

OPINION: AVIAN ROUTE CONSERVATION P.20 | FEATURES: THE YOUNG DIGITAL DETOX P.38

BEIJING REVIEW

VOL.67 NO.46 NOVEMBER 14, 2024

北方周報 WWW.BJREVIEW.COM



DESTINATION: CHINA

How the CIE welcomes the world aboard

RMB9.00
USD1.70
AUD3.00
GBP1.20
CAD2.60
CHF2.60
JPY188

ISSN 1000-9140



46

9 771000 914246

邮发代号2-922·国内统一连续出版物号: CN11-1576/G2

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BEIJING REVIEW

A News Weekly Magazine
Published Since 1958

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Published every Thursday by

CICG Center for Americas, 24 Baiwanzhuang Lu,

Beijing 100037, China

Overseas Distributor: China International Book Trading

Corporation (Guoji Shudian), P. O. BOX 399,

Beijing 100044, China

Tel: 86-10-68413849, 1-416-497-8096 (Canada)

Fax: 86-10-68412166

E-mail: fp@mail.cibtc.com.cn

Website: <http://www.cibtc.com>

General Distributor for Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan:

Peace Book Co. Ltd.

17/F, Paramount Bldg, 12 Ka Yip St, Chai Wan, HK

Tel: 852-28046687 **Fax:** 852-28046409

Beijing Review (ISSN 1000-9140 USPS 2812) is published weekly

in the United States for US\$64.00 per year by Cypress Books,

360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48, South San Francisco, CA 94080

News Postage Paid at South San Francisco, CA 94080

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Beijing Review*,

Cypress Books, 360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48,

South San Francisco, CA 94080

Welcoming the World

Despite an overall decline in the global openness index, China has made gains in this regard. A report released at the Seventh China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai in early November showed China's openness index rose to 0.7596 in 2023 from 0.6789 in 2008. The world's, however, stood at 0.7542.

The World Openness Index, gauging the openness of 129 economies, mirrors reality. The CIIE, for one, bears testament to China's growing international engagement. Launched in 2018 as the world's first national-level expo dedicated to imports, it aims to share the Chinese market's huge potential. This year's edition saw the participation of about 3,500 exhibitors from 129 countries and regions, including a record-high 297 *Fortune* 500 companies and industry leaders.

While attracting business heavyweights, the CIIE takes an inclusive approach. This year, organizers offered more than 120 free booths for vendors from 37 least developed countries (LDCs), as part of China's efforts to support their development. The country has also recently announced a policy of giving all LDCs that have diplomatic relations with China zero-tariff treatment on all tariff lines starting December 1.

The latest official data showed China's foreign trade surged in the first three quarters of 2024, surpassing 32 trillion yuan (\$4.4 trillion), with imports rising

4.1 percent year on year to 13.71 trillion yuan (\$1.9 trillion). The new edition of China's national negative list for foreign investment, which took effect on November 1, scrapped the remaining two restrictions related to the manufacturing sector, fully opening up this industry to overseas investors.

China's growing openness is also evidenced by the fact that the country is increasingly facilitating visits by international tourists and businesspeople. On November 8, it launched a pilot visa-free policy for ordinary passport holders from Slovakia, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Andorra, Monaco, Liechtenstein and the Republic of Korea. They are the latest additions to a list of countries for which China has granted visa waivers. China welcomed 8.186 million international arrivals in the third quarter of this year, with 4.885 million of these coming in visa free, registering year-on-year upsurges of 48.8 percent and 78.6 percent, respectively.

With a middle-income group currently comprising 400 million people and projected to reach 800 million by 2035, China represents a market that cannot be underestimated. As the country advances its high-standard opening-up program, mutually beneficial outcomes are expected to be strengthened, even as protectionism appears to be on the rise in many of the world's quarters. **BR**



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CANADA.....CAD2.60 SWITZERLAND.....CHF2.60
JAPAN.....JPY188 EUROPE.....EUR1.90
TÜRKIYE.....YTL5.00 HK.....HKD9.30 NEPAL.....RS40

