

By HAO NAN

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Exploring golden opportunities from silvery snow, Changchun in Northeast China's Jilin province has organized diverse events during the ongoing ice and snow season to develop its winter sports industry.

During the new season, which started in mid-November and will run till March, the provincial capital plans to integrate the sports with outstanding traditional Chinese culture, and create platforms to tell ice and snow stories and to promote the city's image, local officials said.

More than 20 activities are scheduled to take place at Jingyuetan National Forest Park and Modern Agricultural Park, with themes centering on the integrated development of sports, culture and trade. They include a light show held at the agricultural park to showcase nature and technology; an ice and snow equipment exhibition; an animation-featured carnival and the 22nd China Changchun Jingyuetan Vasaloppet International Ski Festival.

The most important part of the event, the Vasaloppet international skiing competition series kicked off on Thursday. Comprising 50-kilometer, 25-km and 2.5-km races, it has attracted about 700 professional skiers and enthusiasts from 20 countries and regions such as the United States, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, Poland, Spain and Belgium.

Chinese participants mainly come from 16 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, including Jilin, Liaoning and Heilongjiang provinces, and the Inner Mongolia autonomous region.

The competition series uses a 25-km-long track certified by the International Ski and Snowboard Federation and has established a professional referee team, organizers said.



The 22nd China Changchun Jingyuetan Vasaloppet International Ski Festival kicks off on Thursday.

More to see in Changchun as snow season in full swing

Events for every interest as Jilin province's capital lays on competitions, shows and tours

Vasaloppet China, an annual long-distance cross-country ski race originating in Sweden more than 100 years ago, has been held in Changchun for 21 years.

"With high-quality snow, good venues and a beautiful environment, skiers in the Jingyuetan park can not only enjoy the competition and challenge themselves but also experience the fun of traveling," said Wang Dongcheng, who has participated in three ses-

sions of the Vasaloppet international ski festival.

Thanks to the festival, about 1 million college students in Changchun have received cross-country skiing training.

A sports teacher in the city said he helps about 3,000 college students take part in the training annually and also leads teams to participate in the Vasaloppet international ski festival and the national college cross-country skiing

competition. In addition to sports events, organizers have planned cultural activities, trade fairs and industrial summits under the brand of Vasaloppet, to promote cooperation and exchanges between China and Sweden.

Moreover, Changchun launched the fourth national college cross-country skiing championship and the cross-country skiing selection for the 32nd Winter World University Games in December, and will

carry out an ice and snow sports training camp for youths.

As for public entertainment programs, the provincial capital plans to organize a snowfield soccer tournament, car and dragon boat races on ice and other mass ice and snow sports activities at Jingyuetan Snow World, a large-scale snow sculpture garden built at Jingyuetan National Forest Park.

The attraction, which opened to

the public in late December, covers an area of 100,000 square meters this year and has used 66,000 cubic meters of snow.

It is home to 44 sets of snow sculptures; the main one is in the shape of a dragon flying around the Changbai Mountain. It is 70 meters long, 13.6 meters wide and 13 meters high, and was shown at the opening ceremony of the 22nd China Changchun Jingyuetan Vasaloppet International Ski Festival.

Other forms of entertainment at the park include a 120-meter-long, 30-meter-wide and 8-meter-high snow slide, a 20-meter-long and 20-meter-wide snow maze, and a snow bowling field covering an area of nearly 1,100 sq m.

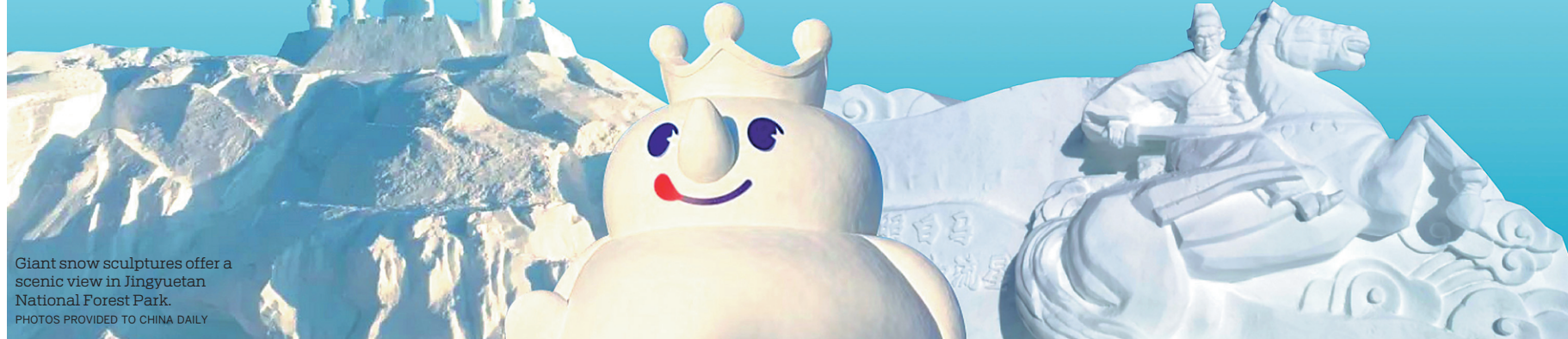
Also, Changchun has developed and rebuilt several internet-famous sites, like the light tunnel near the west gate of the Jingyuetan park, to meet the public's needs and expectations for the ice-snow-based consumption.

Yu Lili, deputy director of the cultural tourism and sports bureau at the Jingyue High-tech Industrial Development Zone, has recommended three tourist routes.

The first route is for a parent-child research trip that includes such tourist spots as the Jingyuetan park, the Palace Museum of the Manchurian Regime, Jilin Province Folk Arts and Crafts Museum, and Manshanli Children's Paradise.

The second is designed for "slow travel", which comprises attractions like the Jingyuetan park, Modern Agricultural Park, and two hot spring resorts.

The third enables visitors to experience the unique cultural charm of Changchun, as well as the combination of its history and modern sci-tech achievements. It includes the Palace Museum of the Manchurian Regime, Jilin Provincial Science and Technology Cultural Center and Changchun Movie Wonderland.



Giant snow sculptures offer a scenic view in Jingyuetan National Forest Park. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



The finalists of the Snow Angel of Vasaloppet China 2024 competition make their appearance at the awards ceremony held in late December. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Cultural heritage helps to raise profile of city

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Changchun, capital city of Northeast China's Jilin province, is redoubling efforts to promote its ice and snow culture.

In response to a three-year action plan issued by the provincial government in October to build Jilin into a world-class ice and snow brand and bolster winter tourism and summer resort destinations aimed at achieving a 1-trillion-yuan tourism industry within five years, Changchun is hosting a wide range of activities, planned by the Jingyue High-tech Industrial Development Zone, to showcase the city's unique charm.

"We are integrating world-renowned ice and snow-related intellectual property with outstanding traditional Chinese culture, aiming to create a fertile environment for ice and snow culture, a good stage for telling stories, a platform for talent cultivation and development, and a popular IP asset that can be passed on through word of mouth while

building a well-recognized brand among the public," said Yu Li, head of the publicity department at the Jingyue High-tech Industrial Development Zone.

Together with the 22nd China Changchun Jingyuetan Vasaloppet International Ski Festival, the organizers have planned Vasa Night to promote cultural exchanges between China and Sweden. Moreover, the Snow Angel of Vasaloppet China 2024 competition, which concluded with the finals in late December, was a landmark event to demonstrate the charm of ice and snow through a fashion show. It culminated with 23 competitors appearing on stage in a group dancing performance featuring traditional Chinese clothing, sportswear and cheongsams (*qipao* dresses).

As an important sideline event complementing the ski festival, the Snow Angel competition was launched in 2005 to promote the integration of high-end cultural creativity and local ice and snow resour-

ces and to strengthen cooperation between cities and nations. Compared with previous sessions, this year's event focused more on regional and traditional Chinese cultural elements. With ice and snow as the core components, it combined traditional Chinese culture with ice and snow culture, attracting a large number of participants who fully demonstrated their charm and talents.

Snow Angels represent kindness and wisdom, and the brand event also helps more people understand the charm of ice and snow culture and sports and better promotes the development of Changchun's ice and snow culture and tourism, local officials said. The competition has become an important bridge and link for cultural communication between Changchun and the world, showcasing the city's ice and snow culture to the world. It popularizes ice and snow sports to the public and promotes the Changchun ice and snow brand at the international level.

Local authorities have arranged a slew of other cultural activities, such as an ice and snow light and shadow show demonstrating world-renowned and traditional cultural IP assets as well as themes involving aviation, aerospace and navigation, and an animated ice and snow carnival and themed exhibition.

Wintertime heralds increased trade opportunities and market prosperity

By YUAN SHENGGAO

In winter's wake, Changchun, capital city of Northeast China's Jilin province, is seeing more trade exchanges.

At the 2024 China Changchun Jingyuetan Vasaloppet International Ski Festival Economic and Trade Fair held on Wednesday, a total of 38 investment promotion projects from the Jingyue High-tech Industrial Development Zone were signed, including 22 investment projects with a total planned investment of 18.2 billion yuan (\$2.55 billion), and 16 headquarters economy projects with an estimated first-year revenue of 6.6 billion yuan.

Local officials said the contracts underscore the achievements of the Jingyue high-tech zone's investment promotion efforts and its commitment to promoting high-quality economic and social development in the region. In addition to multiple project signings, the event unveiled the temperate agricul-

ture research center, the Open Bio Lab joint laboratory and the Changchun branch of the intelligent connected vehicle software testing center.

According to local officials, the research center and the joint laboratory is co-run by the management committee of the Jingyue high-tech zone, the Institute of Special Animal and Plant Sciences at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and investment management firm Hosen-care Brothers. The Changchun branch of the intelligent connected vehicle software testing center, co-run by the management committee of the Jingyue high-tech zone, the software testing center under the China Center for Information Industry Development and Changchun Huicheng Technology, aims to advance development of Jingyue's digital and automobile industry.

In conjunction with the fair, the Biotechnology and Health Industry Summit was held, gathering industry researchers and experts

to share insights centered around bioeconomy, food security and land quality and discuss technological breakthroughs in key core technologies such as biological fermentation, biological extraction and biological synthesis to further develop the processing technology system for Jilin's corn industry.

Meanwhile, local authorities are making full use of the ice and snow season to develop new business patterns and scenarios. Changchun Agri-Expo Garden, which serves as a main venue for culture and trade during the ice and snow season, has planned a series of new projects to attract more visitors, including a light and snow show and equipment exhibitions. The Dec 22-27 exhibition of ice and snow equipment attracted participants from 15 businesses and 42 brands from home and abroad.

In addition to high-end snow sports products such as ski equipment and cutting-edge technologies, the exhibition introduced ice and snow economic data and intelligent services. Moreover, a dazzling array of ice and snow products showcased forward-looking, technological and experiential ice and snow equipment technology, providing security for enthusiasts to engage in ice and snow sports and activities, according to organizers.

Focusing on agricultural facilities, brands and traditional customs, the 14th Jilin (Changchun) Winter Agricultural Expo, which is scheduled to run from Jan 28 to Feb 16, will launch more activities to echo the Spring Festival as well as promoting agriculture and ice and snow tourism, local officials said.



Visitors take pictures at the popular tourist attraction Jingyuetan starlight tunnel in Changchun, Jilin province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY