Shandong province artists welcome the New Year with dough creations

Shandong craftsman turns scraps of paper into art

Snowfall transforms Shandong fishing villages into winter marvels, attracting tourists

Massive 90-megawatt solar power project operates well in Shandong

Shandong Changyi: Accelerated project construction key to high-quality development

Rare, extreme snowfall hits Shandong cities

Industrial transformation spurs innovation and growth in Shandong

Coastal cities in Shandong blanketed in deep snowfall

Expats visit modern agriculture project in Shandong

District in Shandong province makes full use of renewable energies

Couplet production in Shandong village ramps up ahead of festival season

Researchers give Yellow River Delta's sea grass beds in Shandong a helping hand

New innovation hub emerges in Shandong

Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply powers high-speed rail

Shandong-made Smart Dragon 3 carrier rocket launches test satellite

Song Dynasty theme resort in Shandong to boost local night economy

Colorful koi help Shandong county boost livelihoods

6th Shandong College Student AI Competition held in Laoling

Shandong's Qihe pushes for net-zero with PV projects

Shandong polishes brand strategy

Shandong promotes innovative business development

Shandong deploys unmanned helicopters for enhanced boat traffic control

3rd phase of nuke heating service starts operations in Shandong

Shandong keeps economy stable

International communication center opens in Shandong

Time-honored peanut industry blossoms with new growth in Shandong

Shandong boosts strength in product quality

Production for overseas orders in full swing in Shandong

667 hectares of Qishan sweet potatoes harvested in Shandong

Swans move in for winter in Shandong

Traditional Chinese costumes boost rural vitalization in Shandong

Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company turbocharges development

Norovirus sickens 74 students in Shandong

Diplomatic envoys laud Shandong: Unveiling further cooperation potential

For tall scallions, look to Shandong

Promotion showcases Shandong heritage

Shandong rekindles fine traditional culture

Shandong park provides rosy outlook for villagers

Shandong cracks down on bird poaching in nature reserve

Shandong and Kenya jointly open traditional medicine center

Fresh rose industry blossoms in Shandong

Shandong promotes Yellow River tourism

Grapes sweeten life in Shandong province

Shandong's Dezhou: gearing up to lead in silicon materials industry

Infographic: Shandong remains popular destination for foreign investment

Upgraded street ramps up progress in rural Shandong

Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid boosts clean energy

Shandong farmers enter drying season

Rescue team from Nepal hones skills in Shandong

Super peanuts harvested in Shandong test field

Expats discover cultural gems, natural marvels in Shandong

Shandong dazzles international folks with Yellow River wonders

Shandong: A tale of river civilization and human ingenuity

37th Taishan Intl Mountain Climbing Festival held in Shandong

Infographic: Shandong, Central Asian countries enjoy closer trade ties

Shandong's cultural heritage and natural splendor wow intl visitors

Shandong hosts champions at the 37th Taishan Mountain International Climbing Festival

Shandong fishermen return from the sea with a full load of fish

Shandong event sees signing of 14 Taiwan-funded projects

Figs from Shandong on their way to market

Shandong ramps up green efforts with plan for low-carbon pilot zone

Shandong county enhances grassroots governance

Shandong strengthens ties with Singapore

Shandong farmers draw an unusual income

Shandong urges full paid leave to boost economy

Shandong villagers’ fruit sales soar online

Shandong Port Group targets expansion and growth

Birds enjoy rewewed wetlands in Shandong

Shandong boosts travel efficiency amid business surge

Shandong acrobats wow in South Korea

Shandong gas explosion kills two

Captivating and cultural: Wucheng in Shandong province showcases fascinating folk elements

Shandong maps out blueprint for world-class port cluster

Shandong tourism market on the rise

Shandong launches key initiatives to bolster rural vitalization

Strong quake rocks Shandong

24 injured in 5.5-magnitude earthquake in E. China's Shandong

Over 100 houses collapse as earthquake hits Shandong

5.5-magnitude quake jolts East China's Shandong: CENC

Traditional industries in Shandong embark on path of transformation

Peaches bring prosperity to humble village in Shandong

A life-changing experience: Embracing culture and nature in Shandong

Vitalization in Shandong transforms rural communities

Shandong's Weifang focuses on high-quality agricultural growth

Painting fuels local economy in Shandong

Contracts inked for nuclear tech expansion in Shandong

Shandong maps out blueprint for cross-border e-commerce

Shandong to probe Lairong rail quality questions

Over 70% of Shandong's foreign trade contributed by private sector in H1

Seeing is believing: Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong

Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong kicks off in Jinan

Global Gen Z youth experience a vibrant Shandong

South Africa's ambassador to attend livestream sales in Shandong

Shandong braces for downpours, flooding

Global Youth Conference to be held in Shandong

Shandong displays tech strength at WIC Nishan Dialogue

National book expo to be held in Shandong

National Optimist Sailing Championship opens in Shandong

Shandong province comes together to help facilitate wheat drying

Machines set to work harvesting wheat in Shandong

Shandong takes steps to restore marine ecology

Free buses carry students to exam venues in Shandong

Shandong strengthens collaborative ties with HK, Macao

Imperial cultural artwork collection unveiled in Shandong

Inland water transportation project in Shandong to reopen

Child rapists put to death in Hubei, Shandong, Henan

Shandong to hold tea industry expo

Honeysuckle harvest underway in Shandong

Shandong remains cultural, economic powerhouse in China

Elderly cared for by Shandong canteen

Gold mine in Shandong discovers new reserves

Intangible cultural heritages boom in Shandong

Shandong clothing company thrives on orders from the Middle East

'Friendly Shandong' boasts untouched nature, cultural legacies

Madrid event promotes Shandong tourism

Tea bridges Shandong and Madrid

Shandong promotes culture, tourism in Spain

Innovative center in Shandong province to study saline-alkali land

Shandong promotes culture, tourism in Italy

In Shandong, Zibo sees strong growth

Shandong carrier group back at port after Pacific training

E-commerce helps rural vitalization in Shandong

AI related businesses prosper in Shandong

A glimpse of beautiful China: Yantai, Shandong

Shandong chemical explosion deaths rise to 9

Death toll climbs to 9 in Shandong plant explosion

Exhibit in Shandong highlights European nobility

Cultural programs spice up life in Shandong

Shandong county holds cultural activities

Major folk art festival kicks off in Shandong

Shandong promotes Yellow River culture globally

Forum in Shandong highlights Yellow River culture

Shandong city seeks to capitalize on barbecue fame

Festival in Shandong celebrates Yellow River

Yellow River brilliance shines in Shandong

Across China: Italian chef's labor of love in Shandong

Over 600 enthusiasts kick off kite festival in Shandong

Peony painting propels prosperity in Shandong

Wind turbine innovation conference held in Shandong

CNS Shandong aircraft carrier participates in military exercises

Shandong's Heze holds international peony forum

Shandong culture flourishes along Yellow River

Shandong tourism sector on the rise

Shandong attracts talented returnees

In rural Shandong, blossoms mark changing season

Shandong looks to boost tourism

'Friendly Shandong' enhances global influence

Exchange week to strengthen Shandong, Indonesia ties

Shandong site provides solid evidence of prehistoric agriculture in northern China

Qingdao to host Shandong Tourism Development Conference

National Acrobatics Show kicks off in Shandong

In Shandong, apricot blossoms signal success

11th China Acrobatic Exhibition stuns in Shandong

Cole flowers bloom in Shandong village

Shandong farmers lay solid foundation for year to come

Shandong builds cultural corridors to lead new trend

Cooperative farmers grow wheat in Shandong

Acrobatic feast set to kick off in Shandong

Night economy shines at Shandong's Dongping

Shandong Port Group prospers through integration

Sweet success with strawberries in Shandong

Tai'an leads Shandong in construction industry

Grand Canal National Cultural Park (Dezhou) Forum held in Shandong

Former Shandong official given life sentence for bribery

CNOOC begins crude reserve operations in Shandong

Shandong moves to support inbound tourism

Shandong nuclear heat pipe work begins

Shandong opens scenic spots for free to help tourism recovery

Lush wheat in Shandong gets a checkup

Shandong stabilizes foreign trade, investment

Shandong's China Movie Metropolis becomes hub of filmmaking

Expats explore Ejiao culture in Shandong

Shandong turns up heat on invasive grass species

Shandong high-tech enterprises to surpass 30,000 in 2023

Snow, swans attract visitors to Shandong

Biz leaders send Spring Festival greetings to Shandong

Shandong culture highlighted at Serbia's Spring Festival celebration

Foreign envoy explores Chinese New Year vibe in Shandong

Strong festive vibe felt in Liaocheng, Shandong province

Shandong promotes green pilot zone

Shandong probes claim that county head falsified economic data

Shandong to build water sample network

Spring Festival atmosphere fills Shandong's market fairs

Furong Street getting back to hustle and bustle in East China's Shandong

RV production in full swing in Shandong

Shandong court upholds ruling in murder of student in Tokyo

Party chiefs of Shanxi, Shandong adjusted

Linyi, Shandong: The masses take center stage in the civilized practice of the new era

Shandong gets new Party chief

Party chiefs for Shandong, Shanxi adjusted

Some COVID test sites in Shandong upgraded

Shandong enterprises to embrace opportunities in overseas trade activities

Shandong promotes dialogue with Africa

Linyi: Give new vitality to intangible cultural heritage with innovation and create Linyi brand of "Shandong Handmade Products"

Shandong to promote cuju to world during FIFA World Cup

Shandong nuclear plant heats up for cold season

Shandong bridges estuarine cities around the world

Tall scallions harvested in Shandong

Shandong port operator breaks world record

Shandong furthering the Yellow River Basin green mission

Whooper swans arrive in Shandong for winter sojourn

Party chief leads transformation in Shandong

My CIIE Story • Great Opportunity: Shandong culture goes global through expo

Freshly cut flower industry blooms in Shandong

Corn harvest begins in a Shandong village

Rural vitalization yields fruitful results in Shandong

Shandong takes steps to boost tourism

Confucius festival, world civilizations forum open in Shandong

Traditional handicrafts on show in Shandong

In Shandong, farmers welcome bumper harvest

Traditional fruit pit carving promoted in Weifang

China's Shandong sees foreign trade up 18.2% in Jan-Aug

Fishermen in Shandong bring back their catch

Fishing resumes in Shandong as moratorium ends

Digital economy sees rapid development in Shandong

Shandong seaside tour: experience the leisurely life between the mountains and the sea

Yellow River Basin Pilot FTZ Alliance launched in Shandong

Shandong deepens cooperation with RCEP members

Shandong posts robust growth

Highway shows off Shandong charm

Shandong increases grain harvest despite bad autumn floods

Shandong powers ahead economically

China's Shandong posts strong trade growth in H1

Recommended places in Shandong to spend summer nights

Former Shandong official accused of bribery

Shandong leads in many sci-tech innovation fields

China's Shandong reports 66 local COVID-19 infections

In Shandong, coupons aim to spur consumption

Chongqing, Shandong hold joint conference

Shandong to hold high-level tourism event

Prefabricated food industry soars in Shandong

Shandong signs $15.6b deals for 99 projects

Shandong promotes all-round improvements of open economy

Salmon thrive in deep-sea farm off Shandong

Shandong employs efficient machines for wheat harvest

Shandong launches 6th consumption season event

Winter wheat harvest underway in Shandong

Shandong poised to become national growth pole

Shandong continues to spur high-quality development

Salt harvest begins in Shandong

China's Shandong sees trade growth with RCEP members

China's Shandong sees foreign trade up 14.2% in Jan-April

China's Shandong sees growing trade with RCEP members

BA.2.3 subvariant reported in Shandong

Shandong, ASEAN hold online trade exhibition

Shandong revitalizes traditional handicrafts

Power demonstration project benefits thousands of residents in Shandong

Shandong promotes ecological conservation in Yellow River Delta

Shandong to build world-class innovative province

Machines tend winter wheat in Shandong

Shandong lab of new drug development to be built in Yantai

Traditional handicrafts kept and passed down in Shandong

Recommended scenic spot: Laoshan Mountain, Shandong province

Recommended scenic spot: Qingzhou Ancient City, Shandong province

Recommended scenic spot: World's Best Spring Scenic Area, Shandong

Shandong to build Yellow River Estuary National Park

Recommended scenic spot: Underground Grand Canyon, Shandong

Recommended scenic spot: Huaxia City, Weihai

Schools go online amid outbreak in Shandong

Shandong artist captures Paralympic spirit

Video: Beautiful Shandong in 24 solar terms

Recommended scenic spot: Qufu Three Confucius Sites, Shandong

Recommended scenic spot: Mount Tai, Shandong province

Platform to facilitate cooperation between Shandong, African countries

Shandong youth show enthusiasm for winter sports

Recommended scenic spot: Penglai Pavilion, Shandong province

Recommended scenic spot: Longkou Nanshan parks, Shandong

Explore Shandong: A foreigner's Spring Festival travel in a Jinan village

Recommended scenic spot: Liugong Island, Shandong province

Steamed buns enrich life for villagers in Shandong

Shandong powers ahead with hydrogen technology

Shandong surpasses 8t yuan GDP mark in 2021

China's Shandong reports foreign trade surge in 2021

Illegal villas said to damage ecology in Shandong

Shandong approves planning for Huang-Bohai New Area

Hisense, Shandong Hi-Speed win Ethiopian intelligent transport bid

Cultural week tightens ties between Shandong, S Korea

Hydrogen helps Shandong pursue cleaner future

Shandong-made ski-waxing truck to facilitate Beijing Winter Olympics

Shandong farmer donates vegetables to Xi'an

New high-speed rail enters service in Shandong

Israeli ambassador to China visits SDU, unveils Shandong-Israel Research Center

Shandong Port Group announces throughput spikes for 2021

Nuclear power brings Shandong carbon-free heat

Intangible cultural heritage sees rich rewards in Shandong

Student from HK explores Chinese culture in Shandong

Final of Shandong cuisine competition kicks off

experience gained by Weicheng district, Weifang city, Shandong province (No.295, 2021)

Tai'an showcases innovative Shandong dishes during cuisine competition

Work begins on Sinopec's Shandong LNG project

East China's Shandong has over 100,000 5G base stations

Yantai attractions among Shandong's night consumption clusters

Shandong supports revitalization of Yimeng Mountains area

Nuclear heating makes Shandong city totally zero-carbon

Sinopec completes construction on Shandong hydrogen project

Shandong full of ancient treasures and modern splendor

Shandong cuisine competition draws global attention

Experts: Shale oil discovery in Shandong will boost output

Shandong cuisine competition receives first overseas entry

Fisheries, seafood expo gets underway in Shandong

Shandong to expand business ties with Germany

China Opera Festival set to run in Shandong

2,572nd birthday of Confucius commemorated in Shandong

Media trip of Shandong province begins

Shandong International Apple Festival opens in Yantai

Shandong Conference on Tourism Development opens in Yantai

Yantai lights up for Shandong Conference on Tourism Development

Shandong fruit farmers receive govt support

Shandong welcomes a rich harvest of vegetables in autumn

2nd China Intl Cultural Tourism Expo to open in Shandong

Yantai to host Shandong provincial tourism development conference

Shandong boosts modern marine economy

1st Shandong Peninsula South 4 offshore wind power units start up

China's procuratorate orders arrest of former Shandong provincial legislator

Sinopec's 1st gas storage tank in Shandong starts operation

Sinopec wraps up construction on Shandong terminal phase

Shandong, Japan boost industrial cooperation, exchange

Sunflowers, tourism in bloom at Shandong village

Shandong deepens trade cooperation with Japan

Shandong short-track speed skating held in Tai'an

Shandong-South Korea cultural exchange week opens in Jinan

Shandong firefighters help flood-hit city in Henan

China's Shandong sees foreign trade with Belt and Road countries rise in H1

Atomy China CEO: Korean-funded enterprises have advantages in investing in Shandong

Shandong Port Group aims for further global development

Fortune Global 500 companies play active role for Shandong's opening-up

AmCham China expects new opportunities in Shandong

CPC centennial celebrations fill coastal city in Shandong province

Shandong strives to ease life for seniors

Shandong launches hydrogen truck fleet to reduce carbon emissions

Shandong launches cross-border e-commerce train services

16 Shandong sites included in national tourism routes along Yellow Rive

Small town in Shandong riding traditional fashion wave

Shandong, ASEAN expand ties

Shandong takes development initiatives

Shandong surfs ocean economy for high-quality growth

Shandong's population growing; workers abound

Intelligent manufacturing boosts industrial output in Shandong

Hanfu production booms in Shandong

Shandong-Henan deal a good example of ecological governance

Ecofriendly technology simultaneously produces heat, water in Shandong

Shandong village feeding world with peppers

Kites of all kinds take flight over Shandong shore

Shandong deepens cooperation with Japan, South Korea

National center for fuel cell tech innovation launched in Shandong

Vegetables on cutting edge of science at Shandong fair

Event to boost Shandong ties with Japan, South Korea

Yantai sci-tech projects make Shandong's top 10 list

World kite festival takes wing in Shandong

Yimeng spirit alive and well in Shandong

Museum exploration: Tengzhou Museum, Shandong province

Shandong trains offer striking views out window

Museum exploration: Zibo Ceramics Museum, Shandong province

Museum exploration: Linyi Museum, Shandong province

Shandong to reward those who report safety risks

Shandong to further cooperation with Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan

Shandong to boost TCM industry

Museum exploration: Jining Museum, Shandong province

Museum exploration: Qi Heritage Museum, Shandong province

Shandong begins comprehensive inspection of mines

Death toll rises to 6 in Shandong gold mine fire

7 die in fire in China's Shandong

Shandong to seize RCEP opportunities in new era

23 detained for dumping deadly toxic waste in Shandong city

Shandong man receives compensation for wrongful detention

Ten bodies retrieved from Shandong gold mine

11 trapped miners rescued from Shandong mine

10 trapped miners in Shandong found dead

Nation's first! Shandong agricultural output exceeds 1 trillion yuan

Channel being drilled to rescue trapped miners in Shandong

Trapped mine worker goes into coma in China's Shandong

Shandong sees record agricultural produce exports in 2020

The 22 miners were trapped more than 600 meters underground after explosions ripped through a gold mine that was under construction in Qixia, Shandong province

Rescuers detect signs of life in Shandong mine where 9 are trapped

Shandong city officials removed after late reporting of mine explosion

Shandong to renovate old residential communities, shantytown homes

Imported COVID-19 case in Shandong highly similar to UK variant

Some Shandong cities offering COVID-19 vaccine appointments

Over 217,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in Shandong

Shandong business environment continues to improve

Molten metal sparks entertain tourists in Shandong

Shandong peninsula shines with gold deposits

Health forum connects Shandong with Tokyo

Shandong carrier group transits Taiwan Straits

'Mr Knowledge' promoting legal awareness in rural Shandong county

Swans from Siberia arrive for vacation in Shandong

Migratory birds arrive in wetlands of Shandong

Shandong economic circle cities to integrate

In Shandong, cold-chain worker found with virus

Shandong home to 24 national-level industrial design centers

High-speed line boosts Shandong's rail connectivity

Millennium ginkgo tree in Shandong offers up stunning views

Bamboo handicrafts boost incomes in Shandong

Shandong ranks 4th in purchasing power in Double 11 spree

Shandong, Japan to boost business ties at trade event

Shandong, Japan bolster economic cooperation

Shandong and Seoul hold cultural exchange events

Ex-prison officials linked to Shandong outbreak plead guilty

Shandong, South Korea enjoy closer economic ties

Shandong's GDP climbs despite pandemic

Shandong villager promotes apples through dance

Ming garments on display in Shandong

Intl kite festival kicks off in East China's Shandong

5G covers all major urban areas in East China's Shandong

Conference on cooperation with ASEAN countries opens in Shandong

Shandong connects with ASEAN in Jinan

Shandong to establish new rocket factory

In pics: Egrets thrive in Yantai, Shandong province

Shandong residents rush to donate blood for boy, 7

Shandong works to deepen ties with Fortune Global 500 companies

Shandong tells story of success with transnationals

County in E China's Shandong develops tourism across the region

Shandong: a magnet for EU Fortune Global 500 companies

District in East China's Shandong province integrates tourism resources

E-commerce lifts villages in Shandong out of poverty

Shandong exporter explores domestic market

Farmers becoming artists amid rural Shandong's development

Storage facility blast kills 2 in East China's Shandong

New firms in Shandong village strengthen local employment

Over 6000-yr-old relics site found in East China's Shandong

44 Shandong companies listed among China's 500 most valuable brands

CAST to hold annual meeting in Shandong

Shandong fruit institute established in Yantai

Shandong, Japan seek stronger economic ties

Japanese Ambassador: Shandong a partner with unlimited potential

Shandong scenic spots to cut ticket prices

Shandong's amazing agriculture

Li Ganjie elected governor of China's Shandong province

Shandong promotes summer tourism

Shandong goes online to boost employment

​Seashell exhibition opens at Shandong Museum

Visiting China Online: Shandong

Shandong promotes self-driving tourism

Shandong releases top archaeological discoveries for 2019

Shandong to enforce 'strictest measures' for college exam

Tai'an signs 16 projects at Shandong business event

Yantai projects costing 62.4 billion yuan signed at Shandong business conference

'College impostor' cases investigated in Shandong

Shandong aims high to expand opening-up

Shandong launches investment events to promote opening-up

312 high-quality projects to be highlighted at Shandong business promotional event

