



Provincial and local officials attend the groundbreaking ceremony for the Linfen-Fushan Expressway. LI ZHAOMING / FOR CHINA DAILY

Expressway construction to promote county’s development



New road to assist economic growth and improve quality of life

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Standing for hours at a construction site near his home village of Juliang in the Shanxi county of Fushan, local resident Duan Zisheng, 67, cannot hide his excitement, despite the cold weather of late December.

He was there to witness the groundbreaking ceremony for a section of an expressway that will link Fushan county to the city of Linfen and the rest of Shanxi.

Although the expressway section will be only 18.7 kilometers in length, it will be of great significance to local economic development. Fushan, one of the last counties in the province

without access to an expressway, will finally be connected to one.

“We have been waiting for an expressway for about two decades,” Duan said. “We were kind of envious when we heard people in other counties were using expressways to quickly transport and sell their produce and got richer.”

Hou Hongxue, an executive of the local company of Hengjinsheng Technology, had the same feelings as Duan. He said the construction of this expressway is good news for enterprises, which can help them lower logistics costs and facilitate sales.

The expressway’s groundbreaking ceremony, which was held on Dec 21, was attended by provincial and local officials including Shanxi Governor Lan Fo’an. Lan announced the inauguration of the project’s construction.

“Improving road connectivity can play an important role in promoting Shanxi’s economic transformation and high-quality development,” said Tang Zhiping, a member of the Party committee of the Shanxi provincial government, who was also present at the ceremony.

The official said Shanxi has developed a comprehensive transport net-

work featuring highways, railways, navigable waterways and airports, making it a transportation hub in North China.

According to Zhao Jianping, chief of the Shanxi Provincial Department of Transport, Fushan is one of the last five counties in Shanxi without access to expressways.

As construction of expressways is underway in the other four counties, Zhao said the completion of the Fushan-Linfen Expressway, which is scheduled for June 2024, is expected to mark a delisting of all no-expressway counties in Shanxi.

Shanxi Jiaokong Linfu Expressway Corp is the builder of the Fushan-Linfen Expressway. He Xiaoming, board chairman of the company, said the expressway will be constructed according to the highest standards of the nation.

Hu Xinqi, Party secretary of Fushan county, said the expressway is a long-awaited project in Fushan.

“Our officials will do their best to serve the construction of the project, as we are pinning high hopes on the expressway for boosting local economic growth and improving residents’ livelihoods,” Hu said.

According to local statistics, Shanxi

has a total of 144,300 km of highways, including 5,745 km of expressways. At present, 96 percent of the counties in Shanxi have access to expressways.

Rural areas, which boast about 126,000 km of highways, are the highlight of the province’s road infrastructure development. All the villages in Shanxi now have access to highways.

“Shanxi is also expected to be one of the North China provinces with the densest expressway network, with five north-south lines, 14 east-west lines and 33 shorter lines linking the trunk expressways,” said Zhao, chief of the Shanxi Provincial Department of Transport.

In addition to highways, Shanxi has also made headway in building other transport facilities.

According to Zhao, all the 11 prefecture-level cities in Shanxi have now been connected with a high-speed railway network. A total of 45 counties, county-level cities and districts have access to high-speed trains.

Shanxi now has seven airports serving domestic and international flights, with 304 air routes linking destinations throughout the world.

Wang Pei contributed to this story.

Flamingos flock to winter retreat

Photographers in Shanxi spotted a number of flamingos on a lake in the city of Yuncheng on Dec 24. The flamingo is an endangered species of stork mainly living in Africa, Central Asia and South Asia. Records show that the birds were first discovered in China in the late 1990s. Since the first flamingos were found in Yuncheng in 2013, the city has become a frequent winter habitat of the migratory bird. Locals also said this is a sign of an improving ecological environment in Yuncheng and Shanxi as a whole, showing the results of a provincewide campaign to restore and improve the ecology of rivers and lakes.

JIANG HUA / FOR CHINA DAILY



Global expansion booms for celebrated baijiu brand

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Xinghuacun Fenjiu, a famed white liquor, or *baijiu*, brand in Shanxi province, announced the operation of its experience center in Singapore, marking another major step in its globalization.

Xinghuacun Fenjiu is a time-honored brand that is said to represent China’s millennia-long history in *baijiu* production.

Already a household name in China’s *baijiu* market, Xinghuacun Fenjiu has vigorously expanded in the international markets over the past years.

And 2021 is a milestone year for the brand’s globalization, which is marked by more than 200 experience and cultural exchange activities throughout the world, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

These activities included experience events in Singapore, Finland, France, the United States, Canada and Australia, to name just a few. The brand also sponsored a number



Xinghuacun Fenjiu executives and local business representatives witness the opening of its experience center in Singapore.

WEN ZHAOYAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

of sports and cultural events in the US.

Since the beginning of this year, Xinghuacun Fenjiu has released a number of products tailored to the tastes of consumers in various countries.

It established outlets in countries including Singapore, Thailand and Germany and expanded to new markets including Indonesia, Hungary, Denmark, Belgium and Spain.

The company highlights its exchanges with famed wine and

liquor-producing countries like France, Georgia, Russia and Chile.

On Nov 29, Xinghuacun Fenjiu hosted a *baijiu* and food gala in Paris, offering French foodies a chance to taste upmarket liquor varieties from China’s Shanxi province. This event was also held to celebrate the *baijiu* brand’s entry onto the La Liste 2022 ranking of food and beverages.

