

## Hot issue

Sports co-op promotes regional interactions among Belt and Road countries.



# new stories of the

# Silk Road

No.

16

August, 2018

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## Projects

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## Story

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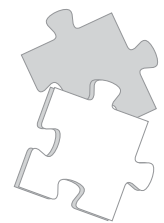






The press conference and the Chinese and Philippines Sports Cooperation Forum in Beijing, on September 29, 2017

Photo/people.com.cn



## Sports co-op to promote regional interactions among Belt and Road countries

The organizing committee of the Belt and Road International Sports Festival and the Asia-Pacific Headquarters of Sport Accord held a press conference and the Chinese and Philippines Sports Cooperation Forum at the Belt and Road International Sports Festival (Beijing), on September 29, 2017. The event was organized by Beijing-based Dancing Sports, with support from the sports industry association of Peking University's Guanghua School of Management.

The forum explored ways to promote regional development and international economic cooperation and exchanges in the Belt and Road regions, establish a communication platform for Belt and Road countries, cities and companies, and contribute to enhancing people-to-people ties among various countries along the Belt and Road.

Participants to the event included Liu Jianxing, the deputy-director of the International Cooperation Center of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), Manny Pacquiao, the world-renowned boxer and Philippine senator, Yang Haibin, the deputy chief of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Sports, and Ma Wenguang, the general secretary of the International Weightlifting Federation and executive chairman of Sport Accord's Asia-Pacific Headquarters. They gave keynote speeches on ways to promote international exchanges and cooperation through sports under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Zhou Wenxin, secretary-general of the organizing committee of the Belt and Road International Sports Festival, delivered a speech in which he extended a warm welcome to Pacquiao and other guests and media organizations and thanked to various supporting organizations.

Manny Pacquiao thanked Dancing Sports for inviting him to the event and the Chinese government and Dancing Sports for

their vigorous support. He said the festival was an excellent example of innovation, and that he hoped to collaborate with Dancing Sports to jointly promote the festival and boxing in China, cultivate China's Pacquiao, and help promote all-round development of both China and the Philippines in economics, politics, culture and other fields. At the end of his speech, Pacquiao said in Chinese, "Wo ai Zhongguo (I love China)!"

Liu Jianxing said the sports industry is becoming a new growth point in the national economy and plays an important role in international relations, connecting different regions, peoples and cultures and promoting people-to-people ties. He thanked Zhou for rendering strong support to the NDRC's research on the internationalization of the Chinese sports industry. He called for taking this opportunity to further the integration of the sports industries of the two countries.

Ma Wenguang praised cooperation with Pacquiao as an innovation in China's sports industry, and thanked Zhou for offering new ideas, saying that everything he had done was for the good of the Belt and Road Initiative, China's sports industry, and the whole of the Asia-Pacific region. He called for joint efforts to forge a new model for the Chinese sports industry.

Pacquiao praised the Belt and Road International Sports Festival as an innovative move that would play an important role in enhancing exchanges between the Chinese and Philippine peoples and promote people-to-people ties. He said there would be more projects involving cooperation with Dancing Sports to jointly promote the Belt and Road International Sports Festival and strengthen interactions and exchanges in economic, political and cultural fields, among others.

Source: people.com.cn

# Belt and Road boosts exchanges in sports and people-to-people ties

The year 2018 marks the 10th anniversary of the Beijing Olympic Games and also the FIFA World Cup in Russia. In recent years, sports functions have been gradually playing an important part along the Belt and Road. Due to their popularity, sports will continue to have a role in the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative. People in affected countries and regions participate in sports events and activities to stay healthy and strong and to deepen understanding, cement friendly ties, and pursue their common goal of a positive and happy life. Belt and Road countries' efforts to promote exchanges in sports and people-to-people ties are as follows:



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## Joint development of sport infrastructure

With rising demand for public sport services and facilities, Belt and Road countries' sport industries will continue to enhance cooperation and interactions to realize sustainable development.

- Share high-quality industrial capacities
- Consult on project investments
- Jointly build infrastructure
- Share fruits of cooperation

2

## Enhance cooperation in sports and tourism

With further development of the Belt and Road tourism strategy, opportunities and conditions for developing sports tourism are becoming more mature.

