



The Tiaoshun cross-sea bridge is put into service in Zhanjiang on Monday. ZHANG FENG FENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

## Air, land and marine transport upgraded after major expansion

By SONG MENGXING

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The Wuchuan section of the Shantou-Zhanjiang Expressway opened to traffic in Zhanjiang on Tuesday.

It is planned to connect to the Zhanjiang Airport Expressway, which is under construction, and to Maoming city in Guangdong province.

On the previous day, the Tiaoshun cross-sea bridge went into service, connecting eastern and western parts of Zhanjiang and improving the traffic efficiency between the Haidong New Area and downtown Zhanjiang.

Several more expressways are set to open in the near future. They include the Donghai Island-Leizhou Expressway, Zhanjiang's first intracity expressway, which extends more than 21.94 kilometers.

In early June, the 400,000-metric-ton ore carrier *Ore Zhanjiang* docked in Zhanjiang Port, marking the port as the first deepwater port in South China with the capability to berth 400,000-ton vessels.

"Our city has kept spending on improving its transportation system to consolidate the position as a national comprehensive transport hub and to ensure high-quality economic and social development with rapid transport development," said Zeng Jinze, mayor of Zhanjiang, during the opening ceremony of the Tiaoshun bridge on Monday.

The city made fixed asset investments in transport exceeding 70 billion yuan (\$10.82 billion) during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), official statistics indicate.

Thanks to the hefty investment, Zhanjiang boasts a transport system involving the sea, railways, highways and aviation. It was even included in an overall plan for western land and sea transportation released by the National Development and Reform Commission in 2019.

The city's modern transportation system is represented by such infrastructure as Zhanjiang Wuchuan Airport, five high-speed railway lines and a maritime channel that can hold 400,000-ton ships.

Zhanjiang's length of highways reached 22,400 km by the end of 2020, ranking second in Guangdong. Expressway length, mean-

while, hit 414.93 km.

The city will start the construction on 15 highway projects and promote preliminary work on the Zhanjiang section of the Guangdong coastal sightseeing roads during the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25).

The Guangzhou-Zhanjiang high-speed railway, which can allow trains to go 350 km per hour, has begun construction. Preliminary work on other high-speed railways running through Zhanjiang are advancing. They include one connecting the city to Haikou, capital of southernmost island province of Hainan.

An intercity train project, involving Zhanjiang, Maoming and Yangjiang, is being planned and transportation between Zhanjiang and southwestern regions is expected to improve in the near future, local media reported.

The world's largest passenger-cargo roll-on roll-off wharf came into operation in the Xuwen port area in September 2020, which increased navigation efficiency in the Qiongzhou Strait, local media reported at the time.

With the deepwater port and wharf development, Zhanjiang plans to develop itself into a port-type logistics hub.

Zhanjiang Wuchuan Airport is scheduled to complete construction this year and open to air traffic next year. Its supporting facilities, including the airport expressway and the airport section of the Shenzhen-Zhanjiang Railway, are also under construction.

The new airport is designed for a yearly throughput of 5.1 million passengers. It will be capable of handling 31,000 tons of cargo and 47,400 aircraft arrivals and departures annually.

Official data showed fixed investments in Zhanjiang's road transport industry amounted to 2.04 billion yuan in first four months of this year, a year-on-year rise of 27.9 percent.

Guan Yu, chief economist at the Zhanjiang industry and information technology bureau, said better transport infrastructure will shorten the time and distance between Zhanjiang and the Pearl River Delta and help the city to better integrate into the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

# Megaprojects celebrated as city building a bright future

Large-scale construction works get underway and key facilities are opened in Zhanjiang

By ZHANG LINWAN

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Zhanjiang, a coastal city in South China's Guangdong province, held a ceremony for the groundbreaking and operation of several megaprojects on Monday. It is hoped the works will hasten the city's development into a regional subcenter of Guangdong, as well as a major development hub along the province's modern coastal economic belt.

A total of 43 projects began construction on Monday, involving capital input worth 61.43 billion yuan (\$9.52 billion). Most of them are transport infrastructure facilities, while the rest are related to the high-tech industry, airport, economic zone development, higher education, a hospital and the modern service industry.

Among the projects that began construction is a 9.64-kilometer-long undersea tunnel in Zhanjiang Bay, which involves 2.75 billion yuan investment. It is a crucial leg of the Guangzhou-Zhanjiang high-speed railway with a speed limit of 350 km per hour.

Another is the Haidong campus of Guangdong Medical University with a budget set at 2.36 billion yuan, which will be big enough for 11,300 students. Also, there is the city's public health hospital based on Zhanjiang No 3 People's Hospital, which will cost 466.49 million yuan for construction.