The company has also developed a series of cross-industry products to meet the demands of international customers. One such product is the liquor-heart chocolate it presents to the overseas market.

Boosted by strong demand from both domestic and overseas markets, Xinghuacun Fenjiu reported business revenue of 17.26 billion yuan (\$2.72 billion) during the first three quarters of this year, increasing 66.24 percent year-on-year. Its net profit reached 4.88 billion yuan, growing 95.13 percent from the same period of last year.

Li Shu contributed to this story.

Shanxi offers bases to boost cross-Straits ties

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The famed Donghu Vinegar Cultural Park and Jinci Museum in the Shanxi provincial capital of Taiyuan now have their new identifications in addition to their original status as tourism destinations.

They were added to the list of “Shanxi’s bases for exchanges with Taiwan” on Dec 22. The North China province now has a total of five such bases targeting cross-Straits cultural exchanges.

Donghu Vinegar Cultural Park is a major tourist attraction in the city of Taiyuan featuring the exhibition of intangible heritage of vinegar production.

Shanxi is the top producer of matured vinegar in China. And Shanxi-made matured vinegar is also well sought-after in the East China province of Taiwan.

Back in 2015, Donghu Vinegar Cultural Park opened an exhibition hall in the Taiwan county of Miaoli, featuring exhibitions relating to vinegar production and the farming culture in Shanxi.

Officials at the park said the Miaoli exhibition hall has also grown into a major platform for promoting Shanxi’s vinegar and other local produce to Taiwan.

The Jinci Temple, a major part of the Jinci Museum, is a historical and cultural site offering fine examples of ancient Chinese architecture, sculpture and inscriptions.

First constructed during the Northern Wei Dynasty (368-534), the temple stands in memory of prince Ji Yu of the Western Zhou Dynasty (c.11th century-771 BC) on

the site of his kingdom’s capital, a monument to his commitment to improve the lives of his people.

Expanded over subsequent centuries, the temple has a diverse collection of more than 100 sculptures, bridges, terraces and buildings. Most of the temple’s dozens of buildings were built after the Tang Dynasty (618-907), primarily using wood, tiles and stone.

As Jinci is regarded by many as a treasure trove of ancient Chinese culture, it has been a favored destination among tourists from Taiwan and holds a unique position in cultural exchanges between Shanxi and Taiwan.

Other bases for exchanges with Taiwan include the Guan Gong Temple in Haizhou township of Yuncheng.

Guan Gong is a reverential term of address for Guan Yu, a general in the period spanning the late Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220) and the Three Kingdoms (220-280). And Haizhou was the hometown of this famous general.

Known for his exceptional valor and loyalty, he was deified as Guandi or Emperor Guan centuries after his death. The worship of Guan is popular throughout China, especially in his home province of Shanxi and southeastern provinces like Taiwan.

A highlight of Guan Gong-related cultural exchanges was a tour of the Guan Gong statue from Haizhou to Taiwan in 2013, which aroused excitement among Taiwan residents.

Wu Jia contributed to this story.



Two craftsmen use old techniques to brew vinegar at a studio in Donghu Vinegar Cultural Park. LI ZHAOMIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Excavation unearths glimpse of ancient life

By YUAN SHENGGAO

An archaeological excavation site in Shanxi was once again included in the top 10 archaeological discoveries with media influence rated by China Central Television on Dec 20.

The site, which is located in the village of Beibai’e in Yuanqu county, was given the award for the second time after it was included on the same list last year, because of its new findings this year.

Excavation of the site, which was identified as a group of tombs belonging to noble families between the Western Zhou Dynasty (c.11th century-771 BC) and Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC), began in April 2020 after damage caused by tomb robbing was reported in the area.

“The excavation was a salvage action taken by local archaeologists, aiming to protect the historical relics from any further damage caused by tomb robbers,” said Yang Jiyun, head of the archaeological team at the Beibai’e excavation site.

“Since 2020, we have excavated relics from nine tombs and 17 caves, including more than 500 items ranging from bronze ware, stoneware, earthenware, jade articles, lacquer ware and bone artifacts,” Yang said. “Ceremonial bronze ware pieces, which were numbered more than 140, accounted for the largest portion of the discoveries.”

The archaeologist said the most significant discoveries were the nearly 50 pieces of bronze ware with inscribed characters.

“From the inscriptions, we can identify the exact family names and even full names of those buried in the tombs,” Yang said. “And these were also records about the social lives and historical events of their times.”

While the excavation is still underway, tourists are offered an



One of the bronze containers discovered at the Beibai’e archaeological excavation site. GUO YANJIE / FOR CHINA DAILY

opportunity to see these precious historical heritage relics. More than 100 items have been displayed at the Shanxi Archaeological Museum in the provincial capital of Taiyuan.

At a dedicated hall in the museum, two exhibits — a bronze pot and a bronze box — have attracted the attention of most of the visitors, as these have been proven to be the containers of wine and cosmetics made nearly 3,000 years ago.

“When we discovered remains of red powders and liquid residue in the two containers, we immediately asked the nation’s top archaeological researchers to make analysis,” said Nan Puheng, a researcher at the Shanxi Archaeological Research Institution. “The analysis results showed that the remains are a kind of fruit wine and makeup powder made from cinnamon, grease and flora essential oils.”

Nan said the discoveries of the remains are of great significance as they can give people an idea of what life looked like nearly three millennia ago.

Guo Yanjie contributed to this story.