

Trade roars back amid economic recovery

By YUAN SHENGGAO

A train carrying 600 metric tons of high-speed train wheel sets and photovoltaic panels left the Zhongding Logistics Park in Jinzhong, Shanxi province, on Jan 1. It was bound for Ningbo Zhoushan Port in East China's Zhejiang province and marked the inauguration of a new land-sea transmodal shipment route for Shanxi's international trade.

The new route was developed to meet the rapid growth in foreign trade in Shanxi. With the first half of 2020 affected by COVID-19, foreign trade made a strong recovery in the second half. Shanxi's imports and exports grew 85.8 percent year-on-year to reach 49.02 billion yuan (\$7.64 billion) in the first quarter of this year, according to Taiyuan Customs.

Its exports increased 95.8 percent year-on-year to 29.61 billion yuan in the first quarter.

The export of solar power equipment, including photovoltaic panels and batteries, was among the strongest-growing sectors. The export of solar power batteries, for instance, increased 274.9 percent to reach 560 million yuan in the first quarter.

Machinery and electronic products made up the lion's share of Shanxi's foreign trade. The export and import of such products reached 34.15 billion yuan in the first quarter. It grew 117.21 percent from the same period of 2020 and accounted for 81.41 percent of the province's total foreign trade volume.

On April 16, 140 live pigs left Jinyang Customs in Taiyuan and arrived in Hong Kong on April 18, after quarantine inspections by customs.

The export of live pigs is a relatively new business for Shanxi's agricultural produce exporters. It started in 2019.

Local traders said it is significant in Shanxi's exports as strict quality standards are required for exporting pigs.

Nanshan Baishi Agriculture and Husbandry is a major live pig exporter in Shanxi. Li Zhi, deputy general manager of the company, said that the pigs were raised on its farms with a diet featuring a low amount of drug and pesticide residue and a high protein content.

"Our pigs are well-received by residents in Hong Kong," Li said. "We plan to sell more than 3,000 live pigs to the special administrative region this year."

Jinyang Customs has also played an important role in ensuring the quality of products.

"On one hand, we have implemented the strictest quarantine inspection measures," said Yang Tao, head of Jinyang Customs. "On the other hand, we have offered assistance to guide enterprises to establish their own internal quality control systems."

The official said strict quality control measures at customs and within enterprises will eventually increase the popularity of Shanxi's agricultural exports in the global market.

Foreign-funded and privately owned enterprises are the major forces driving the province's foreign trade growth, according to the Shanxi Department of Commerce.

Figures from the department show that the foreign trade volume of foreign-funded enterprises reached 30.02 billion yuan in the first quarter. It grew 121.5 percent year-on-year and accounted for 72.74 percent of Shanxi's total foreign trade. Privately owned companies reported a foreign trade volume of 9.93 billion yuan in the same period, increasing 78.8 percent and making up 19.33 percent of the provincial total.

Wang Pei contributed to this story.



The first freight train for the shipment route from Shanxi to Ningbo Zhoushan Port begins operating on Jan 1.

WANG LEI / FOR CHINA DAILY

Central China secures investment



Shanxi businesses stand out in emerging industries with innovative approach

By YUAN SHENGGAO

More than 1,000 businesses from 15 countries attended the 12th Expo Central China held from May 21-23 in Taiyuan, the provincial capital of Shanxi, reaping the benefits of an economic transformation in the province.

Expo Central China is a major investment and trade event held every two years in one of the six provinces in Central China: Shanxi, Anhui, Jiangxi, Henan, Hubei and Hunan.

Taiyuan also hosted the sixth event in September 2011.

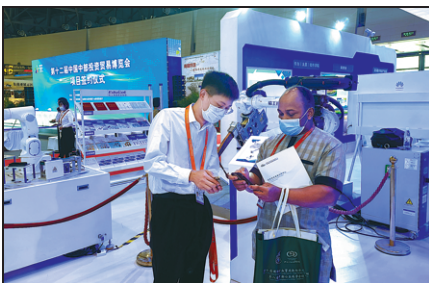
With the slogan of "opening-up, cooperation, transformation and innovation," the 12th session of the expo consisted of 71 events.