Among the projects that opened is the 9.36-km-long Tiaoshun cross-sea bridge, which cost 2.47 billion yuan. The 26.72-km-long Wuchuan section of the Shantou-Zhanjiang Expressway with an investment of 2.94 billion yuan was put into service on the following day.

The projects represent a gift to the Communist Party of China ahead of the 100th anniversary of its founding. They will also help to solidify the foundation of the city's development in the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25), local officials said.

"Zhanjiang is going all out to turn itself into a regional subcenter of Guangdong and a major development point of the modern coastal economic belt," Cao Xing, executive vice-mayor of the city, said at the ceremony.

Liu Hongbing, the new Party secretary of Zhanjiang, announced the start of the operation and construction of the projects that day.

In recent years, the city has prioritized the development of the port-based industry, coastal tourism, special and advantageous agriculture, and the sector related to military-civilian integration in its

strategy to boost high-quality economic and social development.

Official data showed Zhanjiang's GDP rose by 5 percent on an annual basis during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), and reached 310.02 billion yuan last year.

The added value of industrial enterprises above designated size — those with an annual revenue of 20 million yuan or more — came in at 63.99 billion yuan in 2020. Investments in fixed assets have exceeded 100 billion yuan for five consecutive years.

"The provincial government has given strong support for Zhanjiang's development, so we must seize the opportunity and make progress," Zeng Jinze, mayor of Zhanjiang, said at a meeting in April.

Over the coming years, Zhanjiang will strive to reinforce its position as a national transportation hub. It comes on the back of ongoing projects, such as the Guangzhou-Zhanjiang high-speed railway and Zhanjiang Wuchuan Airport.

A comprehensive transport system, involving ports, railways and aviation, will lay a solid foundation for the city's economic growth, said local officials.

Zhanjiang also plans to establish regional centers for innovation, finance, healthcare, business and trade, and culture and education in a bid to enhance its ability to offer multiple urban services.

Local authorities said the city has built Zhanjiang Economic and Technological Development Zone, Haidong New Area and several major research platforms. They will play a critical role in promoting the construction of an innovation center.

In addition, Zhanjiang is home to six universities and polytechnics with more than 130,000 students in total, paving the way to build a center of culture and education.

As a port city, Zhanjiang seeks to increase its ties with the free trade port in South China's Hainan province to boost its marine industries such as marine transportation and ocean energy exploration.

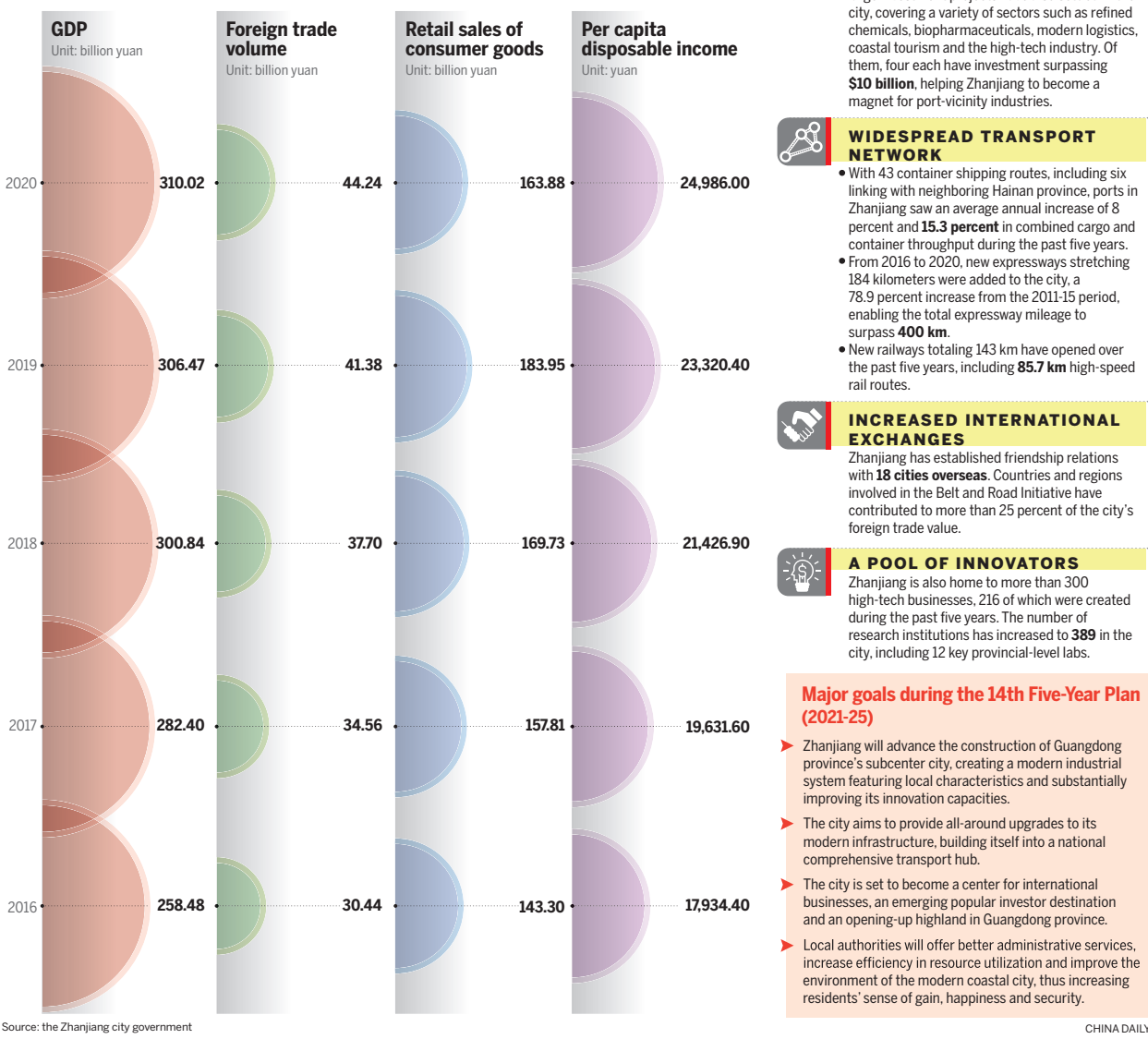
Meanwhile, the two regions will step up cooperation in the modern service industry. Together, they will build an array of tourism attractions and resorts. Zhanjiang also intends to set up a base to offer vegetables and other agricultural products to Hainan.

