himalayan yew grows slowly in the wild and has poor regeneration ability. This is the first time I have seen a wild Himalayan yew with such a large diameter," Shi said.

The tree has broken the record for both trunk diameter and age of the wild Himalayan yew in Fengqing, which is of great significance for studying the origin of the species and its living environment, and strengthening the protection of the area, Shi added.

Currently, more than 1,000

wild Himalayan yews have been recorded in Fengqing, with a distribution range of about 533.33 hectares, mainly growing at altitudes between 2,500 and 3,000 meters above sea level, according to the management and protection bureau of the reserve's Fengqing area.

The Himalayan yew is a national first-class protected wild plant in China and is listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species.



## Safety First

Students from Changpinglu Primary School in Renze District, Xingtai City in Hebei Province, learn how to use firefighting equipment on November 7. To mark National Fire Prevention Day on November 9, activities were held across China to raise safety awareness and share knowledge about fire prevention and control.

## Foreign Trade Up

China's total imports and exports of goods expanded 0.03 percent year on year to 34.32 trillion yuan (\$4.78 trillion) in the first 10 months of the year, official data showed.

Exports grew 0.4 percent year on year to 19.55 trillion yuan (\$2.72 trillion) for the January-October period, while imports declined 0.5 percent from a year earlier to 14.77 trillion yuan (\$2.05 trillion), according to the General Administration of Customs of China.

In October alone, China's foreign trade rose 0.9 percent from a year earlier to 3.54 trillion yuan (493.04 billion), the data showed.

The country's exports shrank 3.1 percent year on year that month, while imports increased by 6.4 percent.

In the first 10 months, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) remained China's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade rising 0.9 percent year on year to 5.23

trillion yuan (\$728.42 billion) and accounting for 15.2 percent of the country's total trade value.

China's trade with the European Union eased 1.6 percent from a year earlier, while its trade with the United States declined 7.6 percent year on year during the January-October period. Its trade with Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) partners rose 3.2 percent year on year. China proposed the BRI in 2013 to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes.

A breakdown of the data showed that China's exports of machinery and electronic products, accounting for 58.5 percent of total exports, increased 2.8 percent during the period, and the export value of automobiles surged 88.5 percent from a year earlier.

## Carbon-Peaking Pilot Scheme

China will launch carbon-peaking pilot projects in 100 cities and zones nationwide to solve bottlenecks constraining

the country's green and low-carbon development and explore paths toward carbon peaking for different areas, according to a plan unveiled on November 6.

By 2025, the policy mechanism conducive to green and low-carbon development in the pilot areas will mostly be in place, together with many innovative practices and reform measures that are both feasible and replicable, read the plan issued by the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

The plan further stated that paths toward carbon peaking for cities and zones with different resource endowments, development foundations and industrial structures would be clear by then.

By 2030, primary tasks, projects and reforms in pilot cities and zones shall be completed, and the policy mechanism conducive to green and low-carbon development shall be fully established, according to

the plan, which expects those innovative practices and reform measures will then play a vital supportive role for carbon peaking at the national level.

The NDRC said the pilot scheme will initially cover 15 provincial regions, considering their total carbon emission volumes and growth trends, as well as local economic and social development status.

## Canton Fair

The 134th China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair) concluded on November 4 in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, with export deals worth \$22.3 billion signed.

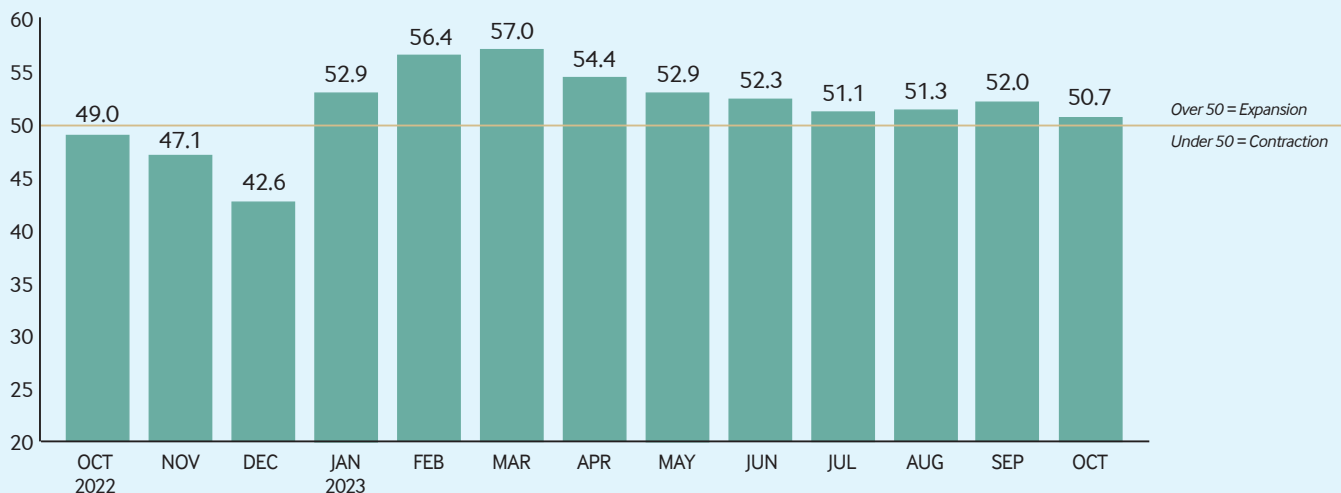
This figure was 2.8 percent higher than that of the previous Canton Fair, said Xu Bing, a spokesman for the fair.