主管单位：中国外文出版发行事业局

主办单位：中国外文局美洲传播中心（北京周报社）

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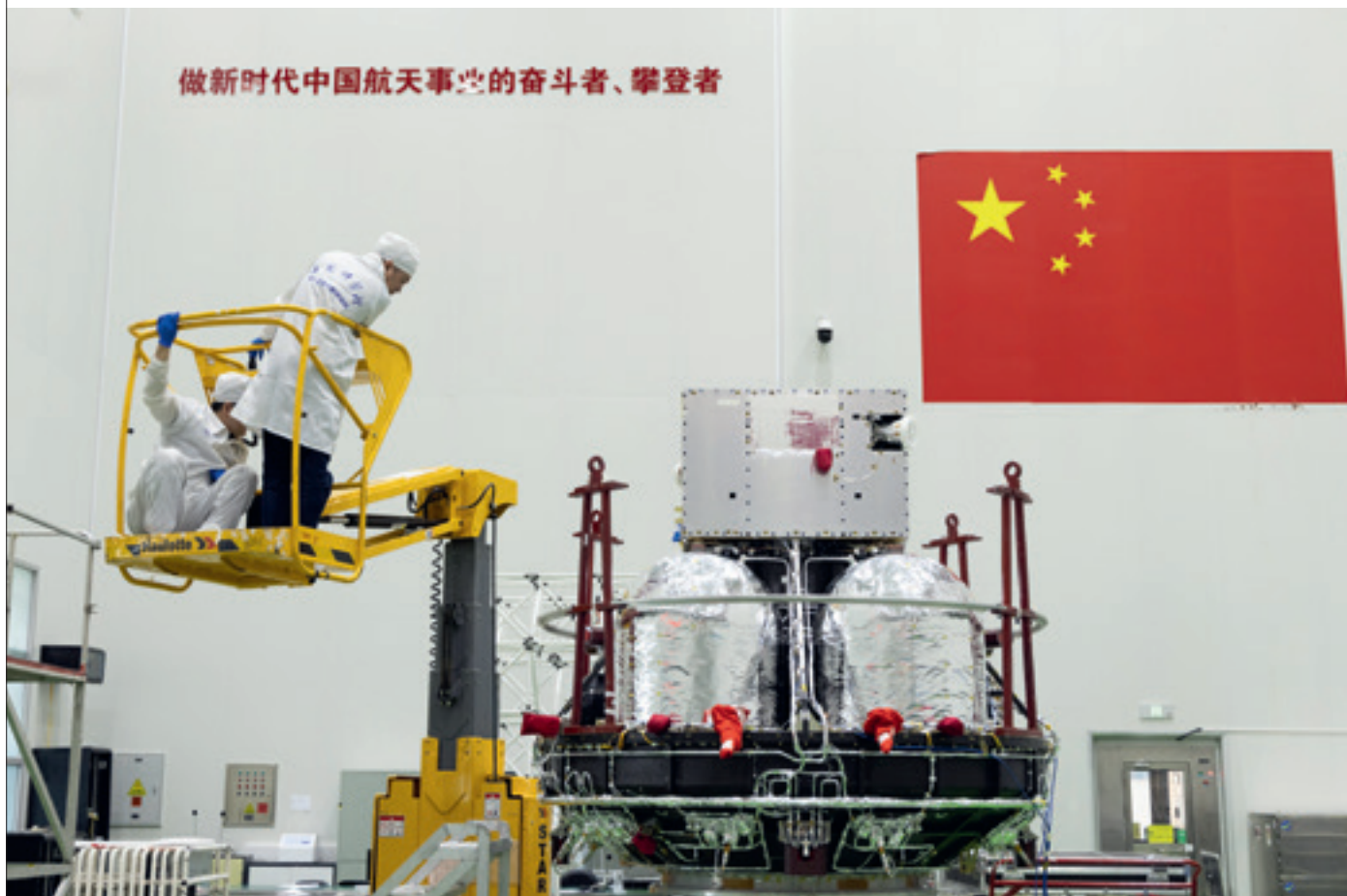
印刷：北京华联印刷有限公司

北京周报 英文版2024年 第46期 ISSN 1000-9140

国内统一连续出版物号：CN11-1576/G2 邮发代号：2-922

广告许可证0171号 北京市期刊登记证733号

国内零售价：人民币9.00元



MISSION SMILE

Technicians inspect the Solar wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer (SMILE) at the Innovation Academy for Microsatellites of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) in Shanghai on November 4.