The six Central China provinces secured 433 investment projects, including 25 overseas-funded projects worth \$1.96 billion and 408 projects funded by domestic investors with investment totaling 571.47 billion yuan (\$89.2 billion), according to event organizers.

Businesses from the host province of Shanxi secured 255 projects funded by domestic investors, with investment totaling 398.1 billion yuan, and eight projects backed by overseas investors with funding surpassing \$1.18 billion.

In addition, companies from the province signed trade agreements with domestic and overseas companies valuing nearly 2.5 billion yuan in total.

According to event organizers, Shanxi used this year's expo to showcase its latest achievements in economic transformation and local companies displayed their latest



Clockwise from top: Opening on May 21, the 12th Expo Central China is used as a platform to display achievements in Shanxi's recent economic transformation. SHI XIAOBO / FOR CHINA DAILY Xinghuacun Fenjiu Group displays its ancient distilling techniques at the expo. KOU NING / FOR CHINA DAILY A foreign business representative meets a Chinese partner at the event. SUN RUISENG / CHINA DAILY

products, services and solutions.

The province is implementing an economic transformation featuring reducing reliance on coal mining, cultivating emerging industries and using high technologies to upgrade its traditional industries.

Many Shanxi companies that took part in the event are engaged in emerging industries, especially those in new-generation information technology, new energy, advanced manufacturing, biomedicines and new materials.

One of the cutting-edge products is recombined human-origin collagen III developed by Taiyuan-based Jinbo Biology.

A product at globally advanced level, recombined human-origin collagen III can be used in different sec-

tors ranging from surgery, gynecology and dermatology to skin care cosmetics, according to Yang Xia, founder and chairwoman of Jinbo Biology.

The executive said Jinbo Biology is the only enterprise in the world that mass produces the medicine. Its volume production began in January.

Ultraviolet LED products exhibited by Changzhi-based Zhongke Lu'an attracted visitor attention thanks to their novel applications.

The company's deep ultraviolet LED products are not used for lighting, but for disinfection in hospitals and in case of an epidemic outbreak, according to a company executive.

"Our LED devices emit invisible light that features wavelengths between 200 and 350 nanometers,

which can inhibit the spread of bacteria and viruses by changing their genetic DNA and RNA structures," the executive explained. "Our company launched the world's first plant for the mass production of deep ultraviolet LED chips and lighting devices in July 2019."

Other high-tech products and solutions on display included seawater desalination equipment, autonomous buses, hydrogen-powered tractors and light-duty maglev trains, all developed by Shanxi enterprises.

At the 1,800-square-meter outdoor exhibition area at the Taiyuan Jinyang Lake International Convention and Exhibition Center — the main venue of the event, a range of general aviation products were displayed.

91 projects signed at integrated circuit summit

By YUAN SHENGGAO

More than 1,000 experts and industry insiders attended the second Jinyang Lake Summit for the Integrated Circuit and Software Industries held from May 11-12 in the Shanxi provincial capital of Taiyuan, sharing their insights into the latest industrial trends.

Jiang Dayong, vice-president of Huawei's Kunpeng computing business, said he noticed the latest information technologies, including 5G, big data and cloud computing, are playing a crucial role in assisting Shanxi's innovation-driven and high-quality development.

During the first Jinyang Lake Summit held in September last year, Huawei signed an agreement to build its core big data center in Shanxi.

At this year's summit, Huawei announced further collaboration with Shanxi by unveiling the Hua-



Business representatives attend an agreement signing ceremony at the second Jinyang Lake Summit. WEI BO / FOR CHINA DAILY

wei (Taiyuan) Software Academy, which is designed to train software professionals in the province.

As major parts of the IT industry, the software and IC sectors have maintained robust growth in Shanxi. The software sector, in

particular, reported double-digit increases in terms of business revenue, profit and employment in 2020, according to local officials.

At this year's Jinyang Lake Summit, agreements on 91 investment

projects were signed, with combined investment of 116.5 billion yuan (\$18.17 billion).

In addition to forums and networking events, the summit featured an exhibition and releases of new products.

Renowned Chinese tech companies including Huawei, China Electronics Technology, iFlytek, ZTE, Yonyou and Tsinghua Unigroup, as well as local IT companies like Shanxi Cloud Era Technology and Shanxi Baixin, displayed their latest products, services and solutions at the exhibition.

Over the past two years, the Jinyang Lake Summit has developed into a major IT gala in Shanxi, according to Liu Yong, deputy chief of the Shanxi Department of Industry and Information Technology.

The 2020 event was attended by more than 600 delegates and saw the signing of agreements on 131

projects with total investment of 80 billion yuan, according to Liu.

In addition, seven research institutions were launched at the 2020 summit, covering such fields as semiconductors, IC, software and information services.

"From 600-plus participants last year to more than 1,000 this year, from 80 billion yuan to 116.5 billion yuan in investment value, the Jinyang Lake Summit is showing the growing potential of Shanxi's IT industry," Liu said.

Shanxi's software industry reported a year-on-year business revenue increase of 14.03 percent in 2020 and 11 companies each registered business revenue of more than 100 million yuan.

Lou Yangsheng, Party secretary of Shanxi, said at the second summit that the province plans to develop the IC and software industries into sectors with strategic importance in the years to come, as they are expected to play a crucial role in Shanxi's economic transformation.

Wu Jia contributed to this story.

Mountain range keeps close hold on local people's hearts

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Extending more than 400 kilometers from north to south, and serving as the border among Shanxi, Hebei and Henan provinces, the Taihang Mountains are one of the largest mountain ranges in North China.

Because of its high peaks, steep cliffs, unusual rocks, lush forests and clean waters, as well as its storied history over thousands of years, Taihang is one of the top three tourist attractions in Shanxi alongside the Yellow River and the Great Wall.

Wangmangling, in the south of the mountain range, is praised by many as the most beautiful and spectacular part of Taihang.

Located in the east of Lingchuan county in Shanxi, Wangmangling presents some of the most impressive sights in Taihang. These include a sea of clouds and sunrise viewed from the main peak; gorgeous valleys surrounded by the rising, red-colored cliffs; groups of waterfalls and highways

running along the edge of cliffs.

The area's forest coverage surpasses 96 percent, with pine trees as the dominant plant. The whistling of the wind in the trees sounds like roaring waves.

With an average temperature of 22 C in the summer, Wangmangling offers an ideal retreat to escape hot cities.

On April 14, the Wangmangling scenic area welcomed more than 650 tourists from South China's Guangdong province.

They were told by the tour guide, Zhang Jiali, that Wangmangling's rising cliffs are representative of the famed "iron walls of Taihang."

Zhang said in the eyes of locals, the term "iron walls of Taihang" is not only a description of the landscape, but also a tribute to the heroes who protected the nation by fighting Japanese invaders seven decades ago.

During the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45), the Taihang Mountains, including Wangmangling, were an important base for the Eighth

Route Army led by the Communist Party of China.

When the nation and the people were at their most critical moment, the warriors of the army pledged to "build a new Great Wall with their very flesh and blood."

After the tour guide's introduction, Deng Jilin, a tourist from Guangzhou, the capital city of Guangdong, proposed singing a chorus to tune of *On the Taihang Mountains*, a song composed in the region and during the war.

"The song is even more touching when it is sung on this specific site where the national heroes devoted their energy and lives to protecting the nation and the people," Deng said.

With its main peak standing at an altitude of 1,665 meters, Wangmangling held a strategic position in North and Central China throughout history.

The flat mountain top was used as a military base in times of war and conflict. Relics of defense works, including four watchtowers, are still there.



Wangmangling in Lingchuan county is one of the most spectacular parts of the Taihang Mountains. SUN RUISENG / CHINA DAILY

In addition to the defense works, another engineering miracle in the region is a 6.5-km road running along the edge of the cliffs. It is said to have been built by local villagers by hand, using only simple tools. Construction of the project took about 30 years.

With a number of viewpoints

along the road, it is now a favorite route for many self-driving tourists.

During the May Day holiday at the beginning of this month, Wangmangling received more than 11,000 visits, increasing 7.6 percent from the same period of last year.

Peng Ke'er contributed to this story.