It will forge ahead with reforms and further expand opening-up in the future to provide a vital backup to the country's dual circulation development pattern, according to the city government.



A helicopter flies over a cross-sea bridge in Zhanjiang, Guangdong province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## Economic achievements during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20)



## Refined business climate serves corporate needs

By HAO NAN

Zhanjiang, a coastal city in South China's Guangdong province, recently collected public opinions on a draft regulation about improving its business environment, which will be put into effect soon.

Local officials said the initiative aims to strengthen the rule of law for market management in Zhanjiang and create open and transparent rules, fair and just supervision systems, and convenient and efficient services to better protect the rights and interests of various market entities.

The city government designated 2021 the "Year of Business Environment Improvement". It has carried out eight rectification campaigns which involve 70 items across 18 categories.

The moves are intended to help Zhanjiang hasten the construction of a market-oriented and international business highland, and boost high-quality development in the city, according to the government.

Earlier this year, the city took a series of measures to deepen the reform of its commercial affairs registration system, an important part of optimizing its business environment.

It has further lowered the threshold for market access; simplified procedures; innovated services; improved administrative efficiency; streamlined the approval for enterprise-related business certificates and licenses; completed supervision systems; and enhanced coordination and collaboration among government departments.

According to the reform, applica-



Businesspeople take advantage of one-stop services at Zhanjiang's administration for market regulation. LIU JICHENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

tions for opening businesses will be finished within half a workday by the end of this year. The city will also promote one-stop services for entrepreneurs to register new start-ups and provide them with free engraving of official seals and invoice stamps.

Effective measures to optimize the business environment have fueled a surge in the number of new market entities in Zhanjiang.

Statistics from the city's market regulation administration show the number of newly registered market entities reached 12,737 during the first quarter of this year, an increase of 37 percent year-on-year.

They included 3,398 companies and 9,247 individually owned businesses, up 66 percent and 29 percent year-on-year respectively.

Zhanjiang Economic and Technological Development Zone is an important base for the city to develop port-based industries. It is home to several large-scale projects.

This year, the zone has learned from the Guangzhou Development District and the Nansha pilot free trade zone to speed up administrative approval procedures and shorten the time it takes for enterprises to settle business registrations and other related issues.

For example, the time to examine and verify types of project bidding has been slashed from 30 working days to just one day.

At the beginning of this year, Guangdong Shuanglin Bio-Pharmacy in the zone planned to build new production lines. The applications for this involved multiple

The business environment here can be completely comparable to that of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen — four major first-tier cities in China."

Qian Feng, director of Guangdong Shuanglin Bio-Pharmacy's administrative center

departments and needed many materials.

