



Government officials, industry experts and business representatives from home and abroad attend the Taiyuan Energy and Low-Carbon Development Forum held from Sept 3-4. LI LIANJUN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Taiyuan hosts international forum on renewable energy

High-profile attendees lend their support to cooperation in environmental goals, resources

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Taiyuan, the capital city of North China's Shanxi province, became a focus of the world energy industry earlier this month while hosting a high-profile energy forum.

The 2021 Taiyuan Energy and Low-Carbon Development Forum, which was held in the city from Sept 3-4, was the first international forum in China's energy industry since Chinese authorities proposed the country's goal for carbon peak by 2030 and carbon neutrality in 2060.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was held both offline and online.

Centering on energy, climate and the environment, participants at the forum, including government officials, industry experts and business representatives from home and abroad, discussed topics such as energy revolution, carbon peak and neutrality, and ecological civilization.

At the summit forum, a major part of the event, held on Sept 3, Liu Zhenmin, deputy secretary-general of the United Nations, delivered a keynote speech.

"China is now a major power in the development of renewable energy resources, featuring the largest renewable energy market in the world," Liu said. "I feel encouraged that China has taken many effective measures to deal with the challenge of global warming and improve the efficiency of energy utilization."

Kim Yung-rok, governor of the region of Jeollanam-do in South



Korea, said the forum was of great significance when it came to such affairs as energy, climate and environment.

"Jeollanam-do is willing to closely cooperate with Shanxi and other regions in China in the fields (of energy, climate and environment)," Kim said.

Greek Minister of Environment and Energy Kostas Skrekas was also present at the summit forum. He said he believes green development is the common choice of many countries.

"I hope Greece and China deepen cooperation in the energy field," Skrekas said. "There have been close collaborations between Greek and Chinese enterprises and more Chinese companies plan to invest in Greece."

Malik Amin Aslam, Pakistan's minister for climate change, said at the summit forum that Pakistan firmly supports the consensus reached at the Taiyuan forum, especially in the fields of energy revolution and low-carbon development.

"We hope to continue our close cooperation with China in forging a green, ecological-friendly economic development corridor between our two countries," Aslam said.

Attendees to the summit forum included the diplomats of 26 country's diplomatic missions in China

and representatives of Shanxi's friendly regions in the world.

These foreign representatives highly praised the efforts made by China and Shanxi in promoting energy revolution, carbon peak and neutrality, and eco-friendly development.

They expressed their hopes to use the Taiyuan forum to share experiences, enhance international cooperation and map out new paths to deal with global climate change.

The 2021 hydrogen energy industry development forum and the 11th summit meeting for the global top 500 new energy enterprises was another highlight of the event.

Corporate representatives shared their insights into hydrogen and other new energy sectors.

They proposed many effective solutions to various challenges based on their own companies' innovative practices.

Shanxi, as a major coal producer, has great potential in developing the hydrogen energy industry, said Zheng Peng, board chairman of Pengfei Group based in the Shanxi city of Xiaoyi.

He said the emerging hydrogen-making industry is an effective way to promote the clean and efficient utilization of coal and coal-related resources.

The entrepreneur explained that hydrogen can be made from coalbed gas and gases emitted in the coking process.

He said the coking industry is among the heavy-polluting sectors in Shanxi as well as China, as gas

emissions in coking are not under efficient control at many manufacturing plants.

"Using coking gas to produce hydrogen can be an effective solution to curb pollution at many coking facilities in Shanxi by reducing emissions," Zheng said. "It also forges a lucrative industry with great market potential."

Pengfei Group is one of the pioneers in China using coking gas to produce hydrogen and a major supplier to the country's emerging hydrogen-fuel-cell industry.

Zheng said his company plans to invest more than 20 billion yuan (\$3.1 billion) in developing a hydrogen energy industry chain that covers hydrogen production and storage as well as downstream sectors including hydrogen filling stations and the manufacturing of heavy-duty trucks using hydrogen-fuel-cell systems.

Wang Qirui, chief of the Shanxi Department of Emergence Management, agreed with Zheng on the environmental benefits of the hydrogen industry.

But the official stressed that safety management should be at the top of the agenda of the hydrogen industry. He explained that the production and use of hydrogen — a highly combustible gas — requires high technological and managerial standards.

The official suggested more research be conducted on leaks, diffusion and combustion of hydrogen and more safety testing facilities be established for the industry.

Guo Yanjie contributed to this story.

Green focus revitalizes Fenhe River's fortunes

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Local residents are finding that the second-largest river in Shanxi province is attracting wild birds thanks to its improved environment.

Han Min, a resident of Sixian village in Qixian county, said he has spotted an increasing number of wild birds while jogging by the Fenhe River recently.

"Several years ago, no one would like to jog or walk along the river and there were no birds in sight," Han said. "Fenhe was almost a dry river throughout the year. If there was some water, it was stinky."

He noted that Shanxi's campaign to develop an ecological tourism belt along Fenhe has brought a fundamental change to the river.

The plan, started several years ago, was designed to turn riverside areas into a new attraction for tourists, a pleasant habitat for humans and wildlife through efforts to control pollution, increase water supply and green both banks of the river, according to local officials.

Han said after he gets up at 5:30 am, he usually jogs for about an hour along the river. He has noticed there is an increasing number of sightseeing tourists.

"Seeing the river becoming cleaner, air becoming fresher and more wild birds coming, I told myself that should be what a good life looks like," Han said.

The changes that locals can sense are not limited to the environment, but more business opportunities and new sources of revenue.

Sixian is known for its high-quality pears. The fame of this produce has increased as more tourists come and taste the local fruit.

According to Han, the pears are now sold to more regions of China

due to tourists' word-of-mouth recommendations.

Shanxi began to harness and improve its rivers about a decade ago.

Shanxi's innovative practice is to appoint chiefs for each river. A river chief is usually the head of the local government according to each section of the river. It can be the head of the township, county, city or provincial government.

There are a total of 18,000 river chiefs in Shanxi and their responsibility is to ensure that the rivers can maintain a good water quality and good ecological environment.

To ensure sufficient water supply to each major river for a better environment, Shanxi began to build a project to divert water from the Yellow River four years ago.

Since 2017, more than 1.5 billion cubic meters of water has been diverted from the Yellow River to Fenhe, making sure that there is enough water in the river.

The increasing water volume in rivers has also ensured the irrigation of farms and supplies of clear drinking water to rural residents.

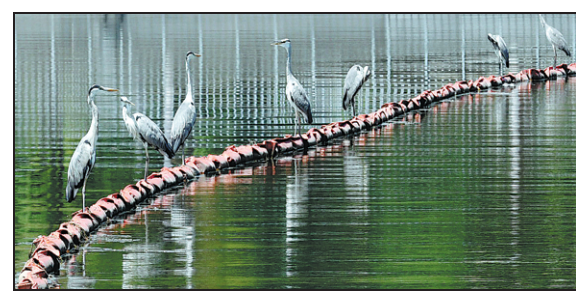
Wang Hu, a resident in Lecheng village in Yonghe county, said drinking water used to be a major challenge in local life.

"We used to fetch water from a mountain spring more than 4 kilometers away," Wang said.

But this changed three years ago as a water supply project was built for his village, according to Wang.

By the end of 2020, more than 94 percent of rural residents in Shanxi had access to clean drinking water supply. The rate was 6.5 percentage points higher than the national average, according to the Shanxi Department of Water Resources.

Wu Jia contributed to this story.



Thanks to its improved environment, the Fenhe River is now a favored habitat of wild birds. WU LIUZHONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Language studies led me to love Chinese culture

Many overseas students in Shanxi province have gained a better understanding of the province and China. This section, named *Shanxi in the Eyes of Foreign Students*, will tell their stories in the province and share what Shanxi looks like from their perspectives, giving accounts of the local environment, customs and culture, as well as their personal experiences.



no means easy, but I made progress every day with the help of my teachers and friends.

Making friends with locals and experiencing local life are the secret behind my steady progress in the language.

While helping me with my language, my teachers and friends have offered me the care that you can sense from your family. It's no exaggeration that it is because of them, I am given a home away from home.

While making progress in the language and academic studies, I've found I'm getting increasingly familiar with the culture and history of Shanxi.

This was made possible with my visits to local attractions and museums, where the preserved ancient relics and remains help me to understand what Shanxi or even China looked like centuries ago.

Life is enjoyable in Shanxi University because there are a range of activities that I can take part in. I even won awards at some cultural and sports events.

And my stay in Shanxi has become more pleasant when I found I was accustomed to and fell in love with local dishes like knife-cut noodles, mature vinegar and many other local snacks.

I will graduate from the university next year. I'm still not sure whether I will stay in China or return to Nigeria. But I know my emotional attachment to Shanxi and China will not fade for the rest of my life.

The author is a student from Nigeria, who studies at the School of International Education and Exchange at Shanxi University.

By IHEKE MARY IHENJIKIA

When I was studying the Chinese language at a Confucius Institute in Nigeria, I developed a fondness of the Chinese culture and decided to study in a university in China.

That's why I came to Taiyuan in 2019 to study in a master's program in business administration at Shanxi University.

Despite my experience in the Confucius Institute for a certain period of time, I still found it was challenging to learn the Chinese language when I arrived in Taiyuan, the capital city of Shanxi province.

Although there were some courses for international students taught in English, I set myself a goal to fluently master the Chinese language during my stay in Shanxi, because I'm fully aware that Chinese is important for me to develop a career, considering China is now among the leaders in the international economy.

Every morning when I woke up, I would remind myself of my goal so I could refuse any notion of giving up.

The language studies were by

Province showcases its innovative services at CIFTIS

By YUAN SHENGGAO

North China's Shanxi province showcased its innovative strength in service trade and related sectors during the recent China International Fair for Trade in Services, which was held in Beijing from Sept 2-7.

A total of 38 enterprises from Shanxi, engaged in the seven sectors of biomedicine, construction, transportation, information technology, cultural creativity, cultural tourism and smart manufacturing, displayed their services and products at the six-day fair.

To attract visitors' attention, the Shanxi pavilion was designed as an eye-catching showroom with a huge LED display showing the province's latest developments and business opportunities in various sectors.

According to videos shown on the display, Shanxi's service trade has witnessed rapid growth over recent years thanks to the wide use of the latest technologies like cloud computing, big data and new modes of operation such as e-commerce, digitalized logistics, cultural tourism and the integration of manufacturing and services.

At the fair, Shanxi's major flagship companies in the service industry, including Shanxi Cultural Tourism Group, Shanxi Cloud Era Technolo-



A Shanxi company exhibits its health food during the 2021 China International Fair for Trade in Services. LIU TONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

gy and Huayuan International Land Port Group, attracted the attention of many visitors.

Huayuan International Land Port, for instance, displayed how it uses big data to serve businesses ranging from agriculture to international logistics.

At its showroom at the 2021 CIFTIS, a company executive was using a computer to help business visitors search for the market information of farm produce in Shanxi.

"Visitors can immediately

obtain data about the prices and output of produce from Shanxi with the help of our big data system," said Liu Yanli, general manager of Yimutian Logistics, a branch of Huayuan.

"The big data system is only a part of our comprehensive trade service system, which has helped more than 30 million business clients in China and more than 20 foreign countries identify partners and make deals."

International logistics is the main

business of Huayuan. It is the operator of the China-Europe freight train service in Shanxi.

Kang Lei, board chairman of the cross-border e-commerce business at Huayuan, said the 2021 CIFTIS offered a venue for the company to display its international logistics and trade platform powered by digital and intelligent technologies, and created an opportunity for Huayuan to exchange with its partners.

At the exhibition area for Shanxi's creative culture, a number of companies displayed their products inspired by the traditional culture of Shanxi.

Baixiaoling Dough Sculpture was among the exhibitors. Its boss Bai Xiaoling is a fourth-generation inheritor of the dough sculpture art, which is on Shanxi's list of intangible heritage.

"By making dough sculptures on-site, we have secured an increasing number of orders, especially for the forthcoming Mid-Autumn Festival," Bai said. "There are even orders from New Zealand."

Many business visitors to the Shanxi pavilion said that its exhibits offered them a chance to learn about the province's history and business environment, and they hope to have long-term cooperation with Shanxi.

Wang Pei contributed to this story.