

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

## CHINA WATCH

CHINA DAILY 中国日报

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# More policies lined up to boost economy

China will incrementally execute a series of measures to promote sustained economic recovery and growth, the National Development and Reform Commission says.

"The country is confident it can maintain steady and healthy economic growth and achieve the full-year growth target," said Zheng Shanjie, head of the commission, China's top economic regulator, on Oct 8. More will be done to strengthen the countercyclical adjustments for macro-economic policies, he said.

The measures announced in late September attach greater importance to improving the quality of economic growth, supporting the real economy, facilitating the

sound development of market entities, and coordinating high-quality development and high-level security, Zheng said.

Since Sept 24 the country's top regulators have put forward supportive measures covering the financial sector, the property market and the real economy, among others.

The measures will be better used to spur more development potential and help achieve this year's growth target, Zheng said.

More will be done to boost the capital market, he said, and more effective and comprehensive measures will be taken to vigorously guide the inflow of long-term capital. Blockages preventing the smoother entry of

social security funds, as well as insurance and wealth management funds into the capital market should be removed, he said.

Public companies will be supported in mergers and acquisitions as well as restructuring. The reform of mutual funds should be advanced steadily, and efforts will be made to execute measures to protect individual investors, Zheng said.

Liu Gang, managing director of China International Capital Corp. in Beijing, said the measures announced last month had exceeded market expectations and rekindled investors' passion, emphasizing the financial measures' support for the stock market.

These have served as a driver

for the bullish performance of the A-share market in late September. However, the market's performance will be determined by the pace and scale of successive policies, especially fiscal policies, Liu said.

Luo Zhiheng, chief economist at Yuekai Securities in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, said fiscal and property market policies should better coordinate with recently announced monetary policies to stabilize investor confidence and expectations. Increasing the scale of this year's budget deficit, accelerating the issuance of special bonds, granting subsidies to special groups of people and the issuance of additional treasury bonds are possible options in terms of supportive

fiscal measures, he said.

China may adopt moderate fiscal stimulus of about 1.5 trillion yuan (\$212 billion) to 2 trillion yuan in the short term, which is also a reasonable level, said Wang Tao, chief China economist at UBS Investment Bank.

Chen Guo, chief strategist at China Securities in Beijing, said the Chinese stock market's recent bullish performance is supported by the revaluation of Chinese assets and renewed confidence. But a well-grounded overall bull run still needs time, especially the further improvement of economic fundamentals. Investors should have patience for the medium term, he said.

— SHI JING



## FESTIVE SPIRIT

Tourists in the ancient city of Luoyi in Luoyang, Henan province, during the National Day holiday between Oct 1 and Oct 7. Tourism-related revenue reached a record high of more than 700 billion yuan (\$99.4 billion) during the break, 6.3% more than in the corresponding period last year, according to official figures. HUANG ZHENGWEI / FOR CHINA DAILY

## NEO-CHINESE FASHION SHINES ON INTERNATIONAL CATWALKS

Asian fashion designers are putting neo-Chinese attire on the catwalks of the world, dazzling fashion aficionados with rich mixtures of Eastern and Western aesthetics.

Young Generation Z fashion designers, inspired by Chinese culture and with a global outlook, are unveiling their brands worldwide, opening a dialogue of dual heritage across cultures, bridging the new with the authentic, the rural with the urban and the conservative with the avant-garde.

Fashion designers in New York are integrating their identities and backgrounds into their creations, enriched by having studied abroad and showcasing diverse interpretations and concepts of womanhood.

"I feel that as an international student and a fashion designer, my mission is to use my design language to express my experience and my cultural value," said Charlotte Shao, founder of the fashion brand Sisio.

The logo for the brand, created in 2018, is rooted in traditional Chinese culture, incorporating elements of Taoism.

"Sis" stands for sister and combines the design philosophy of yin and yang. The two i's in Sisio represent the positive and negative aspects in the divination trigrams of the *Book of Changes*.

"Every coin has two sides," Shao said. "In fashion I find it very interesting that many contrasting ideas actually keep good balances, like scheming and true feeling, elegance and vulgarity, virtuality and reality, bright and dark."



The Joya Ma collection shows designs for the Year of the Dragon. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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Such ideas as well as yin and yang are reflected in her designs, she said.

"I compare fashion to the concept of yin and yang because the fashion industry is inherently vain. I believe that desire and vanity are inseparable truths of life, while beauty and dreams represent the other side of the same coin."

Shao has showcased her brand on numerous catwalks in New York, Paris and Tokyo.

"In my designs I incorporate a lot of traditional Chinese calligraphy elements. ... Few people use hand-written calligraphy as prints on clothing anymore, most using machine printing to cut costs. However, I want to preserve the traditional artisanship of ancient China," she said.