"Officials of the zone listed all the application materials we needed and personally took our staff to the departments to go through procedures," said Qian Feng, director of the company's administrative center. "We finished the application in just one day, which greatly facilitated the efficient operation of our company."

"The business environment here can be completely comparable to that of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen — four major first-tier cities in China," Qian added.

As of May 10, the zone was home to 24,461 market entities, up 26 percent year-on-year. Their collective registered capital increased by 14 percent year-on-year. It has also issued a total of 6,037 electronic business licenses, the highest in Zhanjiang.

## Environment put first to lift people's quality of life

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Zhanjiang has an ecological construction plan for the period 2020-35; one goal is to build waterside greenways totaling 180 kilometers in length by the end of 2022. They will be extended to 255 km by the end of 2025 and 1,500 km by the end of 2035, according to the plan.

The waterside greenways will be a complex system linking major rivers, lakes, reservoirs, estuaries and coastal zones in the city.

With the goal to cover almost all key water sources in the city, the greenways are aimed at ecological conservation, safeguarding the city, cultural promotion, landscape construction and the leisure industry as a whole.

According to Zhanjiang Daily, the city has invested 1.97 billion yuan (\$304.72 million) in the water system protection and restoration project in the central urban area since 2019.

As a coastal city in Guangdong province, Zhanjiang is home to a large number of high-profile industrial projects. It is also making efforts to cut down energy consumption and emissions.

The Zhanjiang base of Baosteel Iron and Steel invested 6.4 billion yuan in environmental protection at the beginning of its construction.

Adopting 116 leading environmental protection technologies in the industry, the project is close to



The coastal city of Zhanjiang boasts an appealing natural environment. LI BO / FOR CHINA DAILY

its goal of realizing green development.

Baosteel invested more than 200 million yuan to apply advanced pollution control technologies and realize deep treatment and recycling of industrial wastewater in its plant.

Zhongke (Guangdong) Refinery and Petrochemical Project, whose total investment in environmental protection at its plant reaches up to 3.7 billion yuan, is said to adopt world-leading environmental protection technology and stringent measures to reduce

all kinds of pollutants.

Since the project began in June last year, pollutant emissions have met the latest national standards. The utilization rate of water resources reached 98.75 percent and the reuse rate of sewage reached 76 percent.

The BASF Guangdong Verbund site is also committed to building itself into a model project of energy conservation and environmental protection. It plans to adopt higher technical indicators so that its wastewater discharge can be reduced by more than 85 percent.

## Investments worth billions help create provincial subcenter

By HAO NAN

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Zhanjiang has been growing smoothly into a regional subcenter of Guangdong province and is building a modern coastal economic belt through its gigantic industrial projects.

The port city, located in the less-developed western area of Guangdong, is home to several large investments, including the Zhongke (Guangdong) Refinery and Petrochemical project, Baosteel project and BASF's smart petrochemical project.

June 16 marks the first anniversary of Zhongke's operation. With an investment of more than 44 billion yuan (\$6.81 billion) in its first phase, the project is the biggest of its kind put into operation during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20) by China Petrochemical Corp. Also known as Sinopec, the company is one of Asia's biggest oil refiners.

The Zhongke project is designed to refine 10 million metric tons of

crude oil and produce 800,000 tons of high-end ethylene products annually.

The project is expected to realize an annual industrial output value of more than 60 billion yuan. Out of this, it is expected to generate profits and taxes at a combined value of more than 26 billion yuan a year.

Also, downstream industries worth some 200 billion yuan will benefit from the project, according to the city government.

Between January and May, the Zhongke project refined nearly 6 million tons of crude oil and produced 340,000 tons of ethylene products.

Another mammoth project is being built by Baosteel, one of China's largest steel manufacturers. The project, which became operational in 2015, is tasked with eliminating outdated capacity and is aiming to become one of the world's most efficient green production bases for carbon steel.

So far, its No 1 and No 2 blast fur-

naces have reached target output. Construction of the No 3 blast furnace started in March 2019 and is scheduled to be finished this month.

Between 2017-20, it generated total profits of more than 10 billion yuan. Its industrial output value exceeded 149 billion yuan, accounting for 21 percent of the city's total.

The \$10 billion BASF project began construction in November 2019.

The first batch of plants, which are expected to be operational in 2022, will produce engineering plastics and thermoplastic polyurethane to serve the increasing needs of various industries in southern China and throughout Asia. The whole project is planned to be complete by 2030.

Following suit, Air Liquide, a world leader in gases, technologies and services for industry and health, decided to invest in the city in 2020. Dow, a materials science leader, signed a memorandum of understanding to launch a South



The *Ore Zhanjiang* carrier is guided to dock at Zhanjiang Port in June. CHEN YIZHONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

China specialties hub in the city in March.

Guan Yu, chief economist with the Zhanjiang bureau of industry and information technology, said the projects have many great advantages both in China and throughout

the world. "With their help, Zhanjiang is speeding up the construction of a subcenter in Guangdong and a major growth pole of a modern coastal economic belt in the province."

These projects will play a key role

in expanding the city's five advanced manufacturing clusters — green steel, green petrochemicals, high-end papermaking, green energy and new energy vehicles — and in promoting the city's high-quality development in the years to come, local officials said.

The improved business environment has helped Zhanjiang draw more attention from Fortune Global 500 companies. The city now has projects invested in by more than 10 such companies.

During the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25), the city government said it hopes to introduce new projects with a total investment of 300 billion yuan. Of this sum, more than 40 percent will be used in industrial projects.

To realize this goal, Zhanjiang plans to strengthen its port-based industries and build a large industrial park covering an area of 500 square kilometers.

The park will focus on developing new energy vehicles, auto parts, new materials, intelligent automobile equipment, equipment manufacturing, petrochemicals and steel, said Cao Xing, executive vice-mayor of Zhanjiang. The city is currently home to 20 industrial parks.

## Authorities gear up effort to continue rural vitalization campaign

By SONG MENGXING

Zhanjiang renamed its poverty relief and development office the rural revitalization bureau recently to consolidate poverty alleviation results and make rural areas thrive.

The new bureau also promotes the living environment in villages and a new round of rural reforms, local authorities said.

Zhanjiang's first rural revitalization academy was launched on March 18. It is the third of its kind nationally after those opened in Beijing and Sichuan province. It is expected to train professionals in the city to modernize agriculture and implement the city's rural revitalization strategy.

It will also play a role in cementing Zhanjiang's achievements in poverty alleviation, solving problems related to farmers and helping plan and manage sectors of modern agriculture, officials said.

A training center for rural revitalization professionals was established on the same day in Zhanjiang.

Zhang Jianwen, deputy secretary-general of the city's government, said the center needs to launch projects to nurture skilled farmers and foster leading companies and farmers' cooperatives.

It should help agricultural professionals, who are well educated, aware of technologies and good at operations, to become a force of rural revitalization, Zhang said.

Official statistics showed Zhanjiang once had 81,680 poor households and an impoverished population of 233,737, accounting for one-seventh of Guangdong province's poor population. All these people in Zhanjiang had escaped poverty by the end of May 2020.

A total of 284,000 impoverished people were transferred elsewhere for employment between 2016-20. Per capita disposable income of some 4,970 yuan (\$780) in 2015 to 14,736 yuan in 2020, a rise of 196.51 percent.

Zhanjiang took the lead in formulating a city-level plan for rural revita-



Villagers celebrate their poverty alleviation success during a flash mob event in Zhanjiang. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

lization nationally in January 2018.

It announced the rankings of county-level regions' rural living environment improvement on a

monthly basis and conducted an appraisal annually.

Zhanjiang was evaluated as "excellent" in Guangdong's performance appraisal of promoting

rural revitalization in 2019.

The city has relied heavily on industrial development for rural revitalization, aiming to establish modern agricultural systems and promote the healthy development of its agricultural economy. The moves are highlights of the city's poverty alleviation and rural revitalization.

Zhanjiang has built four national-level and 14 provincial-level industrial parks for developing modern agriculture in recent years. These have helped 45,559 farmers to find jobs.

Zhanjiang earmarked 88.74 million yuan to support 900 poor villages to develop specialty products and industries in recent years. It has fostered 178 large leading agricultural companies in recent years.

The city also gave priority to boosting the living environment in rural areas. It has improved roads for villages, renovated numerous dilapidated buildings and guaranteed safe drinking water.

Zhanjiang created a project fea-

turing Guangdong cuisine to help lift local people out of poverty in 2017. It set up four provincial-level Guangdong cuisine master studios and four provincial-level Guangdong cuisine training centers that provided training to poor laborers.

Thanks to effective implementation plans for rural revitalization, many villages in Zhanjiang have gained popularity with tourists.

Fangpo village in Xuwen county is a highlight of Guangdong's countryside tours. It received more than 300,000 visits which helped more than 150 villagers into employment in 2020. Its tourism revenue reached about 28 million yuan and the per capita income of villagers amounted to 32,000 yuan last year. Wencun village in Wuchuan city, under the administration of Zhanjiang, has become noted as the time-honored home of sweet potatoes in China. As a result, it has expanded its market for poverty alleviation products. The per capita income of its villagers was 27,263 yuan in 2020, four times more than that of 2015.