

Area's economy lifted after inaugural meeting secured 134 contracts

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The first Conference of Great Business Partners held by Shandong in 2018 has helped the province reap a raft of business deals and attract professionals, which has helped to boost the economy with new growth drivers.

With an aim of building a platform for high-level exchanges and cooperation, the 2018 Conference of Great Business Partners invited 1,096 guests from all walks of life from home and abroad, and more than 4,000 scholars and representatives from enterprises to participate in 11 forums and 17 negotiation activities.

At the event, the Shandong Development and Reform Commission presented 600 selected projects from diverse fields — including new-generation information technology, new energy and materials, intelligent maritime engineering and healthcare — to seek investment from all over the world.

Statistics from the provincial government show that a total of 134 contracts were secured at the first conference, the total amount of which reached 643

billion yuan (\$90.86 billion).

All the projects represented the advanced technical level in China and helped Shandong fill some industry gaps, according to the local government.

By the end of May 2020, the signed projects from the 2018 Conference of Great Business Partners have gathered a total investment of 95 billion yuan. And 14 projects, with an investment of 10.8 billion yuan in total, have been completed.

The 2018 Conference of Great Business Partners also saw 57 local employers in Shandong reach cooperation intention agreements with 118 high-level professionals and teams from home and abroad.

A website named "Select Shandong" was launched during the first conference in 2018, to provide information on investment projects, employment opportunities and capital flows, involving more than 180 industrial parks in 17 cities across the province.

The website has documented 600 key investment projects, 539 enterprise recruitment requirements and the information of more than 2,000 high-level professionals.



Vehicles are carried along the production line of a smart automobile manufacturing plant in Shandong. WEI DONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Youth summit spawns wave of new projects

By ZHANG LINWAN

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The International Summit on Innovation and Development of Youth Entrepreneurs has become a vital platform for East China's Shandong province to attract investment and business, local officials said.

The 2019 summit which was held in September last year introduced 121 projects, worth about 231.8 billion yuan (\$32.75 billion) in total.

After the event, the Shandong government built a team to review regularly how these projects have progressed and do their best to provide help.

To date, 46 projects have been signed with investment amounting to 114.35 billion yuan, and 29 have started construction in cities across the province. Among these is the Ruigan (Jinan) sensor project, which was launched in Zhangqiu district of Jinan, capital of Shandong province in February.

"Thanks to the local government's customized services, it only took us three months to make an acquisition overseas, paving the way for the project's launch," said Zhang Yungjie, manager of the Ruigan (Jinan) sensor project.

gan (Jinan) sensor project.

"The summit offered us easier access to quality projects, which can bolster the city's high-quality development," said Lou Chunyang, deputy director of the Zhangqiu investment promotion service center.

The company started operation in June, and it is expected to achieve output value of 350 million yuan within this year. "Next, we will step up cooperation with local governments to set up a semiconductor industry fund," Zhang said.

The fund will provide investment to promising companies and projects in the fields of semiconductors, big data, and the internet of things, driving the development of the technology industry and high-end manufacturing in Shandong province, he added.

Another project is China's first marine big data demonstration base, which is under construction in Qingdao, a coastal city in the province.

When completed, the base will feature a big data storage center, a marine big data exhibition center and numerous business incubators. It will boost the growth of emerging industries in the city and generate profits, said a local official.



A staff member at Poton Motor Group's Shandong plant tests a welding robot. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



The Shandong Peninsula is surrounded by the Bohai Sea to the north and the Yellow Sea to the south. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Shandong launches investment events to promote opening-up

Province in East China to host second Conference of Great Business Partners across 16 cities

By YUAN SHENGGAO

A mega investment promotion event kicks off in East China's Shandong on Tuesday, as part of the province's efforts to further expand its opening-up and shore up high-quality development.

Attaching great importance to bringing in investment, collaborating with Hong Kong and Macao and win-win cooperation with multiple partners, the Second Conference of Great Business Partners and International Summit on Innovation and Development of Youth Entrepreneurs is Shandong's first high-level activity this year for opening-up and investment, said Ren Airong, vice-governor of Shandong province. She made the remarks at a news conference held on June 23.

Ren also serves as the deputy director of the organizing committee of the conference.

Under the context of the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the normalization of epidemic prevention and control, the conference is expected to deepen communication and exchanges with investors at home and abroad, strengthen investors' confidence in Shandong, expand new fields for cooperation and stabilize the industrial and supply chains, Ren said.