Participating companies signed deals worth a total of \$12.27 billion with their counterparts from BRI participating countries, up 2 percent from the previous fair, Xu said.

As of November 3, overseas buyers from 229 countries and

## NUMBERS

China's Comprehensive Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)





regions had attended the fair online or in person. Nearly 198,000 overseas purchasers attended the fair in person, up 6.4 percent compared with the 126th Canton Fair in 2019.

“More overseas buyers attended the Canton Fair this year and actively placed orders, which has further boosted enterprises’ confidence in foreign trade next year,” Xu said.

A total of 650 enterprises from 43 countries and regions participated in the fair’s import exhibition, of which 60 percent were from BRI partner countries, according to Xu.

Established in 1957 and held twice a year, the fair is considered an important gauge of China’s foreign trade.

## Homegrown Large Cruise Ship

China’s first domestically built large cruise ship, the *Adora Magic City*, was delivered in Shanghai on November 4, with its maiden voyage scheduled for

January 1, 2024.

The cruise ship, measuring 323.6 meters in length and with a gross tonnage of 135,500, can accommodate up to 5,246 passengers and has 2,125 guest rooms, said the China State Shipbuilding Corp. (CSSC) Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding Co. Ltd., the shipbuilder.

To date, China has been able to build aircraft carriers, large liquefied natural gas carriers and large cruise ships—the most challenging shipbuilding projects to undertake, according to the CSSC.

## New Businesses

Some 24.81 million new business entities were established during the January–September period, up 12.7 percent year on year, according to data released by the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR). Of the total, the number of new companies went up 15.4 percent, and that of self-employed households climbed 11.7 percent.

The number of new foreign-funded enterprises surged 29.3 percent from a year ago, and that of private firms grew 15.3 percent.

The figures point to improving market expectations and recovering confidence, the SAMR said, stressing that the Chinese market remains a popular investment destination.

The substantial rise in business registrations was consistent across the board, spanning both traditional agriculture and modern services. The hospitality and food and beverage sectors, which were hit the hardest during the COVID-19 pandemic, reported an increase in business registration of over 40 percent.

As of late September, the number of registered business entities nationwide stood at 181 million, up 6.7 percent from late 2022.

## Moderna Project

American biotech company Moderna on November 6 commenced construction on its first pharmaceutical plant in China,

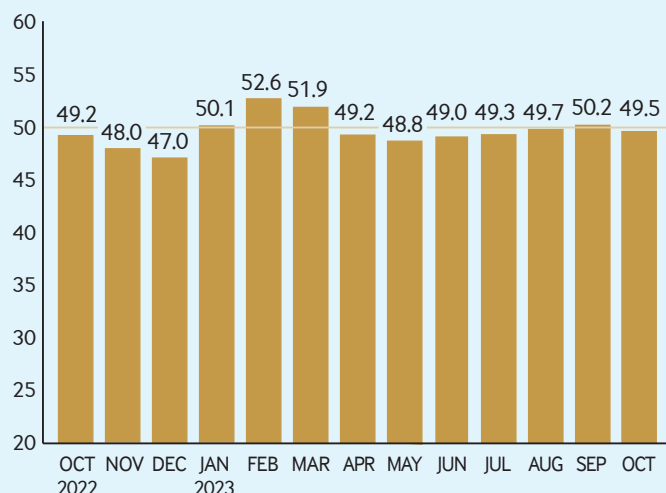
with an estimated investment of 3.6 billion yuan (\$501 million).

The Moderna China research and development (R&D) and production headquarters project, located in Shanghai’s Minhang District, covers about 18 hectares in the Shanghai Xinzhuang Industry Park, according to the park’s authorities.

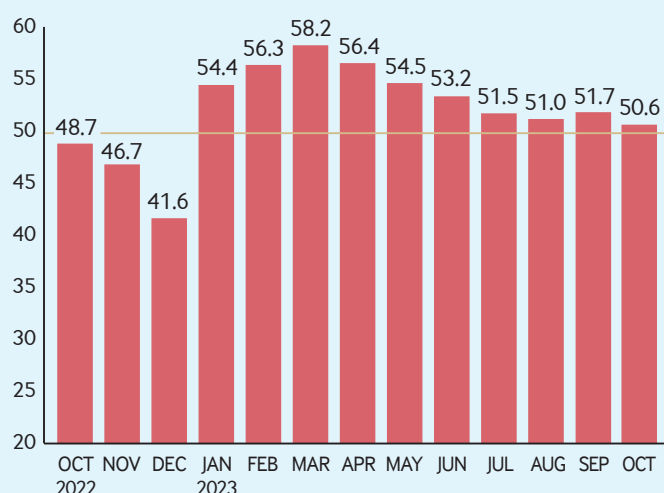
This move follows a tripartite strategic cooperation agreement signed on July 5 between the Shanghai Municipal Commission of Economy and Informatization, the Minhang District Government and Moderna. The collaboration aims to bolster investment, R&D and commercialization in biopharmaceuticals.

As one of the world’s leading mRNA vaccine developers, Moderna focuses on cancer immunotherapy, including mRNA-based medicine R&D and virus prevention technologies. An mRNA vaccine is a type of vaccine that uses a copy of a molecule called messenger RNA (mRNA) to produce an immune response.

China’s Manufacturing PMI



China’s Non-Manufacturing PMI



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)



## UNITED KINGDOM

A visitor tries Chinese tea at the China Pavilion at the World Travel Market London 2023 on November 6



## PALESTINE

Volunteers play games with children during a psychological stimulation and relief activity at a school affiliated with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Younis on November 8



## NEPAL

Soldiers conduct a rescue operation in Jajarkot District on November 4. As of November 9, the death toll from a strong earthquake that hit the country's western region had risen to 153







## RUSSIA

An open-air exhibition held in Moscow's Red Square on November 5 commemorates a 1941 parade that sent then Soviet soldiers into battle against Germany



## MEXICO

People take part in the Day of the Dead Parade in downtown Mexico City on November 4



## GERMANY

A customer shops at a supermarket in Berlin on November 8. Consumer price inflation in Germany slowed further to 3.8 percent in October, the lowest level in more than two years



# THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

## ↓ BIGGEST WINNER AT THE GOLDEN ROOSTER AWARDS

Director **Wuershan**'s epic film *Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms* became a big winner at the 36th China Golden Rooster Awards, one of the major national film awards, in early November.

The film is the first installment of a trilogy based on the well-known Chinese fantasy novel *Investiture of the Gods*. It tells the story of the fall of ancient China's Shang Dynasty (1600-1046 B.C.) and the rise of the Zhou Dynasty in the 11th century B.C. and the battles between gods, goddesses and mortals.

The film won two awards: Best Picture and Best Cinematography, and Li Xuejian took the award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in the film.

It took Wuershan and his team 10 years to create the film. People from more than 20 countries and regions have so far been involved in the production of the trilogy.



## Artificial Interlocutors

**Guangzhou Daily**  
**November 7**

Recently, videos of Taylor Swift and other international pop idols speaking perfect Chinese and Guo Degang, a famous Chinese comedian, speaking perfect English have sparked heated discussion on Chinese social media. The transformation of these celebrities into linguistic prodigies is, of course, powered by artificial intelligence (AI), which enables hyper-realistic speech simulation.

While many Chinese people rejoice in the fact that their favorite foreign artists

can finally speak in a language they can understand, some worry that these videos may constitute an infringement of copyright laws. Furthermore, experts warn of the possible use of speech simulation in fabricating news and advertisements.

For these reasons, social media platforms and supervisory authorities should work in tandem to prevent the possible abuse of AI voice cloning. However, stricter preventive measures do not mean that the technology should be paused or nipped in the bud. AI is undeniably the future. The urgent task at hand is to ensure it is safe, trustworthy, and aligned with the common good.



## Echoes of the Past

**Lifeweek**  
**October 30**

A 17-hour westward drive from Dunhuang, a city in Gansu Province in northwest China, through a vast expanse of desert will reveal a fantastic scene, where a massive Buddhist cave-temple complex is carved into steep sandstone cliffs over a 2-km stretch. It is the Qiuci Grottoes, the largest existing collection of Buddhist cave-temples in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Of the many parts that form the Qiuci Grottoes, the largest and best-known group is the Kizil Thousand Buddha Caves, a complex comprising some 350 cave-temples.