SMILE is a collaborative mission between CAS and the European Space Agency (ESA), aimed at deepening the understanding of the Sun-Earth connection by studying the dynamic interactions between the solar wind and Earth's magnetosphere.

With all its development work completed in China, the satellite is set to be launched from Europe's Kourou spaceport in French Guiana by the end of 2025, aboard Arianespace's Vega-C launch vehicle.



Thought-Provoking Artifacts

The Origins of Chinese Civilization from an Archaeological Perspective exhibition at the Chinese Archaeological Museum in Beijing on November 6. Over 300 domestic and international guests attended the exhibition as part of the inaugural World Conference of Classics, held in Beijing from November 6 to 8. The event provided a cooperation platform for experts in classical studies.

Disciplinary Inspection

Fifteen teams of disciplinary inspectors had been stationed at 34 central Party and state departments to carry out discipline inspections as of November 5, according to an official statement released on November 6.

This is the fourth round of routine disciplinary inspection launched by the 20th Communist Party of China Central Committee.

According to the statement, the new round of disciplinary inspection will focus on the duty performance of Party organizations in the targeted units regarding the implementation of reform plans, fending off and defusing major risks, ensuring full and rigorous Party self-governance, rectifying problems identified in inspections, and other issues.

The inspection teams will be based at the units assigned

to them for around two months, during which hotlines and mailboxes will be set up to solicit reports on the breach of discipline and other problems involving Party officials and personnel in key positions in these units.

The inspectors are ready to receive complaints from the public until December 30.

Cooperative Education

Chinese authorities are considering the implementation of a family-school-community cooperative education system nationwide for primary and middle school students, according to a recent work plan, Xinhua News Agency reported on November 1.

The plan was issued by 17 departments including the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the National Working Committee on Children and Women under

the State Council, the country's highest state administrative body.

The plan outlines the responsibilities of different stakeholders in the cooperative education system. Government departments are tasked with strengthening their overall leadership, while education authorities should improve coordination with related agencies and social resource organizations to help schools play their leading roles and provide specialized guidance.

Families should cultivate a positive and healthy family culture while embracing scientific educational concepts. Meanwhile, schools should offer guidance for family education, establish a sound system for the communication between families and schools, and actively solicit input from parents and the community, the plan states.

Currently, issues like myopia,

obesity, scoliosis and mental health problems are prevalent among primary and middle school students, and addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts from schools, families and communities, according to the MOE.

Ecological Progress

Qinghai Lake, China's largest inland saltwater lake, has continuously expanded for the past 20 years, with the water level rising nearly 20 cm annually on average, Xinhua reported on November 5.

Satellite remote sensing in late September found that Qinghai Lake's water surface had reached over 4,650 square km, returning to the size it was approximately 70 years ago.

An indication of the lake's "growth" is the partial submergence of a large mythical statue by the lakeside.

Qinghai Lake, located in the northeastern part of the Qinghai-Xizang Plateau, is an important ecological barrier in north China and a key stopover site for migratory birds.

In the mid-1950s, the lake's water area was approximately 4,600 square km. However, due to climate change and human activities, the lake gradually shrank over the following decades. By 2004, its area had decreased to 4,244.5 square km, accompanied by a decline in vegetation coverage and a reduction in the populations of rare and endangered wildlife.

Charging Facilities

The number of charging piles for electric vehicles in China had reached 11.43 million as of late September, an increase of 49.6 percent from a year ago, the latest government data showed.

Among them, around 3.33

million were public charging facilities while 8.1 million were private ones, according to National Energy Administration data.

Based on a total stock of 28.09 million registered new-energy vehicles (NEVs) in the country at present, there is one charging pile for every 2.46 vehicles, the data showed.

NEVs refer to vehicles completely or mainly driven by new-energy sources, including battery electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid vehicles and fuel-cell vehicles.

In the first nine months of 2024, the country reported a net increase of 2.84 million charging piles, while the charging amount for vehicles totaled 66.67 billion kilowatts-hour, up 12.4 percent year on year, the data showed.

The government agency said the growing network of charging facilities is providing services across more highways in the country. At the same time, charging facilities in counties and towns were growing in number, having reached 417,000 units as of late September.

Manganese Deposit

Chinese geologists have discovered a massive manganese deposit in central China, with estimated reserves potentially

exceeding 200 million tons, according to the Geophysical and Geochemical Survey Institute of Hunan Province on October 31.

Approximately 84 million tons of manganese ore have already been identified within the Qiyang-Lingling Basin in Yongzhou, Hunan.

"Manganese is an important raw material for industries like steel, new energy and advanced materials," noted Liao Fengchu, director of the institute.

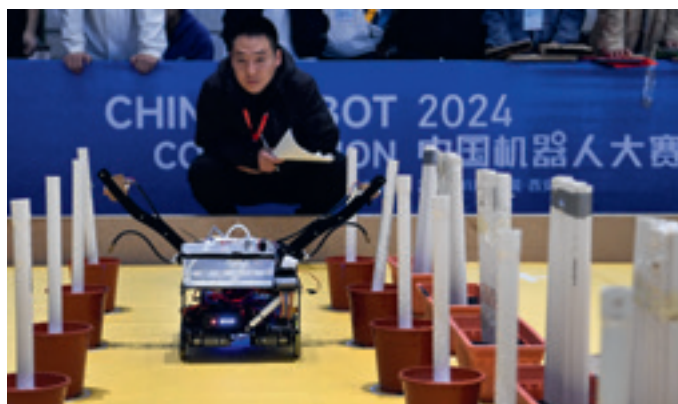
In recent drilling over 1,016 meters deep in the basin, researchers identified a substantial manganese ore body with promising industrial potential, explained Xu Junwei, the institute's chief engineer.

China consumes millions of tons of manganese annually, with most of the supply currently imported, Liao added.

Lifestyle Changes

The time Chinese people spend on both online and physical activities has increased compared to before, a survey released on October 31 showed.

According to the survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics, the daily average time individuals spend online has reached five hours and 37 minutes, an increase of



Automation in Action

An irrigation robot competes at the China Robot Competition in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, on November 1. The event, which ran from November 1 to 3, attracted over 1,700 teams from more than 200 universities.

two hours and 55 minutes since 2018, driven by the widespread use of smartphones, tablets and wearable devices.

The current participation rate of Chinese people in sports and fitness activities stands at 49.6 percent, an increase of 18.7 percentage points from 2018, according to the survey.

It also shows that Chinese people spend an average of one hour and 59 minutes on housework each day, 28 minutes less than in 2018, thanks to the rise of smart homes, takeout

food and household services.

Meanwhile, the average time spent on purchases is 43 minutes per day, reflecting the convenience that online shopping has brought to people's lives.

Conducted from May 11 to 31, the survey comprehensively assessed how residents in the world's second largest economy use their time and gained insights into people's life quality and lifestyle changes so that related government policies can be fine-tuned in a scientific manner.



Writing New Chapters

Senior residents practice calligraphy at an elderly care center in Beijing's Dongcheng District on October 31. As part of Beijing's community-based nursing model, the city plans to establish 100 elderly care centers at the subdistrict and township levels. As of September 20, 60 centers had already been completed.

Investment Rules

Chinese authorities on November 1 released revised rules on foreign investors' strategic investment in listed companies to encourage foreign investors to make long-term and high-value investments in the country.

The revised regulations, jointly released by six government departments, including the Ministry of Commerce and the China Securities Regulatory Commission, now permit foreign natural persons to make strategic investments in listed companies. This marks a departure from the previous rules that only allowed foreign legal entities or organizations to make such investments.

Under the new rules, the capital requirement for foreign investors who do not become controlling shareholders in listed firms has been lowered. The new capital requirements stipulate that foreign investors must have at least \$50 million in total actual assets or at least \$300 million in total

managed assets.

The revised regulations also introduce tender offers as an additional option for making strategic investments. Previously, the only available options were private placements and share transfer agreements.

For foreign investors choosing private placements or tender offers, the rules now allow the use of shares from non-listed overseas companies as consideration for acquisition payment.

Furthermore, the new rules ease the requirements for shareholding ratios and lock-up periods. The shareholding ratio requirement has been eliminated for foreign investors making investments through private placements, and the ratio for tender offers and share transfer agreements has been reduced from 10 percent to 5 percent.

