

Chinese literature shines light on Abu Dhabi book fair

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DUBAI, May 2 (Xinhua) – The seven-day Abu Dhabi book fair which closed Tuesday has brought Chinese literature closer to readers in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and beyond.

As this year's official "guest of honour" country, China's participation at the 27th Abu Dhabi book fair was the country's largest at a foreign book fair to date.

Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE which supports China's The Belt and Road Initiative, the strategy to bring the Far East with the Middle East, Africa and Europe closer together in relation to trade, investments and cultural exchange.

Xiao Guanglu, the representative for China as "guest of honour," told the Abu Dhabi daily, The National, that the 650 sq.-metre Chinese pavilion hosted books of "famous Chinese authors" as well as 3,400 titles and 5,400 copies in Arabic, English and Mandarin."

Nasser Yousuf Alzaabi, a sales director at Abu Dhabi Abu Dhabi Media, told Xinhua "I think this is a great book fair. The UAE government's mission is to connect people through reading, to reach out to all people in the world."

On China's role at this edition, Alzaabi said "The Chinese has a big culture, and this book fair is a great platform to merger their culture with our culture. It is normally difficult for us to access Chinese literature, but this year's book fair made it easy."

Moroccan historian and scholar Abdallah Laroui, who was awarded the Sheikh Zayed Book Award in the category "Cultural Person of the year," told Dubai daily Gulf news in an article published earlier in the day he considers to be "very important" for the future of Arabs to have different and very variant culture.

The Confucius Institute at University of Dubai and several schools in Abu Dhabi started to offer lectures in Mandarin. The 300,000 Chinese community is one of the fastest growing group of foreigners in the Gulf Arab state.