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INSIDE

Expo lauds China-ASEAN cooperation p9

Celebrating Shaanxi's historic metalwork p16-17

NEXT CHAPTER

As publishers enter new markets, Chinese titles are finding more readers in Belt and Road countries and beyond

By **BEN YUE** in Beijing
For China Daily Asia Weekly

Academic publisher Ian Bannerman remembers that on his first visit to China in 1992 he was astounded to see shelf after shelf of photocopied journals in university libraries. People at that time had no concept of copyright, he said.

These days, as managing director of journals at Taylor & Francis Group, a leading global publisher of academic books, Bannerman sells databases to hundreds of universities in China.

With more Chinese scientists' studies included in international journals, his job is "more about bringing China's research to the world".

Publishing, as an instrument of "soft power", is now at the forefront of the China-led Belt and Road Initiative to build a modern trade and infrastructure network that spans the ancient Silk Road routes.

According to the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SAPPRFT), China's trade volume of publishing copyrights has seen more than 20 percent annual growth during the past three years.

Imported books changed from mainly fiction and nonfiction titles from the West to titles from elsewhere, including Latin America and Africa, especially in the children's books category.

Exports grew significantly, from 5 percent of China's total new titles in 2014 to 15 percent last year.

>> **BOOKS, PAGE 5**

Cover Story

Translating into global success,
page 6

World wants to read Xi's philosophy,
Demand grows for book translators,
page 7

Opportunities to understand China,
Books and tea culture unite countries,
page 8

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