

Shared by All, Accessible to All

By Yuan Yuan

Four nucleic acid tests, 14 days of quarantine with daily reports on body temperature and another 14 days of isolation in future. This is part of what Roy van den Hurk had to go through to attend the Third China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai in November.

Van den Hurk is Product General Manager of Milk New Zealand, one of the largest dairy farm groups in New Zealand, and an "old friend" of the CIIE. "All I went through for the CIIE is worthwhile," he told the media after signing a contract. "The market of dairy products has been struggling worldwide due to the pandemic, but China's market has picked up for months. We have

laid great importance on the Chinese market and the CIIE is a great platform for us. We can't miss it."

While many large international events have been postponed or scrapped due to coronavirus (COVID-19), the CIIE was not only held as scheduled but had a larger exhibition area than last year. It demonstrated, as President Xi Jinping said in his keynote address delivered by video, China's commitment to sharing its market opportunities with the rest of the world and contributing to global economic recovery.

"China will stay committed to openness, cooperation and unity for win-win results," Xi said. "Our aim is to turn the China market

into a market for the world, a market shared by all, and a market accessible to all."

It was a heartening message for businesses. According to official data, China's GDP grew 4.9% in the third quarter of this year, when most other major economies contracted. Viewing China's market pick-up amid the sharply declining world economy, over 80% of the Fortune Global 500 companies and industry leaders that had participated in the previous CIIEs returned to Shanghai this year.

The deals made at this CIIE reflected global confidence in China. The value of intended deals signed reached \$72.62 billion, an increase of 2.1% from 2019, as figures released by the CIIE Bureau on November 10, the last day of the six-day event, showed.

Safety First

To ensure the safety of all participants, Shanghai took every detail into consideration. Everybody at the event was required to wear masks. Exhibitors and visitors coming from abroad had to go through 14 days of quarantine after arriving in China and two nucleic acid tests, one before and one after the quarantine.

Volunteers, journalists and all domestic visitors were also required to get nucleic acid tests. Medical workers manned dozens of medical stations and temporary observation and treatment sites in the exhibition areas, which were regularly disinfected. Hand sanitizers were placed everywhere, including in elevators. Strict measures were also adopted to disinfect the raw food displayed at the expo.

A New Area

The exhibition area was full of creative and stunning items, like the world's first all-carbon fiber sports car, and the Korloff Noir, the 88-carat black diamond from Korloff Jewelers of France.

However, what really stood out was the new display area showcasing new technologies and products for pandemic prevention and treatment.

The initial planned area for this section was 2,000 square meters. However, due to high exhibitor demand, it had to be expanded multiple times, before finally reaching 12,000 square meters.

Fosun Pharma, a Shanghai-based biotech company, released the update on its experimental COVID-19 vaccine, the mRNA vaccine that it has jointly developed with Germany's BioNTech. In July, the vaccine candidate was



Chinese and Swiss partners celebrate after signing an agreement on hydrogen fuel cell vehicles at the Third China International Import Expo in Shanghai, November 6

approved in China for phase-one clinical trial. Japanese biopharmaceutical company Takeda said it has collaborated with leading plasma companies to set up the COVID-19 Plasma Alliance to accelerate the treatment of the disease. Now an experimental therapy is in phase-three clinical trial. If successful, it may become one of the earliest treatment solutions for hospitalized adult COVID-19 patients.

Roche Diagnostics from Switzerland brought a three-in-one reagent capable of simultaneously detecting influenza A, influenza B and COVID-19. Fujifilm from Japan exhibited a genetic test kit that can shorten the detection time for the virus to two hours from four to six hours.

Pharma firms had a fruitful CIIE. Leading U.S. biopharmaceutical company Pfizer signed a collaboration agreement with Alibaba Health at the CIIE to build a complete and full-chain vaccination service online.

"Pfizer has great confidence in China's economy in the long-term. Our proactive participation in the CIIE reiterates our commitment to continuously developing in China, to fulfill our purpose of bringing breakthroughs that change patients' lives," Wu Kun, Chief Operating Officer of Pfizer Biopharma Group in China, told the media.

Players from the U.S.

Despite China-U.S. tensions, exhibitors from the U.S. took up the largest area.

U.S.-based commercial real estate services company CBRE joined the CIIE as an exhibitor for the first time this year. "Although it is the first time for us to be here as an exhibitor, we are not fresh here at all," Ben Duncan, CBRE President of North Asia and CEO of Greater China, told *Beijing Review*.

CBRE had visited the First CIIE and taken part in some activities in 2019. This year, it set up its own booth.

"Shanghai is the commercial heartbeat of China and the CIIE enables us to make connections and know more about our partners," Duncan said.

Despite the rising uncertainties in China-U.S. relations, he said his company has never thought of moving out of China. A survey by the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai and Beijing and business consultancy firm PricewaterhouseCoopers said in April that 70% of the American companies surveyed have no short-term plan to relocate any part of their operations out of China. About 40% said they would not revise their long-term supply-chain plan in China.

Duncan said Xi's remarks at the opening ceremony made him more confident about China's market.

He also said it is no surprise to see China's market has seen a pick-up, given the government's effective COVID-19 control measures: "Countries who control the spread of the virus are going to be the winners that come

out of the situation."

Maria Sferruzza, Senior Vice President for Asia Pacific at Baker Hughes, one of the world's largest energy technology companies headquartered in the U.S., said China is one of the few countries in the world that can hold large events like the CIIE. "It is also a sign that China is further opening to international players including our company. This event has provided a great platform for us to socialize with our potential partners," she said.

Baker Hughes has over 2,000 employees and seven manufacturing sites in China. At the CIIE, the company showcased a wide range of innovative technologies across the oil and gas value chain.

For U.S. medical device and consumer goods maker Johnson & Johnson, it was their third consecutive year at the expo. "Johnson & Johnson is confident in the new chapter of our growth in China," Song Weiqun, the company's chairman in China and Global Senior Vice President, told the media. The company expanded their exhibition space this year as a mark of that confidence. ■



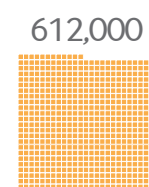
Scan QR code to visit Beijing Review's website
Comments to yanwei@bjreview.com

The Third China International Import Expo

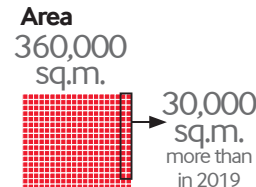
Worth of Intended Deals Made



Visits to CIIE



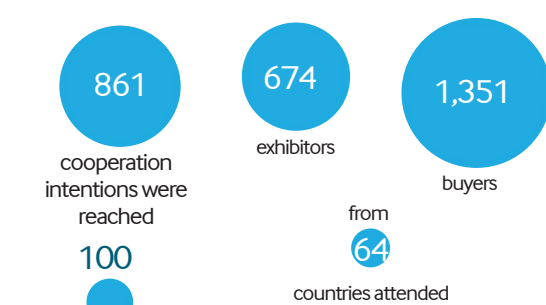
Total Exhibition Area



Fortune Global 500 Companies and Leading Enterprises Debuting



Offline and Online Trade Promotion Sessions



Attending Future CIIEs



(Source: China International Import Expo Bureau, designed by Pamela Tobey)