Shao's works also incorporate Western classical aesthetics, creating a cultural collision. For example, she combines the design of European corsets, which exude a regal, courtly style, with Japanese cultural elements, some of them influenced by traditional Chinese culture.

Joya Ma, designer and

founder of the eponymous brand, said: "I want to bring Chinese culture, my Chinese heritage ... to the world. I hope everyone can enjoy and appreciate the beauty, and I want all women to be able to wear it."

Joya Ma was founded in New York, which Ma said is "a place where I can truly be myself".

She was born in Los Angeles but said she has spent the bulk of her life in New York, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Arizona.

"Empowering women to express themselves boldly and fearlessly" is one of her main messages, one that is aimed especially at Chinese women.

Ma's work also integrates many Western elements. Her interest in abstract art has led her to use bold, vibrant colors in her designs, challenging perceptions of what Chinese style is supposed to be, she said.

"Chinese elements can be combined with modern aspects to create many breakthroughs. Even though my designs are inspired by Chinese style, I want to innovate further so that the clothing can better align with the international market."

"Chinese elements take on different characteristics when mixed with local cultures around the world. As I've traveled and lived in different places, I've noticed that people's perceptions of Chinese culture can be very different. The challenge in designing clothes is figuring out how to create pieces that resonate with people everywhere, and that's something I'm always working on."

— MINGMEI LI

## Years of effort bring giant pandas back to the wild

The devastating earthquake that struck Wenchuan, Sichuan province, in 2008, killing more than 87,000 people, had reverberations far beyond the human realm. Among the quake's many other casualties were the breeding bases of the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda there.

After the quake a part-time cleaner, Mu Shijie, driven by his love for the national treasure, volunteered to help restore the base to its former glory, and after a month of effort he was taken on as a caretaker.

Sixteen years later Mu is an experienced trainer who helps giant pandas to be reintroduced into the wild.

"This consists of releasing bred giant pandas back into the wild after they undergo wilderness training, the aim being to increase wild giant panda numbers," Mu said.

During the first stage of wilderness training, caretakers move a giant panda mother to a training enclosure at the base. These enclosures cover tens of thousands of square feet and are built on mountains, resembling natural environments.

To simulate living in the wild, caretakers ensure that cubs do not see humans. When feeding their mothers, they wear panda suits sprayed with the smell of panda urine.

"We must ensure that the cubs do not see us feeding their mother and do not come into contact with any artificial food," Mu said.

"The main diet for giant pandas is bamboo. Feeding the mother ensures ample milk production because the cubs primarily rely on

milk before bamboo. This approach maximizes the cubs' independence from humans and ensures they will naturally avoid humans rather than seek them out."

When the cubs are about 1 year old they are transferred with their mothers to larger enclosures with more complex natural environments, and they gradually learn to feed on bamboo independently. Eventually, when the cubs are close to adulthood and possess the skills to survive in the wild, they are released back into their natural habitat.

"The work of reintroducing giant pandas into the wild is more demanding than that of captive caretakers," Mu said.

"Wilderness trainers must establish a sense of familiarity and trust with the panda mothers to carry out tasks such as fitting them with GPS collars and collecting and returning cubs."

In recent years China's efforts in natural forest conservation, protection of wildlife and plants, and the establishment of the Giant Panda National Park in Sichuan, Shaanxi and Gansu provinces have advanced the conservation of giant pandas and their habitats. The number of wild giant pandas has risen from about 1,100 in the 1980s to nearly 1,900.

Experts say reintroducing captive-bred giant pandas back into the wild after wilderness training helps improve genetic diversity and reduce the risk of extinction within small groups, thereby aiding in the recovery and rebuilding of wild giant panda numbers.

— YAN DONGJIE



Mu Shijie guides a panda during its training to be reintroduced into the wild at the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda in Sichuan province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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# SOCIETY



Children wait to get their lunch at a kindergarten in Xiangxi Tujia and Miao autonomous prefecture, Hunan province, in June. PHOTOS BY YAO YUXIN / CHINA DAILY

## Witness to a country's years of transformation

FRIENDS AFAR

John Quelch's ties with China started in 1981 when he took a few hours from an Asian trip to visit the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall in the city of Guangzhou. Quelch, then a Harvard Business School professor, says he tried to send a postcard to his family in the United States, only to discover that many Chinese did not understand what a postcard was.

"China was economically poor, with few cars on the road, and Chinese people were very friendly and curious to talk to us," Quelch, now 73, said.

He served as a professor at Harvard Business School for more than 30 years, ending his tenure in 2017. This January he arrived in Kunshan, Jiangsu province, to take up a post as executive vice chancellor of Duke Kunshan University, keen to serve as a bridge linking Chinese and U.S. education.