To encourage medium- and long-term investments, the lock-up period for acquired shares has been reduced to at least 12 months, down from the previous three-year requirement.

Property Market

Transaction volume of new homes in China went up 0.9 percent year on year in October, reversing a decline that had persisted since June 2023. This improvement followed a series of government measures to boost the market, according to the latest figures released on November 1.

Second-hand home transactions rose 8.9 percent year on year in October, marking the seventh consecutive month of growth, as reported by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development.

On a monthly basis, transaction volume of new homes increased 6.7 percent, while second-hand home transactions moved up 4.5 percent in October.

The months of September and October are traditionally considered peak housing sales seasons in the latter half of a year. Typically, September tends to be the stronger of the two months, as property developers

push to hit their third-quarter sales targets.

The ministry said this was the first time since 2007 that October property transactions exceeded those in September.

To support the property market, China has implemented a range of measures, including cutting mortgage rates for existing loans, lowering down payment ratios and relaxing purchase restrictions.

The ministry expects the recovery momentum in the property market to be sustained as these policies continue to take effect.

Nuclear Technology

China aims to achieve an annual direct economic output value of 400 billion yuan (\$56 billion) from its nuclear technology application industry by 2026.

This target was outlined in an action plan jointly released by the China Atomic Energy Authority, the National Development and Reform Commission and other related departments. The plan is designed

NUMBERS



to support the development of the nuclear technology application industry over the next three years.

According to the plan, the industry is considered a driver for advancing the high-quality development of China's nuclear sector, as well as an important factor in supporting the transformation and upgrading of the national economy.

By 2026, the plan expects big improvements in China's independent innovation capabilities within the nuclear technology application industry, along with an expansion of the industrial sector.

Over the next three years, the plan sets out to achieve breakthroughs in several key technologies, establish multiple innovation platforms and cultivate new enterprises. The focus will be on applying nuclear technology in fields including medical diagnosis and treatment, agricultural breeding, food processing, and safety and security.

Services Trade

China's services trade saw rapid

growth in the first three quarters of the year, including a steep increase in the trade of travel-related services, official data showed.

The country's services trade totaled nearly 5.52 trillion yuan (\$775 billion) between January and September, up 14.5 percent year on year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Services exports exceeded 2.27 trillion yuan (\$319 billion), up 15.3 percent, and services imports rose 14 percent to over 3.24 trillion yuan (\$455 billion), resulting in a deficit of 971.46 billion yuan (\$136 billion).

Trade in travel-related services skyrocketed 42.8 percent to surpass 1.5 trillion yuan (\$211 billion), and trade in knowledge-intensive services rose 5.3 percent to 2.13 trillion yuan (\$299 billion).

Marine Economy

China's marine economy made steady progress in the first three quarters of 2024, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Preliminary calculations showed China's gross ocean product grew 5.4 percent year

on year to 7.7 trillion yuan (\$1.08 trillion) during said period.

The country's marine transportation industry continued to improve, with ocean freight volume up 5.6 percent year on year and cargo turnover increasing 8.5 percent.

The ministry further stated that the development of emerging marine industries is accelerating. The marine engineering equipment manufacturing industry maintained a sound, steady performance, with the amount of newly contracted marine engineering orders up 167 percent year on year and the amount of outstanding orders up 17.8 percent.

Overall, marine-related enterprises showed positive trends in production and operations. The ministry reported that nearly 80 percent of over 900 surveyed enterprises maintained stable or increased average employee numbers in the first three quarters compared to the same period last year.

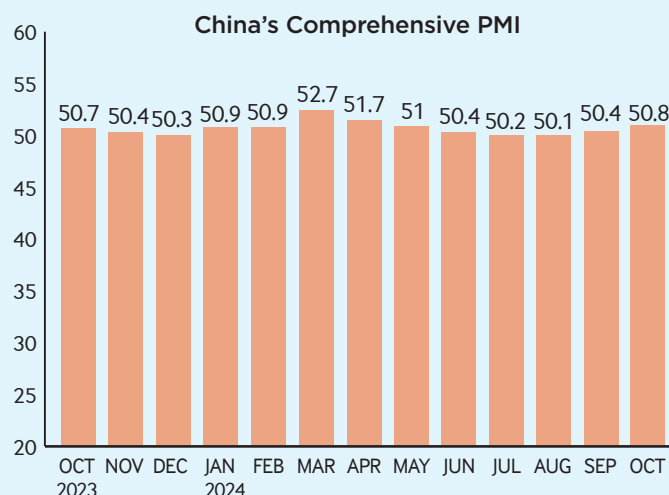
FTZ Growth

Foreign trade of China's pilot free trade zones (FTZs) expanded 11.99 percent year on year in the first three quarters of 2024, customs data showed.