With its main venue set up in Jinan, the conference features online project promotions in 16 cities across Shandong province, including Qingdao, Yantai, Rizhao, Liaocheng, Weihai and Dongying.

"The conference is rich in content and innovative form. In fact, it is an online investment attraction day of the whole province," Ren said.

To secure a successful conference, Shandong has made a great deal of preparation for inviting guests and

enterprises and selecting projects. A total of 3,545 corporate guests have been approved to take part as of June 22, of which 219 are from the world's top 500 enterprises, 193 from China's top 500 companies, 999 from industry-leading companies and 356 from startups.

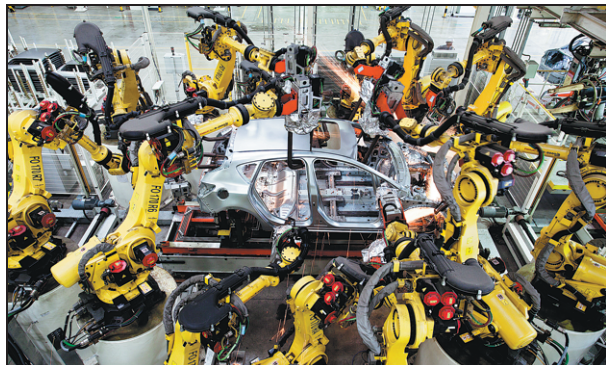
A total of 1,885 guests are engaged in Shandong's top 10 industries, which are new-generation information technology, high-end equipment, new energy and new materials, modern marine, healthcare, green chemicals, modern agriculture, culture creativity, tourism and modern finance.

With an aim to forge new economic growth drivers, the province selected 332 quality projects for inviting investment at the second Conference of Great Business Partners and International Summit on Innovation and Development of Youth Entrepreneurs.

These projects cover a wide range of areas including major infrastructure, Shandong's top 10 industries and industrial technology reform, demonstrating Shandong's determination to replace old economic growth drivers with new ones and bringing in high-quality investment, Ren said.

A total of 129 selected projects are from Shandong's top 10 industries, accounting for 41.3 percent of the total. And projects from emerging industries account for nearly 70 percent of the total, with 56 projects covering 5G, big data and industrial internet industries.

To meet the requirements of epidemic prevention and control, Shandong has developed a complete virus prevention and control system to guarantee participants' safety. The main venue in Jinan will be disinfected and all the attendees, reporters and staff members will have nucleic acid tests before the conference.



From top: Scores of containers at Shandong's Rizhao Port, which is playing an important role in boosting the province's opening-up. Robots assemble a car at the SAIC Motor factory in Yantai, Shandong province.

Di, and Chinese-leading property developer Greenland Chairman Zhang Yuliang.

"We have also invited executives of Fortune Global 500 companies, leaders of the top 500 Chinese companies, corporate representatives, business association presidents, young entrepreneurs and social celebrities.

"They are from more than 20 industries, such as medical equipment, information technology, healthcare and tourism, high-end equipment and cultural exchanges. They have a strong willingness to invest in Shandong," a local official said.

Moreover, Weihai plans to introduce more than 50 key projects covering major infrastructure, new infrastructure, key industries and industrial technological transformation to attendees via online and offline platforms.

Dongying, nestled in Shandong's

northern region, will host a forum on Tuesday where about 20 industry insiders will give online speeches about hot topics like the internet celebrity economy and Internet Plus.

Also on that day, local officials will go online, tailor plans for each project, and discover and address pain points for enterprises.

An official in Binzhou, another city in northern Shandong, said: "This event will have a deep influence on the growth of Binzhou."

"There are four projects to be signed at the event. They are: a beer-themed town in Bincheng district with a total investment of 2 billion yuan (\$280 million), a chemical industry park with an investment of 1.55 billion yuan, a biomedical industrial park with an investment of 1 billion yuan, and an industrial base in Boxing county with an investment of 1 billion yuan."

Entrepreneurs reach out for global cooperation



Weihai plans to introduce more than 50 key projects at the second Conference of Great Business Partners. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By YIN RUOWEI

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Cities in Shandong province, including Weihai, Dongying and Binzhou, have long been considered rich in culture and maritime resources, and they are looking to expand in these areas and more by collaborating with businesses worldwide.

On Tuesday, 16 branch venues of the second Conference of Great Business Partners and International Summit on Innovation and Development of Youth Entrepreneurs will be held across Shandong province.

In Weihai, which sits on the shoreline of northeastern Shandong, a virtual meeting platform

will be in place that day. It will connect the venue, nine negotiating rooms and hundreds of guests across the world.

"Echoing the theme 'Seizing New Opportunities and Sharing New Development,' Weihai aims to hold many cloud-based activities. From communication, promotion, release and signing to negotiation, all can be done on the cloud," said a local official.

More than 160 guests from 12 countries and regions including Japan, Germany and Canada will attend the event. Among them, there will be a handful of big names: Chinese dairy giant New Hope Group Chairman Liu Yonghao, major Chinese corn oil producer Xiwang Group President Wang



From left: Quancheng Square is a landmark of Jinan, the capital city of East China's Shandong province. Staff members at China National Heavy Duty Truck Group work at the automaker's plant in Shandong. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

It has also called for expanding productive investment via the assessment of key performance indicators, monitoring and analyzing

investment trends monthly, and cooperating with the statistics department to supervise project progress.



In April, Shandong planned to launch 495 new projects worth 659.5 billion yuan, targeting investment in grassroots medical institutions, edu-

cation and small town infrastructure.

In May, a total of 796 major projects in 16 cities in Shandong were



Weihai joins other cities in Shandong to promote investment projects and sign deals at the conference. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Major companies have choice from over 300 corporate opportunities

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Shandong is making efforts to promote 312 major projects at the Conference of Great Business Partners, which gets under way in the province on Tuesday.

The conference has attracted a group of the world's top 500 companies, large State-owned enterprises and the top 500 Chinese enterprises seeking business opportunities in the province.

Shandong has introduced a number of key industrial projects, major infrastructure and new infrastructure construction projects, industrial technical innovation projects and mixed-ownership SOE reform projects to guests at home and abroad.

More than 10 key industrial projects will be introduced at the conference, including a national rare earth catalytic research institute project and a catalyst resource utilization and water treatment agent project in the city of Dongying.

Other major infrastructure projects, including the reconstruction of highway bridge, the construction of a high-tech logistics industry zone, an airport, subway and others, will also be introduced at the conference.

The new infrastructure construction projects, promoted at the conference, cover the construction of new energy vehicle charging piles, 5G smart zones and a national super-computing science park.

The Yantai China Mobile 5G big data center is seeking technical cooperation at the conference. The center is to generate an estimated annual revenue of 2.4 billion yuan (\$339.04 million) when it is put into operation.

Industrial technical innovation projects are an important part of the 2020 Conference of Great Business Partners, with a group of them being promoted.

Dahan Construction Machinery, a tower crane and construction elevator manufacturer, plans to build an intelligent green factory in Jinan and is seeking cooperative partners.

Covering 32,800 square meters, the plant is expected to achieve an annual sales revenue of 1 billion yuan upon completion.

The province also plans to pro-

312 projects

Shandong is promoting at the second Conference of Great Business Partners

10 key projects

Dongying is to introduce at the conference

10.2 billion yuan

total assets of Shandong Port Group by the end of 2019

note mixed-ownership reforms for SOEs to help them expand their market and increase capital.

A batch of mixed-ownership reform projects will be promoted at the conference. One of them involves Shandong Port Group, established in August 2019 in Qingdao.

The company has 33 qualifications related to construction engineering and one qualification for overseas contract projects. As of the end of 2019, total assets of the company totaled 10.1 billion yuan and its revenue reached 740 million yuan.

The company plans to seek partners in financing, engineering design and construction.

Other mixed-ownership reform projects focus on airports, high-speed rail, steel, investment and marine culture.

Shandong's Qingdao, Weihai, Jinan and Yantai cities are promoting investment projects and signing deals, covering sectors of modern marine, healthcare, high-end equipment, new materials and new-generation information technology at the conference.

The provincial government said the conference is a major international event being held during a critical period of pandemic prevention and control, and is of great significance for promoting high-quality investment, stabilizing foreign trade and promoting high-level opening-up.

Centers for trade and service opened at FTZ

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone Yantai Area opened international trade and service centers last week.

The international trade center is expecting some 36 foreign trade companies to set up their operations there including JD Cloud, Hengbang Supply Chain Company, and Shandong Longtai Petroleum Equipment.

To date, the trade center has attracted 42 enterprises, generating 9.79 billion yuan (\$1.38 billion) in imports and exports from January to May.