- Enhance tourism cooperation, and host one another's tourism promotion weeks and months
- Jointly develop the best international travel routes and tourism products characteristic of the Silk Road
- Improve visa facilitation for tourists from Belt and Road countries

3

## Hold sports events

Through holding a series of sports events, Belt and Road countries actively set the direction for win-win cooperation in sports under the Belt and Road Initiative.

- The 2018 Silk Way Rally kicks off in Xi'an, China on July 15 and concludes on Red Square in downtown Moscow on July 29.
- The Belt and Road International Open Table Tennis Tournament and the Sports Economy and International Regional Cooperation Forum opens in Qingbaijiang District, Chengdu on June 5, 2018.
- The Belt and Road Colorful Yunnan Belt and Road International Football Open kicks off in Mangshi city, Dehong prefecture, Yunnan province on December 4, 2017.
- The Belt and Road Marathon Series, the largest and most influential marathon event in Malaysia, is held in Kuala Lumpur on October 1, 2017.
- The 7th International Children's Games, co-held by China, Russia and Mongolia, kicks off in Ulaanbaatar, capital of Mongolia, on August 12, 2017.
- The International Boxing Federation (IBF) announces the launch of the IBF B&R and the IBF Silk Road Championship Tournament on August 7, 2017.

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## Integration of 'Internet plus sports' industry

With progress in bilateral and multilateral cross-border information construction projects, the "internet plus sports" industry will definitely become a leading candidate for integration.

- Advance the construction of cross-border communication backbone networks and satellite information channels to facilitate smooth information communication along the Silk Road.
- China and Europe will pilot practices in the "internet plus sports" industry.





# Overseas students' martial arts dream

**A**s part of traditional sport and culture, martial arts not only embody the Chinese virtues of modesty, courtesy and ceaseless self-improvement, but also convey the philosophy that only what is capable of stopping wars and bringing peace and order to the world can be counted as a real martial art. For many foreigners, "Kung Fu" and "Tai Chi" are among their first contacts with Chinese culture. Attracted by martial arts, more and more fans have traveled a long way to China to learn and practice those arts. They all share the same dream – to carry forward Chinese martial arts and spread them throughout the world.

A 24-year-old Kazakhstan student majoring in kinesiology at Beijing Sport University (BSU) had practiced martial arts for 16 years. "Martial arts are an important part of my life," she said. "I like China and Chinese people very much." Her mother, also a martial artist, had taken her to China every year to learn techniques from a Chinese master.

In order to overcome language barriers, she worked hard on the Chinese language while pursuing studies in her specialty. The reporter felt simplicity and calmness in her rarely seen in her peers, which might have been part of the changes martial arts brought to her. She said she would not have come to China if she had not practiced martial arts. She loves martial arts, and chose the highly unpopular major of kinesiology for her undergraduate studies in September 2013. She thought studying how to avoid injuries would help other practitioners.

Like her, several hundred people from various countries and regions have come to China every year to learn martial arts since the 1980s. With the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, countries in the region will have closer economic and cultural exchanges with China, which will bring new opportunities for martial arts to reach out to more parts of the world.

In May 2017, BSU launched the Belt and Road sport talent scholarship program, planning to invest about 5 million yuan each year to attract overseas sport talent to the university. Cao Weidong, Party secretary of the university, said it had established relations with 28 universities in 17 countries along the Belt and Road by May this year.

Two other students, from Brazil and Chile, fell in love with martial arts after watching the Kung Fu movie "*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*". Currently studying at the Wushu School of BSU, they said understanding the Chinese culture through martial arts benefits them a lot. "I'm quick-tempered and I've found a way to relax myself after learning martial arts," said the Brazilian student. The Chilean student, on the other hand, had made martial arts part of his career plan. "I plan to open a rehabilitation center that integrates martial arts, rehabilitation and physical fitness. I've also learned a little bit about traditional Chinese medicine. Such things all have deep relations with Chinese culture, and can help spread martial arts culture."

Since 2000, BSU has seen an increasing number of overseas students, most of them martial arts majors. The new Belt and Road scholarship program will provide more support for traditional Chinese sport by helping overseas students from Belt and Road countries who are interested in Chinese culture.