When he first visited China, people in the U.S. were beginning to take an interest in the country, largely due to former U.S. president Richard Nixon's historic visit to the country in 1972. The arrival of two pandas in the U.S. that same year further stimulated tourism to China, he said.

China's reform and opening-up policy, initiated in the late 1970s, improved economic ties between China and the U.S., offering individuals like him more opportunities to engage with China in the ensuing years, he said.

Against that backdrop, ties between Harvard Business School and China also became stronger, and he often traveled to China to take part in discussions on economic and business matters during the 1980s and 1990s.

Like many, Quelch said he has been amazed by China's great economic changes over the past 40 years. When he first visited the country, poverty was obvious, and the transformation over the years has been astonishing, he said.

"China has achieved the most substantial and rapid transformation in human history by lifting nearly 800 million people out of poverty over the past four decades."

In the 1980s China was in the early phase of implementing the reform and opening-up policy, characterized by an underdeveloped regulatory framework,

he said. Today the country has a structured, regulated and disciplined economic environment, with a lot more capacity in science, technology and innovation. The number of Westerners seeking to work with Chinese business professionals has also greatly risen, he said.

"I've always believed in lifelong learning, and that's pretty easy to do in China because there's so much to learn."

Quelch also highlighted the remarkable increase in English proficiency among Chinese and the increase in Chinese traveling worldwide. This not only brings economic benefits to the countries they visit but also allows people everywhere to meet and understand Chinese, he said.

Quelch was born in the United Kingdom, grew up in Australia and developed his career in the U.S. and China and has traveled in many countries. His family migrated from the UK to Australia when he was 6, an arduous journey with many refueling stops.

"I was very lucky. Without even realizing it, I traveled halfway around the world and visited nine countries when I was just 6."

Young people should seek to travel internationally as early as possible, he said, and he appreciates President Xi Jinping's invitation last year to 50,000 U.S. students to visit China in a five-year period.

"Youth always represents the future of every society, as innovation invariably stems from young minds. It is crucial for young people from China and the U.S. to understand each other."

Quelch launched an immersion program for U.S. college students in August in which more than 70 students from eight U.S. universities traveled to Shanghai and Jiangsu for a week-long cultural exchange with their Chinese counterparts. The program, hosted by Duke Kunshan University and the Foreign Affairs Office of Jiangsu Provincial People's Government, included tours of historic towns and museums, visits to technology companies and seminars on the ethics of emerging technologies.

— CHEN YINGQUN



John Quelch delivers a speech at Duke Kunshan University's 2024 commencement in Kunshan, Jiangsu province, in May. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## Nutrition program puts healthy food on plates

At a kindergarten in a remote area of Hunan province, a simple meal of pickles and rice was often the only food children received at school. Such a meager children's lunch was not unusual in underdeveloped Yongshun county, nestled in the Xiangxi Tujia and Miao autonomous prefecture.

A two-hour drive along winding mountain roads separates this kindergarten, in a village called Shaping, from the nearest county center. Most of its pupils are left-behind children, those raised by grandparents who often sent them to school on empty stomachs.

The kindergarten head, Peng Nangui, said the children were often sickly and shorter than what was the standard for their age; in flu season many missed school because of colds and fevers.

In recent years the Chinese government has given top priority to ensuring children are well nourished, with policies such as the Nutrition Package, for infants aged 6 to 24 months, and the National Nutrition Improvement Program, for rural students aged 6 to 15. However, children aged 3 to 5 have fallen through the cracks.

About 4.8 million Chinese children under 5 still suffer from stunting or wasting, the report State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 said.

A project that provides nutritious school meals, jointly run by the World Food Programme and Hunan province, is working to bridge the gap in Xiangxi. Since 2018 a daily subsidy of 4 yuan (60 cents) a child has provided rural preschoolers aged 3 to 5 with a more varied lunch, along with breakfast and afternoon snacks. It has greatly improved children's nutrition.



Children enjoy their lunch at a village kindergarten in Hunan in June.

About 7,348 preschool children from Yongshun and Longshan counties in the ethnic minority autonomous region have benefited from the program. More than 80% are left-behind children, and more than half of them are from low-income families.

Early intervention in the development of rural children is a crucial investment, said Zhao Bing, representative of the World Food Programme in China. "It's a key strategy to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and achieve social equity."

Nestled in the mountains, a long, narrow path leads to the entrance to Shaping village kindergarten. It is noon, and the children are lined up outside the kitchen, waiting for their lunch. A small blackboard hangs by the kitchen window, listing today's menu: chicken stewed with mushrooms, pork ribs stewed with corn, scrambled eggs with tomatoes, and stir-fried cabbage with carrots.