The two centers are part of the area's effort to attract investment and promote international exchange, local officials said.

As part of the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone, the Yantai area is designed to be a pilot zone for trade and investment cooperation between China and South Korea, a base for intelligent marine manufacturing and a demonstration pilot area for the industrialization of national scientific and technological achievements and international technologies.

The area said it has planned 170 innovative items revolving around the province's 100 innovation pilot tasks, as part of the effort to promote its development.

Approved by the State Council in 2019, the Shandong FTZ covers the areas of Jinan, Qingdao and Yantai, spanning 119.98 square kilometers. It is developed under the focus of institutional innovation and the requirement of accumulating practices that may be replicated and applied elsewhere, local officials said.

The Shandong FTZ consists of three areas with different targets, aiming to improve the local business environment and enhance the

FTZs' influence in attracting investment and high-level professionals.

Focusing on becoming a key national economic center and a hub for logistics and technology innovation, the Jinan area has developed a system for assessing human capital in a bid to empower its industrial development.

It has also provided catering businesses with convenient services for their registration and operation.

To facilitate the construction of industries such as modern marine and the shipping logistics, the Qingdao area has carried out plans on supporting its marine industry via targeted policies and capital management.

In the first quarter of this year, the cargo and container throughput of Shandong Port in the area maintained growth, local officials said.

The Shandong FTZ said it has explored 60 innovative measures, with 24 relating to the business environment, 13 involving trade transformation and upgrading, eight concerning the ocean economy, seven covering innovation-driven development and the financial sector and one referring to regional economic development between China, Japan and South Korea.

As of April, the FTZ had welcomed 17,155 registered companies, with 207 foreign-invested ones. From January to April, the amount of paid-in foreign investment in the province's FTZ reached \$370 million, and the value of its imports and exports was 771.4 billion yuan.

During the period, the Shandong FTZ has helped attract 9.8 percent of foreign investment and contributed 12.5 percent of the value of imports and exports in the province, local officials said.

Government policies stabilize foreign deals

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Despite the impact of the novel coronavirus, Shandong province has made great efforts to stabilize foreign trade by releasing a series of policies and providing services for foreign trade companies.

Lyu Wei, deputy director of the Department of Commerce of Shandong province said: "With the pandemic continuing to spread globally, Shandong is facing new difficulties and challenges."

The province released 32 supporting policies during the outbreak, in efforts to better prevent and control the pandemic and stabilize Shandong's foreign trade, Lyu said.

The government reduced the prices of gas and electricity and reduced or delayed tax payments to ease financial pressures till the end of June.

Transportation, catering, accommodation, tourism, exhibitions and cinemas badly affected by the outbreak are exempt from property tax and land use tax in the first quarter of this year.

The province has also optimized customs procedures, such as allowing companies to choose a customs clearance mode, to improve the efficiency of foreign trade and investment.

During the outbreak, Shandong hosted a series of online export exhibitions for Eastern Europe, Pakistan and Thailand. To date, the province has organized 229 companies to connect with 120 overseas purchasers.

The Department of Commerce of Shandong province has provided financial support for exhibitors online and offline, to help them

expand markets. According to Lyu, to improve international freight capacity and unblock logistics channels, Shandong opened six international freight flights, including Jinan to Seoul in South Korea, Qingdao to Osaka in Japan and Qingdao to Bangkok, Thailand.

The province has also provided specific services for foreign trade companies to promote the resumption and efficient operation of supply chain under safe control and prevention of the pandemic.

At the Jinan National High-Tech Industrial Development Zone, Leoni, a leading German provider of cables and wiring systems to the automotive sector, exports its products to North America. However, overseas orders were all canceled because of the pandemic.

To help the company expand sales channels, the local government introduced leading construction machinery companies to Leoni, who signed agreements and launched business together.

The Jinan National High-Tech Industrial Development Zone also provided technical support and helped Leoni recruit more skilled workers.

With all its efforts, in the first quarter, foreign trade in the province totaled 446.75 billion yuan (\$63.13 billion), down 3.6 percent year-on-year. Export reached 237.17 billion yuan, declining 4.5 percent compared with same period last year. Import business totaled 209.59 billion yuan, down 2.6 percent year-on-year.

The actual use of foreign capital saw a slight increase of 0.88 percent year-on-year, reaching \$3.18 billion.



Qingdao Port in Shandong province is one of the 10 busiest ports in the world. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY