

BUSINESS

PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS



An electric train runs on BYD's Cloud Rail, a straddle-type monorail, at the company's headquarters in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, in February. ZHU HONGBO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Highways bring money, development

Greater Bay Area makes major gains over long term from infrastructure thrust

By **QIU QUANLIN**
in Shenzhen, Guangdong
qiuquanlin@chinadaily.com.cn

Su Xiuyi bought a sewing machine from Taiping Handbags Factory when the first export-oriented processing factory in China closed its doors in 1996.

"The machine was then donated to an exhibition hall, which was built in 2019 to mark the marvelous development of the factory since the reform and opening-up policy," Su said.

Su, 72, worked on an assembly line at the factory, which was established by a Hong Kong company in 1978 in Humen township, Dongguan, Guangdong province.

"Back in the 1980s, many female workers like me were eager to work in the factory, which provided very competitive pay," she said.

Taiping Handbags Factory, the first company to start manufacturing processed goods on the Chinese mainland and export them to Hong Kong, followed China's reform and opening-up policy and its strategy of developing foreign trade.

"Following the success of the Taiping plant, many entrepreneurs from Hong Kong and Taiwan established factories in Dongguan and other cities in the Pearl River Delta region to make shoes, bags, garments and suitcases for export," Su said.

As of 2020, Humen, in the heart of the delta, has more than 782 overseas-funded companies registered,

with import and export volume reaching 55.31 billion yuan (\$8.51 billion) last year, according to local government data.

Humen's GDP increased from 74.66 million yuan in 1978 to 64.5 billion yuan in 2020, according to the local government.

"Rapid development of expressways in the Pearl River Delta region has helped attract foreign investment," said Huang Liangren, director of the Taiping Handbags Factory Exhibition Hall.

Citing the Guangzhou-Shenzhen Expressway, which connects Guangzhou, Dongguan, Shenzhen and Hong Kong in the delta, Huang said the highly efficient transportation network will further push local industrial upgrades.

Along the Guangzhou-Shenzhen route, a number of emerging industries have been rapidly developed in Guangzhou, Dongguan and Shenzhen over the past decades, according to Huang.

BYD Co Ltd, which was founded in 1995 in Shenzhen, has established over 30 industrial parks worldwide, building its business related to electronics, automobiles, new energy and rail transit.

"Our business covers more than 300 cities in over 50 countries and regions, providing green energy and low-carbon vehicle services," said Luo Hao, public relations director at BYD.

Zhang Lei, deputy general manager of Shenzhen New Industries Biomedical Engineering Co Ltd,



said the company has realized an annual increase of more than 30 percent in sales over the last few years.

"Emerging businesses have played a significant role in driving the economic development of Shenzhen. We have increased our production capacity to meet global market demand for biomedical products and services," Zhang said.

Convenient and efficient transportation services have been key to helping boost the local economy, Zhang added.

"We are expecting more business

growth as there will be an intercity expressway soon to be completed and running through Pingshan new area, where our company is located," Zhang said.

In the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, a number of new transportation facilities are being constructed, helping further strengthen connectivity among cities within the GBA.

The main bridge towers of Zhongshan Bridge, one of the key projects amid ongoing construction along the Shenzhen-Zhongshan Link, will be completed before the end of this

“

Emerging businesses have played a significant role in driving the economic development of Shenzhen.”

Zhang Lei, vice-general manager of Shenzhen New Industries Biomedical Engineering Co Ltd

year, according to the Shenzhen-Zhongshan Link Administration Center.

The Shenzhen-Zhongshan Link connects the city clusters of Shenzhen, Dongguan and Huizhou in the eastern part of the PRD region with the prosperous cities of Guangzhou, Zhuhai, Foshan, Zhongshan, Jiangmen and Zhaoqing to the west, helping strengthen connectivity in the GBA.

"The link will play an important role in expanding cooperation and exchanges among cities in the GBA in the future and further help boost industrial upgrading," said Chen Yue, deputy chief engineer and director of the Chief Engineer's Office at the Shenzhen-Zhongshan Link Administration Center.

It will take only about 30 minutes to travel between Zhongshan and Shenzhen when the eight-lane structure, which also connects Guangdong's three pilot free trade areas of Qianhai-Shekou in Shenzhen, Nansha in Guangzhou and Hengqin in Zhuhai, is completed and opens to traffic in 2024.

Guizhou big data expo to spur China's digital era

By **CHENG YU** in Beijing
and **YANG JUN** in Guiyang

The four-day China International Big Data Industry Expo 2021 to be held in Guiyang, Guizhou province, from May 26 will underscore the potential of the emerging field to help develop the digital economy and bolster dual-circulation — the country's new development paradigm — government officials said on Thursday.

The annual event will be held both online and offline this year and showcase cutting-edge big data technologies.

Chen Yan, mayor of Guiyang, said this year's expo is expected to attract more than 200 enterprises and institutions from various countries and regions, including global corporate icons and domestic giants.

All of them will share their views and display their latest products, Chen said. "Not only has the expo created opportunities for the development of big data in Guizhou province but contributed Chinese wisdom and solutions to global big data industry."

The event is part of larger efforts being made in response to the Chinese top leadership's call for innovative development in Guizhou province, implement the new development philosophy, and deepen the dual-circulation paradigm, Chen said.

"Accelerated steps will be made to develop big data to seize the new strategic opportunities. Big data advancement will offer strong impetus to the country's digital transformation and development."

"The expo will demonstrate the latest technology trends, and pioneering research and development results. It will also offer a chance for consumers and industry participants to observe and experience new applications and business models, as well as to promote international exchanges and cooperation."

\$5.6 billion

fixed-asset investment planned by Guizhou in Guian New Area for data centers and servers by 2025

The expo will coincide with China's development of the digital economy and efforts to promote deep integration of the internet, big data, artificial intelligence and the real economy, and comes amid the country's success in bringing the COVID-19 pandemic under better control.

Nestled in a mountainous region, Guizhou has been striving over the past a few years to become a global hub of big data, so as to help develop its local economy, boost employment and local residents' earnings.

Guian New Area, a national-level new urban area in Guizhou, plans to create a hub of 12 mega data centers and 4 million servers with a fixed-asset investment of over 40 billion yuan (\$5.6 billion) by 2025.

Tao Changhai, Guizhou's vice-governor, said, "The province will continue to leverage the digital economy to offer important engines for the upgrade and transformation of traditional industries."

"Guizhou has unique advantages and conditions for the development of big data. It has attracted many large and super large data centers. More efforts will be made to create a better environment for the development of big data in the future."

More than 5,000 big data companies have been set up in Guian New Area. The output of the area's digital economy reached 164.9 billion yuan last year, accounting for 38 percent of the region's GDP.

Ma Bingying contributed to this story.

Contact the writers at chengyu@chinadaily.com.cn

Guangzhou-Shenzhen Expressway key to delta region's prosperity

By **QIU QUANLIN**
in Shenzhen, Guangdong

Tech giant Foxconn's investment in Guangdong province, an economic powerhouse in South China, has developed since the 1980s in a way similar to the route of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen Expressway.

"Our investment in Guangdong was particularly concentrated along the expressway between Guangzhou and Shenzhen in recent decades," Terry Gou, founder of Foxconn, said in an earlier interview.

Foxconn, the world's largest original equipment manufacturer, started its first investment project in Shenzhen in 1988, a year after the construction of the 122.8-kilometer expressway began.

Average daily traffic flow along the expressway between the two major cities in the Pearl River Delta region increased from 36,300 vehicles in 1994 when began trial operations to 650,000 vehicles in 2020, according to the Department of Transportation of Guangdong Province.

"In addition to preferential

investment policies since the reform and opening-up in late 1970s, the high efficiency of transportation infrastructure following the opening of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen Expressway was very attractive for overseas investment in the delta region," Gou said.

Foxconn then started its construction of a liquid-crystal display plant in Zengcheng district, Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province, with an investment of 61 billion yuan (\$9.39 billion) in early 2017.

The project, covering an area of about 1.5 square kilometers, was designed to produce 8K displays, smart TVs and electronic whiteboards, among other products, helping attract more than 70 upstream and downstream companies in the industrial chain to invest in Guangzhou.

Before the operation of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen Expressway, it took about half a day to travel between Guangzhou and Shenzhen, given there had been only a highway with more than 150 kilometers between the two cities.



Foxconn employees work at a production facility in Shenzhen, Guangdong province. WANG YISHU / FOR CHINA DAILY

The Guangzhou-Shenzhen Expressway was fully opened in 1997, becoming the first expressway invested and constructed by Guangdong and neighboring Hong Kong.

Widely claimed as the busiest expressway in China, the

Guangzhou-Shenzhen route has greatly helped accelerate the economic and social development of the cities along the route, according to Wang Wei, Party secretary of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen Expressway Administration Center.