

Party secretary maps out direction of Shanxi



Work report delivered by Lin Wu highlights provincial targets and nationally important pilot initiatives

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Shanxi is expected to become a pilot province in a number of national economic transformation moves within the next five years, a senior provincial official told a congress of the local committee of the Communist Party of China.

Lin Wu, Party secretary of Shanxi province, made the remarks in his work report at the opening ceremony of 12th Congress of the CPC Shanxi Provincial Committee on Monday.

The provincial Party chief said Shanxi's targets over the next five years include becoming a demonstration zone for the nation's transformation in resources development; a pilot region in the country's energy revolution; and an important experimental zone for ecological protection and high-quality development in the Yellow River drainage region.

Other targets that Shanxi set include an advanced manufacturing base in China's central regions; a



The 12th Congress of the Shanxi Provincial Committee of the CPC opens in Taiyuan on Oct 25. SHI XIAOBO / FOR CHINA DAILY

new highland for opening-up in China's inland regions; and a renowned tourist destination with international influence, according to Lin.

The official also said Shanxi is expected to transform resources development by 2030 and achieve basic modernization by 2035.

Lin's work report has resounded among attendees of the congress, as well as Party members, officials and residents of the province.

Wang Jianfeng, Party secretary of the county of Qingxu in Taiyuan, the provincial capital, was a delegate.

Talking about the current economic development in Qingxu, Wang said he agrees with provincial Party secretary Lin's opinion and the province's targets for the transformation of resources development.

He noted that Qingxu is implementing its own economic transformation plan: it aims to reduce its

reliance on coal mining and heavy industries and foster new growth engines.

One important move in the county is the development of the Qingxu Fine Chemicals Industry Park, founded in February 2018.

Wang said it is designed as a low-carbon and recycling economic zone with a focus on turning coal into clean chemicals such as graphite and synthetic fibers, and devel-

oping new energy resources like hydrogen.

The county Party chief predicted that the industrial park will foster an industrial cluster with a total value surpassing 100 billion yuan (\$15.63 billion).

"Qingxu will play its role and contribute to the high-quality development of Shanxi," Wang said.

Wu Zhihua, a delegate to the congress, is a community official in

Shanxi. "Lin's work report said that strengthening the governance of communities is key to the development of Shanxi," Wu said. "As grassroots officials, we must address the concerns of residents and better serve them."

In addition to congress delegates, officials and residents throughout Shanxi watched the event on TV or online.

Li Chenghai, head of the administrative committee of the Shanxi Agricultural Valley, a modern agricultural zone based in the city of Jinzhong, said Lin's work report is both "inspiring and encouraging".

"Officials in the Shanxi Agricultural Valley will use Party secretary Lin's instructions as the guideline to direct the agricultural valley's development."

"We will contribute our efforts to agricultural modernization and high-quality development in Shanxi," Li said.

Wang Junqi is the Party chief at Dongqu Coal Mine, a subsidiary of Shanxi Coking Coal Group. "While proposing a comprehensive blueprint for Shanxi's socioeconomic development, Lin's work report includes new requirements for the industrial transformation and reform of Shanxi's coal mines."

"The coal mine operators should map out their plans for upgrading the industry, spurring development in the direction of intelligence, high efficiency and low carbon emissions, while stabilizing output," Wang Junqi said.

Li Shu contributed to this story.

Grand gala held to mark increase in investment

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Shanxi is witnessing a boom in investment this year, with a great number of projects signed, constructed or becoming operational.

A grand gala was held in the province at the end of September for the signings, launches and operations of a great number of investment projects. This latest ceremony was the fifth such event held this year.

Among the new launches was an original equipment manufacturer plant for internet company Baidu's Xiaodu smart speaker in the eastern Shanxi city of Yangquan.

The first-phase investment of the project is about 150 million yuan (\$23.44 million), with an annual output of 10 million units, according to Shanxi Jonter, the OEM of Xiaodu.

Changzhi High-Tech Development Zone in the city of Changzhi also saw the signings, launches and operations of a raft of high-tech projects that cover such fields as new energy vehicles, next-generation information technology, semicon-

ductors, photoelectronics and advanced manufacturing.

Industrial officials in the province said the projects represent new growth areas in Shanxi and reflect its strategic transformation that features a shift in focus from the traditional coal mining and heavy industries to the cultivation of new, emerging sectors to drive high-quality economic development.

Shanxi's various industrial zones and parks are the major destinations to host such new projects.

Statistics from the Shanxi Department of Commerce show the 88 industrial zones and parks in the province secured a total of 1,059 investment projects by the end of August, with combined investment amounting to 496.94 billion yuan.

The Shanxi Transformation and Comprehensive Reform Demonstration Zone is the province's main draw for attracting investment.

The zone, founded in January 2017, is designed as a pilot area for Shanxi's economic transformation by attracting investment in emerg-



The high-quality steel plant of Taiyuan Steel and Iron represents the company's new transformation driven by innovation.

WANG HONGXU / FOR CHINA DAILY

ing industries. It has developed a comprehensive industrial system that covers such sectors as biological technologies, IT, NEVs, new materials, aerospace, modern logistics, energy conservation and environmental protection.

Shanxi's boom in investment is associated with local authorities' constant efforts to improve its business environment, according to local entrepreneurs.

Hao Ronggui is the general manager of Richangxin New Materials, a newly established company in Yangquan. He said he was impressed with and "even astonished" at the

speed that he could start a new business in the city.