The menu is carefully crafted by experts of the Normal College of Jishou University in Xiangxi. Each of the 40 kindergartens taking part in the project must use at least 25 differ-

ent ingredients in their weekly meals, and the quantity is precisely measured in grams.

Peng Jianguhua usually gets a call from the kindergarten head Peng at night, asking for a chicken or duck for the children's lunch the next day. The following morning she brings along a fowl when she drops her daughter, 6, at the kindergarten.

The mother said she has been supplying meat to the kindergarten for five years. She has more than 100 chickens and ducks and feeds them corn and grains, but never commercial feed, she said.

The project calls on preschools taking part to use at least 30% of their subsidies to buy produce from smallholder farmers at market prices.

It tries to involve the poorest and most disadvantaged parents, especially those with limited market access. Every year, each household receives 500 yuan worth of seeds and organic fertilizer, and undergoes at least two training sessions to improve its farming skills. This has helped expand and improve the variety and quality of meat and vegetables on children's plates.

— YAO YUXIN

## EVENTSPECIAL

# Yangtze River Culture celebrated in spectacular style

On the evening of Sept 14, traditional culture was highlighted in Wuhan, Hubei province, as the Yangtze River Cultural and Artistic Season kicked off in the city. The ceremony used the sky as the curtain, the city landscape as the backdrop and the Yangtze River as the stage to mark the launch of the season's events.

The river section from the Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge to the Second Yangtze River Bridge was the main stage for this event. During the opening ceremony, a large-scale immersive light show, cruises along the Yangtze River, fireworks and drone performances were used to showcase the distinctive cultures of 13 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities in the Yangtze River basin.

During the season's event, iconic cultural elements along

the Yangtze River are planned to dazzle audiences through the exhibition of intangible cultural heritage, films, fine arts, stage arts, literature and other forms.

Hubei is a crucial area in the evolution of the Yangtze River civilization. Currently, the province is working hard to build itself into a pillar city for the rise of Central China. It has been investing in the development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt and promoting the Hubei practice of modernization nationwide.

Under the guidance of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and the China Writers Association, the season is hosted by the Hubei provincial government, the Yangtze River Water Resources Commission and the China Three Gorges Corporation.

The activities will explore the value of Yangtze River culture, collect such cultural resources and contribute to a platform for cultural exchanges and displays through artistic forms. The events will present the cultural heritage from the Sichuan and Chongqing regions and the Jiangnan (south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River) water towns in multiple perspectives, injecting momentum into the high-quality development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt.

On Sept 14, as one of the activities of the Yangtze River Cultural and Artistic Season, the Yangtze River Cultural Research Institute was inaugurated, with the aim to establish an interdisciplinary, inter-industrial and inter-regional academic community.

The institute is dedicated

to innovation in mechanisms, research topics and journal platforms, aiming to set the model for the research, inheritance and commercialization of Yangtze River culture.

Sept 15 an art exhibition themed with new images of the Yangtze River opened at the Hubei Museum of Art, which was attended by artists from provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities along the Yangtze River.

The exhibition organizers received more than 200 works from various regions. After a selection process, it displayed 108 of them, including 54 works from outside the province. These works cover various mediums such as Chinese paintings, oil paintings, printmaking, watercolors, lacquer and experimental images.

Participating artists drew inspiration from the great cre-

ations of contemporary China, focusing on themes such as natural landscapes, historical and cultural heritage, urban and rural development and technological innovation of the Yangtze River Basin people.

The works portray images of ethnic minorities, researchers and young business entrepreneurs.

On Sept 19, a film week event was held in Wuhan. A 60-minute documentary telling the stories of the Three Gorges region over the past 30 years was provided to audience.

Another signature activity of the season, the Dynamic Yangtze River stage art display, opened at the Hubei Theater on Sept 20. Peking Opera, dance dramas, ballets, operas and musicals took the stage in the following one week after it was launched.

— LI YOU

## BUSINESS

## In search of the high-milk, low-gas cow

As China's appetite for milk continues to grow, a team of scientists has embarked on a mission in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region to create low-methane-emitting dairy cows.

The project, established last year by Skxing, a cow breeding company in China, aims to identify genes that contribute to high milk production, longevity and low emissions of methane, said the company, whose headquarters is in Hohhot, the regional capital.

Methane, the second-most abundant global man-made greenhouse gas after carbon dioxide, has more than 80 times the warming power of CO<sub>2</sub> over the first 20 years after it reaches the atmosphere.

The flammable gas is responsible for about 30% of the rise in global temperatures since the Industrial Revolution, the International Energy Agency says.

An estimated 60% of the world's methane emissions are from human activity, with agriculture, fossil fuel extraction and consumption, and decomposition of landfill waste the largest sources. Agriculture, including animal husbandry, is responsible for 40% of human-made methane emissions.

A scientist with the company, Li Xihe, shed light on the intricate, multi-phased research involved in achieving the mission's goal of decarbonizing the dairy cow sector.

The journey begins with measuring the methane emissions of individual cows using a special device resembling a feeding trough, he said.

This contraption not only attracts the cows but also monitors the gases they inhale and exhale, providing valuable data for analysis.

As a ruminant animal, cows, as well as sheep and goats, host millions of tiny microbes in their stomachs. While they aid in digestion and are helpful to the livestock's health, an unfortunate by-product of their functioning is the creation of methane gas, which is expelled into the atmosphere through the animal's mouth and rear end.

The team is using mid-infrared spectra to collect methane emission data and then uses machine and deep learning algorithms to build a predictive model for each cow's methane output, he said.

"With the established model, the researchers can predict the methane emission level of each cow, serving as a crucial parameter for identifying low-emission candidates."

To complete the selection process, they analyze the complete genome of each cow, ultimately selecting those with both low methane emissions and desirable genetic traits, he said.

Developing a reliable methane emission prediction model takes at least two years, he said.

Assessing the chosen cows' milk components and mid-infrared data requires another year. Selecting cows with both high milk production and longevity while maintaining low methane emissions takes an additional one to two years.

However, more research is still needed after the low-carbon core herd is established, he said.



Above: Dairy cows are milked at a smart ranch in Tumd Left Banner, Inner Mongolia autonomous region, in April. The ranch uses cutting-edge technologies to turn cattle excrement into fertilizer to lower carbon emissions. LIAN ZHEN / XINHUA Cattle graze on a grassland ranch in Xilin Gol League, Inner Mongolia, in July. LI ZHIPENG / XINHUA



Scientists meticulously monitor the herds' methane emissions, milk production and other vital parameters to build a comprehensive database that confirms the low-methane status of these chosen cows.

"These exceptional cows then form the foundation of a breeding program, producing low-methane embryos and

facilitating large-scale herd expansion."

Li and his team are also exploring the ideal fodder and management practices for these cows, improving their living environment to ensure that they fully express their low-methane genetic potential.

Sun Wei, a scientist with the low-carbon cow program,

said over the past year a 20-strong team has been monitoring methane emissions from 8,000 dairy cows at a ranch covering about 74 acres.

With only one device for methane monitoring, he said, the team often operates in two shifts around the clock to make the most of the ranch so as to help expedite data collection and enlarge the data pool.

The team's capacity allows it to collect emission data from only 30 to 40 dairy cows a day, but it hopes to acquire another device to improve capabilities, he said.

One thing that has challenged the team is the lack of experience both at home and abroad to serve as references, he said.

The work is still in its early stages in China, he said, and while the concept of low-carbon cows has been explored elsewhere, such research has primarily focused on beef cattle.

Sun emphasized the groundbreaking nature of the team's research and its potential to decarbonize dairy cow production, saying dairy cows are a major contributor to methane emissions.

According to Li Pengcheng, vice-president of Chinese dairy company Mengniu, currently, the annual carbon emissions from China's dairy industry are approximately 66 million to 77 million short tons.

In addition to cultivating low-methane-emitting dairy cows through genetic selection, he also noted the optimization of fodder, manure recycling and the integration of solar energy facilities into ranches as potential solutions to decarbonize the dairy sector.

—YUAN HUI AND HOU LIQIANG

## EVENTSPECIAL

## Wealth of achievements and technological firsts by CIFTIS

The 2024 China International Fair for Trade in Services, which was held in Beijing in September, achieved nearly 1,000 outcomes in seven categories.

Nine thematic exhibitions, more than 100 forums and 25 sideline events were held during the five-day event. Of some 2,000 enterprises that set up booths in the fair, more than 20% were from abroad. Meanwhile, over 6,000 businesses exhibited online. Piao Xuedong, head of the Beijing Commerce Bureau, said at a news conference on Sept 16.

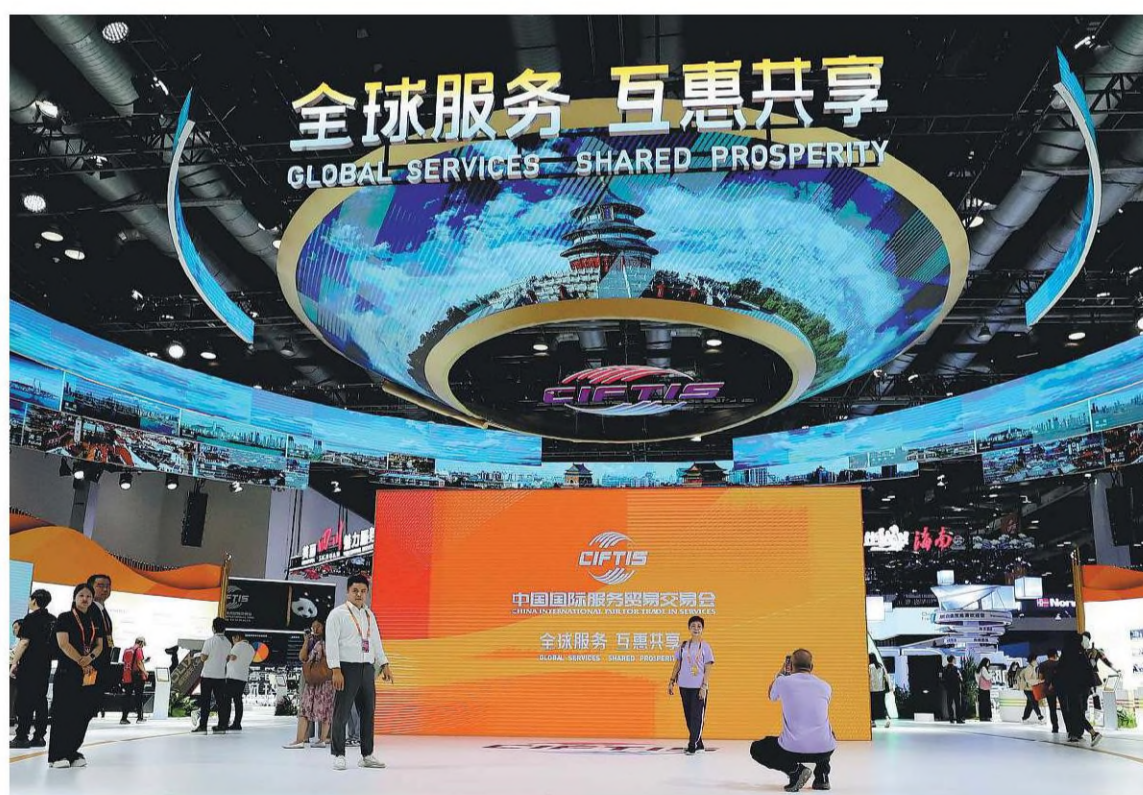
This year's exhibitions highlighted the integration of cutting-edge technologies and physical industries. Exhibits included an orthopedic surgery robot equipped with artificial intelligence deep-learning technology, a tiny cardiac pacemaker weighing about 0.07 ounces and an intelligent cockpit equipped with a remote safe driving system.

A total of 111 enterprises and institutions, including some Fortune Global 500 companies and industry leaders, released 219 achievements at the fair involving fields such as digitalization, AI and healthcare.

This marked an increase of 80 compared with the last session in 2023, Piao said.

Focusing on international projects and foreign companies, organizers held 56 matchmaking and promotional events during the fair. The multinational pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca secured agreements of intent with Sinopharm Holding Beijing and two other Chinese companies.

Meanwhile, it signed a strategic cooperation framework agreement with the Beijing Medical and Health Technology Promotion Center to jointly enhance talent cultivation and advance technological



Clockwise from top: The 2024 China International Fair for Trade in Services is held in Beijing from Sept 12 to 16. ZHANG WEI / CHINA DAILY Participants in the Global Trade in Services Summit assemble. The summit was a key part of the 2024 CIFTIS. ZHANG WEI / CHINA DAILY During this year's CIFTIS, a woman shows an interest in crafts displayed at the Pakistani exhibition booth. WANG JING / CHINA DAILY

research and application.

Provinces and cities also conducted a variety of promotional activities, showcasing their resources, business climate and potential projects.

During the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei investment and promotion summit held on Sept 13, the three regions released a batch of 202 projects, with combined investment of 162.2

billion yuan (\$22.87 billion).

These projects cover many high-tech industries such as new energy and intelligent networked automobiles, integrated circuits, biomedicine and industrial internet.

This year's event also released the 2023 China Trade in Services Development Report and the 2024 Digital Trade Development

and Cooperation Report, which detail the opportunities and challenges facing the industries.

Wang Bo, an official from the Ministry of Commerce, said that the 2024 CIFTIS has achieved fruitful results, demonstrating China's determination to foster high-quality development through opening-up.



"Besides that, it has formed a broad consensus on strengthening global cooperation in the service industry and trade in services," Wang said.

Many participants expressed recognition for the fair and their expectations for China's trade in services and international cooperation.

"We were looking to establish long-term partnerships with more Chinese businesses through the CIFTIS and introduce Chinese advanced technologies, products and services into our country," said Mohammed Bin Abdulaziz Alajlan, vice-chairman of Ajlan & Bros Holding Group, a leading private conglomerate from Saudi Arabia. The company has attended the CIFTIS for three consecutive years.

Honson To, chairman of WPMG China and Asia Pacific, said that the CIFTIS is a key platform for expanding openness in the service sector and establishing a more open economic system.

"We can see a range of international innovation achievements at the fair and gain a deeper understanding of the global trends in trade in services," To said.

China's efforts in trade in services, particularly the growing service imports, create significant opportunities for countries to boost their service exports, while providing strong impetus for global recovery, he added.

—YUAN SHENGGAO

# BEIJING SPECIAL

# Hundreds of guests in city for mutual learning among civilizations

The 2024 Beijing Culture Forum, held in September in the Chinese capital, shone a light on the significance of mutual learning among civilizations.

Featuring academic, high-end, international and public-oriented characteristics, the forum attracted more than 800 participants. Of them, more than 240 foreign guests come from more than 70 countries and regions, a significant increase compared to 2023.

They included domestic and international dignitaries, industry leaders, renowned experts and scholars, heads of international organizations, and representatives of central and local cultural publicity departments.

Discussion topics covered exchanges between Eastern and Western civilizations, digital cultural tourism and artificial intelligence.

This year's event comprised one main forum, also serving as the opening ceremony, six parallel forums and 32 professional salons.

During the main forum, Chinese and overseas guests delivered speeches on such topics as strengthening cultural confidence, inheriting and promoting excellent traditional culture, and deepening exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

A highlight of the opening ceremony was the release of a special report on the inscription of Beijing's Central Axis

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BEIJING CULTURE FORUM

tourism innovation and new patterns in the international dissemination of Chinese documentaries.

Their hosts included renowned universities like Tsinghua and Peking, the China National Archives of Publications and Culture and the Grand Canal Museum of Beijing.

Moreover, this year's culture forum held an industrial investors' conference for the first time. The event, which kicked off on Sept 21, aimed to promote the integration of culture with technology and finance, and create an influential cultural investment and financing brand.

Additionally, the forum was committed to creating a cultural festival with broad public participation. It collected and made short videos showcasing cultural achievements from various provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, and released them on central and local media and internet platforms. Diverse cultural activities for the public were also held during the forum.

—HAO NAN

on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The report told the city's experience in heritage protection and measures to strengthen the protection of historical and cultural cities.

The ceremony also announced the top 10 events in the construction of the national cultural center for 2023, an activity that garnered widespread attention, with more than 34 million votes cast by netizens.

Parallel forums had themes

like cultural inheritance, assets, trends, communication and exchanges, exploring the directions and paths for cultural development.

For example, the "Cultural Empowerment: Spiritual Life and Industrial Development" parallel forum presented projects including an action plan that reflects the collaborative development of the cultural and tourism industries in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, and a strategic cooperation

platform for the animation and game industries, covering 10 provinces and cities.

At the "Cultural Heritage: Systematic Protection and Living Inheritance" parallel forum, experts and scholars in cultural relics and archaeology from Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas engaged in discussions with their Chinese counterparts.

The salons, held on Sept 20, focused on topics such as immersive digital cultural

## Policies see creative industries booming

The popular Chinese video game *Black Myth: Wukong*, released in August, astonished global players with its breathtaking visuals and animations. Virtual Point, a motion capture technology developer based in Shijingshan district of Beijing, once more played a crucial role in the production by leveraging OptiTrack, an optical motion capture technology.

Virtual Point, established in 2017 in Beijing, moved to Shijingshan district in 2020 and has been involved in the production of several films and games including *The Three-Body Problem*.

The fast expansion of Virtual Point also drives the development of the virtual reality and science fiction metaverse industry in Shijingshan district. The Zhongguancun Virtual Reality Industrial Park, formerly the Shijingshan Pressure Vessel Factory, is where Virtual Point is situated. So far, the industrial park is home to 120 companies, among which 12 were recognized as the "Top 50 VR Companies in China" in 2023. A prominent VR industry cluster has been set up in Shijingshan district.

In addition to the VR industrial park, the National Cultural Industry Innovation Experiment Zone in the city's Chaoyang district stands as another hub for creative enterprises.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2024, the zone is home to more than 50,000 cultural enterprises as of the end of June, a significant rise from approximately 16,000 in 2014. During the first six months of this year, businesses within the zone collectively generated a turnover of 82.46 billion yuan (\$11.62 billion), representing 55% of the total in Chaoyang district.

"Over the past 10 years, the zone has continued to play a demonstration role, supporting the formation of new quality productive forces and



LIN YAQI / FOR CHINA DAILY

contributing to the promotion of the quality development of the cultural industry," said Guo Qi, director of the Culture and Creation Industry Development Center of Chaoyang district.

Guo noted that the number of new cultural enterprises in the National Cultural Industry Innovation Experiment Zone is significantly higher than the citywide average, making it a crucial engine for regional economic development.

The experiment zone has also been taking measures to innovate its development model and introduce supportive policies for cultural consumption to inject vitality into the industry.

It is the first such zone in Beijing to release a guide to help cultural and creative businesses attain the status of high-tech company. Approximately 1,800 businesses have obtained approval to be classified as high-tech companies.

It has been enhancing its financial service mechanism to offer increased support to businesses. Additionally, it has initiated programs to identify companies with growth potential and assist them in becoming unicorns or listed entities.

In the next decade, the experiment zone will continue to optimize the business environment and promote reforms in areas such as finance, talent cultivation and policymaking to support Beijing in becoming a national cultural center.

In addition to industrial parks, Beijing also plays a significant role in China's creative industry landscape. Domestic blockbusters such as *Hi, Mom* and *The Wandering Earth* are all Beijing productions.

Positioned as a hub for film production and innovation, Beijing, renowned for its rich cultural resources, is committed to advancing the film industry's development. It continuously refines industrial support policies, nurtures innovative resources, and cultivates an open and dynamic industry landscape.

In 2023, Beijing-produced films secured four spots out of the top 10 domestic films at the box office, generating a total box office revenue of 13.44 billion yuan (\$1.89 billion). The city also solidified its presence across the industry chain, covering creation, production, distribution and screening.

Chaoyang district, where the National Cultural Industry Innovation Experiment Zone is situated, stands out as one of the most important hubs for film production businesses in the city.

Official figures from 2023 show that Beijing boasted over 20,000 film and television businesses engaged in production, screening, marketing, and distribution, with more than 3,200 registered in Chaoyang.

—TANG ZHIHAO

## Beijing ramping up heritage preservation

Beijing ranks top among cities worldwide by number of World Heritage Sites.

With the latest addition of the Central Axis, the city is now home to eight World Heritage Sites, which are distributed across districts such as Dongcheng, Xicheng, Haidian, Tongzhou, Yanqing, Changping and Fangshan.

"Such world cultural heritage is China's cultural landmark and spiritual hallmark, providing a valuable resource for building China into a strong cultural nation, promoting mutual learning among and exchanges of civilizations, and demonstrating confidence in Chinese culture," said Song Haojie, deputy head of the Beijing Cultural Heritage Bureau.

As the jewel in the crown of Beijing's treasure trove of cultural and tourism resources, the eight World Heritage Sites stand as important pillars for promoting the holistic protection of Beijing's old city areas, and the construction and protection of the city's three major cultural belts, revolving around the Grand Canal, the Great Wall, and the Western Hills and Yongding River, he added.

Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Great Wall holds immense cultural significance and historical value. The Beijing section is the best-preserved and most complex among the 15 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities of China where the Great Wall resides.

Demonstrating a steadfast commitment to conservation, the Beijing Finance Bureau recently announced an annual allocation of approximately 100 million yuan for the Great Wall cultural belt protection and development plan.

At the northern end of the Grand Canal, one of the longest and oldest canals still in use in the world, Beijing is making great strides in protecting, inheriting and utilizing the cultural signifi-



cance and historical legacy associated with the artificial waterway.

Important archaeological surveys and excavations were conducted in key sections of the Grand Canal in Beijing, focusing on waterways, hydraulic relics and ancillary facilities. Meanwhile, the capital has been advancing the repair of historical sites, raising the level of cultural relics protection to new heights.

The Western Hills and Yongding River cultural belt embodies natural and cultural resources characterized by the harmony of mountains and waters as well as a blend of strength and gentleness.

In the northwest suburbs of Beijing, centered around the world cultural heritage site of the Summer Palace, there are historical cultural heritage clusters featuring Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) imperial gardens, including Xiangshan Mountain, Yuquan Mountain, Wanshou Mountain, Jingyi Garden, Jingming Garden, Changchun Garden, and Yuanmingyuan. Those are renowned as the Three Mountains and Five Gardens.

Adjacent to the exhibition center of the Zhongguancun National Independent Innovation Demonstration Zone in the northwest corner of Haidian Park, the Three Mountains and Five Gardens Cultural and Art Center has risen as a new cultural landmark.

The center, which is expected to open within this year, will become a "city reception room" that combines cultural heritage protection, cutting-edge technology releases, and natural ecological environment.

—WANG JINHUI AND HAO NAN

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