There are currently 22 pilot FTZs nationwide. They offer attractive incentives for foreign investment, with each zone boasting its own economic and industrial focus. Considered pacesetters for the country's high-standard reform and opening up, the zones have contributed about 20 percent of foreign investment and import-export volume of the nation.

Total imports and exports of these pilot FTZs reached 6.09 trillion yuan (\$855 billion) during the first nine months of this year, according to the General Administration of Customs of China.

Exports rose 16.1 percent year on year to 2.74 trillion yuan (\$385 billion), while imports climbed 8.83 percent year on year to 3.35 trillion yuan (\$470 billion) during the period, the data showed.



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)



SPAIN

Piles of vehicles are revealed after floodwaters receded in Valencia on November 3. As of November 8, 217 people had been confirmed dead in the floods and at least 89 were still missing



TÜRKIYE

Participants at the first World Neolithic Congress in Sanliurfa on November 4. The event covered topics related to traditional theories about settled lifestyles and social hierarchies



SUDAN

A child waits to receive a malaria vaccine at a vaccination center in Gedaref, Gedaref State, on November 4. The country's health ministry has included the malaria vaccine into routine childhood vaccinations





GREECE

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis (left) welcomes German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier in Athens on October 30. Greece raised the issue of World War II (1939-45) reparations and the forced occupation loan, and was rejected



DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Test launch of the new intercontinental ballistic missile Hwasongpho-19 at an undisclosed location on October 31



AFGHANISTAN

People inspect the wreckage of a gas plant after a fire in the Qala-e-Haidar Khan area of Paghman District, Kabul, on November 3. Six people lost their lives and nine others were injured



↓ TABLE TENNIS PLAYER WINS CAREER AWARD

Chinese table tennis icon **Ma Long** recently received the Outstanding Sporting Career Award from the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), recognizing his exceptional achievements in and contributions to the sport.

Ma, 36, has competed in four consecutive Olympic Games since London 2012. Over his Olympic career, he has won six gold medals, becoming China's most decorated Olympian.

In the 2016 Rio Olympics, he clinched his first singles gold, completing a career Grand Slam. Five years later, in Tokyo, he defended his title, becoming the first male table tennis player to claim back-to-back Olympic singles titles and achieving the status of the first "double Grand Slam" champion in the sport.

"The ANOC award represents not only my efforts but also those of the Chinese table tennis team," Ma said.



The Power of Marathons

People.com.cn
November 4

The 2024 Beijing Marathon began early on the morning of November 3 and attracted 30,000 participants from around the world. In 2023, 699 marathon races were held across China, with 6.05 million participants. However, many enthusiasts were still turned away from races due to limits placed on participation.

The popularity of marathon races is bringing business opportunities and also

boosting local tourism in cities across the country. Of the Beijing Marathon's participants, only a very small fraction were experienced professional runners, with the majority being amateurs.

The development of marathon races not only contributes to the promotion of the sports industry as a whole, but is also raising people's awareness of health and pushing forward long-distance running as a healthy activity.

Races are a window for host cities to showcase their best attributes, boost their image as destinations and attract consumption within their hospitality, tourism and retail sectors.



Truck Driver Tales

Lifeweek
October 28

Lifeweek journalists recently joined China's truck drivers on the road to share their stories with the wider public. One of them followed a refrigerated truck that departed from Qingdao in Shandong Province, crossed into Russia at Manzhouli Port in the northeast and drove right across Siberia before arriving near Moscow after a 10,000-km journey. Due to increasing market demand there, a growing number of Chinese logistics companies have launched cross-border

"Competition fosters new forms of collaboration. No company excels in every aspect. The competition with China allows us to exchange ideas with Chinese firms and combine the best components into a cohesive whole."