"From the project's signing to its trial operation, it took only five months and 12 days," Hao said.

He explained that the secret behind the "Yangquan speed" is the local officials' efforts in improving the business environment.

Such efforts include streamlining approval procedures and officials' whole-process assistance from business registration, land acquisition and construction to operation, according to Hao.

Wang Pei contributed to this story.

Fertile ground to turn ideas into businesses

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Edible fungi cultivation, tomato-picking robots, charging piles for buses ... a range of products and designs that appeared unrelated were displayed at a recent show in Shanxi's provincial capital of Taiyuan.

But they all had one thing in common: each was created by young entrepreneurs in Shanxi who want to turn their innovations into businesses.

Huang Chao was one of the exhibitors at the show — the Shanxi subevent of the National Mass Innovation and Entrepreneurship Week held on Oct 19-25. His exhibits included a range of technologies for edible fungi farming.

Huang started entrepreneurship when he was a student in Shanxi Agricultural University in the late 2000s. Back then, he spent some 3,000 yuan (\$470) renting a small farm to cultivate edible fungi.

After graduation in 2008, he developed his own company for fungi farming, which consists of several farms and an institute for fungi research in the entrepreneurship park of Shanxi Agricultural University. The company is now one of the internship bases for university students.

While Huang's exhibits show technologies with broad market potential, the exhibits of a team from Taiyuan-based North University of China represent the cutting edge of frontier sciences.

One of their exhibits was related to the Beidou satellite navigation and position system, which won a second-place prize during the seventh Shanxi Internet-Plus Innovation and Entrepreneur Contest in July.

Li Zhaoying, a graduate from Shanxi University, showcased the electricity and energy trading platform at the show. Combining the

internet of things and artificial intelligence, the platform was the gold medal winner at the sixth Shanxi Internet-Plus Innovation and Entrepreneur Contest in 2020.

The success of these young entrepreneurs is related to the strong support of the government and local universities.

The government of Shanxi views local universities and colleges as the starting point and an important base for mass innovation and entrepreneurship.

In 2016, the government released an action plan to promote innovation and entrepreneurship among university students and graduates.

In recent years, coaching for innovation and entrepreneurship has been included in the curriculum of many universities and colleges in Shanxi.

To date, the higher-education institutions have offered innovation and entrepreneurship coaching courses to more than 160,000 students, accounting for about 45 percent of their collective enrollment, according to the Shanxi Department of Education.

These universities have also established laboratories and incubation parks for students to conduct research and start businesses.

The annual Shanxi Internet-Plus Innovation and Entrepreneur Contest — mainly targeting university students and graduates — is a major provincial event to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship. The platform has offered many candidates the chance to find partners and turn their research, designs and plans into businesses.

A total of 216,913 university students have taken part in the contest, according to the event's organizers.

Guo Yanjie contributed to this story.

Highways create new economic opportunities

By YUAN SHENGGAO

When residents in Jinzhong make plans to tour the seasonal autumn attractions in their vicinity, they now have a new route to choose.

The newly completed highway near Jinzhong has connected a ring of attractions surrounding the city, including Small West Valley, Peach Blossom Harbor, Flower-Picking Bay and Black Gold Mountain.

"Before the operation of the highway, only Small West Valley was known to most tourists," said Zhang Gaopeng, general manager of Jinzhong Transport Group. "This road has brought a number of other attractions into the spotlight."

In another development, the long-awaited expressway linking Taiyuan and its neighboring county of Shilou, began construction in June.

"It takes about five hours for us to travel to Taiyuan," said Ding Youqing, a resident in Shilou. "We are told the travel time will be cut to about two hours after the completion of the expressway."

While construction of the expressway is still underway, Ding is planning to grow high-quality millet targeting the market in Taiyuan.

"When the expressway is ready in one or two years, our produce will be able to reach the dealers in Taiyuan in about two hours," Ding said.

To meet the expectations of many residents like Ding, Shanxi has



A new highway in Yonghe links a ring of tourist attractions across the county. CUI MINGYUAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

stepped up its pace in developing transport facilities, in hopes of creating a new driving force for local economic development.

During the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), Shanxi had invested 216.5 billion yuan (\$33.8 billion) in building transport facilities, according to the province's department of transport. Of the investment amount, about 127 billion yuan went to 58 less-developed counties.

Shanxi's total highway length has reached 144,300 kilometers, with 100 percent of its villages linked by highways and 96 percent of the counties connected by expressways.

About 1,560 km of the water courses of the Yellow River and its branches have been upgraded into navigable waterways. And the provincial airports have connections with 76 domestic cities and 12 overseas cities. The cities of Taiyuan and Datong have been listed as the nation's transport hubs.

The improved road connectivity has given a strong boost to the agriculture-related logistics sector and the entire farming industry, according to officials in Yuncheng, the southern Shanxi city renowned for its fruit farming.

Lu Junqiang, a Yuncheng official

in charge of the regulation of the logistics industry, said the booming business at the local Jinnan Fruit Industrial Park, which was founded by Chinese logistics giant SF Express in October last year, reflects how the local fruit farming industry is bolstered by better road connectivity.

"As transactions increased thanks to better road connectivity and SF's logistic services, the Jinnan park helped fruit farmers garner a total sales revenue of 800 million yuan in 2020 and offered more than 500 jobs to local residents," Lu said.

Wu Jia contributed to this story.



Huang Chao shows visitors around his fungi farm.

JIA LIJUN / FOR CHINA DAILY