First commenced in the third

**“We called for the prompt establishment of a long-term international monitoring mechanism with the participation of Japan, neighboring countries, and other relevant stakeholders to effectively protect the global marine environment.”**

**Huang Runqiu**, Chinese Minister of Ecology and Environment, at the 24th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting among Japan, the Republic of Korea and China held in Nagoya, Japan, in early November

**“When other forms of communication aren’t working, music does work.”**

**Matias Tarnopolsky**, President and CEO of the Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center, in a recent interview with *China Daily*, as the U.S. orchestra visits China to commemorate the 50th anniversary of its first tour of the country

century and completed in the eighth century, construction of the Kizil caves was undertaken by what was then the ancient Buddhist kingdom of Kuqa, also known as Qiuci, a major commercial and cultural hub on the ancient Silk Road. The kingdom's past glory is reflected in the variety of artistic influences evident in the caves' many murals. The signature use of blue pigments, for which the caves are best known, suggests an artistic influence hailing from Afghanistan. The presence of other styles is also visible in the paintings, thus making the site a key resource for tracing the development of Central Asian art.

As the country's westernmost grotto complex, the caves were possibly the first stop on Buddhism's entry to China. In the early half of the 20th century, the Kizil caves were frequented by researchers from Germany, France, Russia and Japan, who continued to send pieces of mural paintings back to their home countries. It was not until 1927 that Chinese scientists began exploring the site. The year 1985 saw the establishment of the Institute of Kuqa Caves Research, which has become an important player in the conservation of Buddhist art. Now, scholars from both China and the West are joining hands to uncover the lost beauty of the mystical Kuqa.

## Winter Tragedy

Gmw.cn

November 8

After days of unusually early snowfall, a school gymnasium in Jiamusi, Heilongjiang Province in the northeast, collapsed on November 6, killing three middle school students and injuring one.

This tragic event is the second such incident that has taken place in the province this year. In July, 11 people were killed after the roof of a middle school gymnasium in Qiqihar, another city in Heilongjiang, collapsed. According to local officials, the fatal collapse was caused by improperly stored construction materials on the rooftop.

As for the more recent incident in Jiamusi, snow may be a major direct

cause. However, heavy blizzards are not uncommon in the area. What's more, the collapsed gym has been in use for only three years. The fact that the gym is quite new has sparked public concerns over the quality of public facilities. Another issue worth raising is that red alerts—the highest in China's four-tier alert system—were issued prior to the collapse, and that schools and public venues were required to close. Whether the gym was closed in accordance with the blizzard alert remains a question to be answered.

Authorities have set up an investigation team to look into the incident. Hopefully, the truth can soon be uncovered. Management teams of public facilities should also step up regular safety checks to prevent such tragedies from repeating themselves.

## NEW FINANCE MINISTER ON FISCAL POLICY

**Lan Foan**, China's newly appointed finance minister, said the country will enhance the effectiveness of its proactive fiscal policy and implement existing policies well amid efforts to ensure high-quality economic development and defuse local government debt risks.

He made the remarks when taking interviews from the media for the first time after being appointed in late October.



Lan said the country will frontload part of its special-purpose local government bonds, a well-regulated scheme for local governments to secure financing. It plays an important role in driving effective investment and supporting economic recovery.

Lan, 61, is a native of Guangdong Province. He spent most of his career in the province as a government official, and was appointed vice governor in 2016. In June 2021, he became governor of Shanxi Province.

“The problem of imbalanced development between developed and developing countries is prominent and severely hinders the shared benefits of development for people worldwide.”

**Zuo Feng**, Vice Chairman and Secretary General of the China Foundation for Human Rights Development, at the recent China-Germany Forum on Human Rights Development in Beijing

“Because the world will go green, it will need all the green energy that China can produce.”

**Andrew Forrest**, Chairman and founder of Australian iron ore giant Fortescue Metals Group, in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency



## COVER STORY

# OPEN TO THE WORLD

CIIE in Shanghai shatters boundaries and explores the global stage

By Tao Zihui

**O**n its opening day on November 6, the American Food and Agriculture Pavilion at the Sixth China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai was bustling with activity as visitors flocked to explore and sample a wide range of

products, including coarse sea salt, California wines, soybeans, cheeses, nuts, berries and more—even chocolates for pets.

Keith Schneller worked tirelessly, navigating between booths and personally guiding visitors through the exhibit. A senior trade policy specialist for the Almond Board of California, this was his team's first time exhibiting at the CIIE.

One of the first American agricultural associations to enter the Chinese market, the board has more

than 7,000 almond growers in the state of California. All of its almonds are grown exclusively in the state of California, which produces 80 percent of the world's total.

"China is our third largest export market in the world," Schneller told *Beijing Review*. "We understand it's a very, very important expo for companies to come and show their