Ferdinand Dudenhoeffer, a renowned German automotive expert, in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency, adding the European Union's decision to increase tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles is "out of touch with reality"

"From grassroots movements to innovation labs, young people are pushing for ambitious climate action."

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary General, in his message to mark World Cities Day, which is observed annually on October 31, calling for amplifying young people's voices and promoting their participation in urban decision-making

transportation services between China and Russia and Chinese trucks are now a common sight on Russian highways.

Another journalist was on a truck transporting live fish from Guangdong Province in the south to a seafood market in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province in the east. Transporting live fish is a notoriously difficult job. Drivers need to rush to meet their delivery deadline, but at the same time drive their truck skillfully to ensure safety. A third journalist followed a fleet of trucks transporting civil engineering vehicles made in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province in northwest China, to Armenia via the Horgos Port in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. In recent years, the number of vehicles queuing up for customs declaration there has increased dramatically, bringing more business to local logistics companies.

Traveling with truck drivers and sharing their experiences offer insights into the rapid changes within China's economy. Moving goods on the basis of supply and demand means drivers' routes, cargo and even their livelihoods are subject to the fluctuations of the market. Due to necessity, truck drivers are known for their flexibility and their ability to seize business opportunities when they see them.

Regulating Pet Funerals

Rednet.cn
November 4

Pets are increasingly becoming indispensable members of many families in China. Families place high value on the happiness and sense of peace pets bring them, so when their pet passes away, many wish to host a funeral, leading to the emergence of pet funeral services.

However, as an emerging industry, pet funeral services still exist within a gray area, without proper regulation.

Questionable management of the industry has ignited constant disputes over how services should be operated.

For example, no law prevents pet funeral services from being conducted in street-facing shops, which tends to make surrounding communities and passers-by uncomfortable. Community concerns about hygiene problems caused by animal remains and the potential spread of diseases to humans are also reasonable.

There must be laws to standardize the pet funeral industry, including for requisite approvals prior to renting business premises and for better management by landlords and property managers.

↓ NOBEL LAUREATE TO WORK IN CHINA

Nobel laureate **Gérard Mourou**, who recently joined Peking University's School of Physics as a chair professor, revealed his work plans during an international academic forum held in Beijing in early November, saying he is going to research the use of extreme light within the medical and energy fields.

The esteemed French physicist shared his vision during the forum, emphasizing the potential applications of ultra-high-intensity lasers in medicine and nuclear energy.



Mourou, who won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2018 for his groundbreaking contributions to laser physics, is set to play a key role in establishing a new institute focused on scientific research and international cooperation in fields including laser and particle physics.

Mourou has expressed admiration for China's scientific achievements and the innovative spirit of its students, noting that their interest in his work has been a driving factor in his decision to join Peking University.

“What does it mean to have a community with a shared future? It's about everyone sitting together, joking and laughing, regardless of nationality or ethnicity.”

Chinese-style stand-up comedy, or *xiangsheng*, artist **Yan Jiabao**, who founded a platform in Beijing for international comedians to perform stand-up comedies, in a recent interview with newspaper *China Daily*

“China is at the heart of the system of global trade and cross-border payments. So the opportunity to be here looking at the global payments infrastructure and do that through the lens of a Chinese market and Chinese perspective is a special opportunity for us.”

Bill Winters, CEO of Standard Chartered Bank, in a recent interview with Xinhua



The National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai, the venue hosting the Seventh China International Import Expo (CIIE), on November 4

COVER STORY

EXPO EMPOWERS EXCHANGE

The CIIE, a fine testament to China's evolving commitment to opening up
By Peng Jiawei

In small Peruvian workshops nestled deep in the Andes Mountains, local families, who have been weaving alpaca wool for generations, make alpaca wool

plush toys by hand.

In a research lab of French tire manufacturer Michelin Group, scientists prepare for the launch of a lunar rover tire designed to withstand the moon's extreme temperature fluctuations of between 100 degrees Celsius and minus 240 degrees Celsius.

At a store in Aoyama, a team of artists from Japanese retailer Muji transform a wide range of vintage items collected from across the world into modern, usable products.

These scenes may seem to