Yantai projects to be promoted at Shandong business event

Yantai ready for Shandong business promotional event

Shandong, an ancient civilization

Shandong steps up efforts to curb identity theft

Shandong construction company starts building second expressway in Serbia

Shandong highlights rural cultural construction

Sinotruk among top 100 export companies in Shandong

Shandong to launch celebrations for Cultural and Natural Heritage Day

Shandong official to host livestreaming, promote cultural products

City clusters to aid growth in Shandong

Yangko in Shandong

This is Shandong: A Bite of Shandong

This is Shandong: Azure Ocean

This is Shandong: Beautiful Islands

This is Shandong: Magnificent Mountains

This is Shandong: Splendid Yellow River Estuary

Shandong promotes cultural heritage protection

Video: Ancient Culture of Shandong

Shandong Culture and Tourism Department, ICBC begin strategic cooperation

Cultural and tourism industries booming in Tai'an, Shandong

Shandong NPC delegation holds plenary meeting

Leadership of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism

Shandong launches quality cultural, tourism products

Shandong holds events in celebration of China Tourism Day

Shandong Nanshan International Travel Agency (5A)

$9.97 billion worth of projects in Shandong signed during online conference

Shandong courts hear cases with foreign litigants

Shandong Library

Shandong medical experts share with Tanzania

Cross-border e-commerce receives boost in Shandong

Friendly Shandong welcomes you

Appreciate peonies in Heze, Shandong

Shandong Museum

Shandong Museum to showcase Terracotta Warriors

Qin culture exhibition to open at Shandong Museum

Shandong cultural consumption season kicks off

Shandong to build 1,000 scenic villages by 2022

Shandong Airlines eases supply shortages by converting passenger planes

Yantai brands make Shandong provincial list

China's Shandong reports trade growth with B&R countries in Q1

Shandong Bangzi (Wooden Clapper Opera)

Shandong sees growing trade with B&R countries in Q1

Shandong promotes scenic spots to South Korea in online show

Shandong Gold Mining net profit up 25.91% in 2019

Parcels from Shandong head for Europe

Measures for administration of 'Friendly Shandong' trademark issued

Shandong takes steps to stabilize foreign trade

Over 500 tourist attractions reopen in Shandong as epidemic wanes

Shandong culture and tourism consumption season to begin this month

Investigative team headed to Shandong to investigate sex assault case

Ecology, environment minister to transfer to Shandong

Shandong ports ramp up cargo, container processing

Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism

Shandong's largest offshore wind power project launched in Haiyang

Shandong donates masks to overseas tourism partners

Shandong artists memorialize epidemic fight through painting

Shandong medical workers reunited with families

Shandong cultural venues reopen to the public

Shandong issues plan to preserve Grand Canal heritage

Shandong sends medical experts, aid to UK to help with outbreak

Team leaves Shandong with protective goods to help Chinese in UK

Video: See a different Shandong in 30s

Culture, tourism sectors pick up in Shandong

Shandong artists honor front-line medics with paintings

Shandong launches measures to boost culture, tourism sectors

Shandong University team creates new ECMO machine

Shandong develops key equipment for critically-ill coronavirus patients

Bus services resume gradually in Shandong

Cultural, tourism industry in Shandong to gradually resume operations

Shandong farmers busy as new solar term arrives

12 liable in disease spread in Shandong prison

S. Korea spotlights reboot in Shandong

Shandong artists depict the fight against virus

11 former prison, justice officials in Shandong under investigation

Technology facilitates efficient spring farming work in Shandong

Yantai area of the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone

Shandong offers live streams of scenic spots and local culture

Bavaria official sends regards to Shandong people

Museum exploration: Yantai Museum, Shandong province

Shandong city to conduct nucleic acid tests on arrivals

Signing for $4.27b in projects for Shandong held via online video

Shandong donates ICU beds to Huanggang

Shandong strengthens friendship with foreigners amid virus outbreak

Shandong medics on frontlines make their own 'pockets'

Shandong fuels foreign trade amid epidemic

Shandong company donates disinfection robots to Huanggang

Intl students in Shandong receive online lessons

4 trapped by collapse in Shandong coal mine

Shandong sends 12th medical team to help fight virus

Recovered patient sends thank-you note to Shandong medics

Team travels to Shandong to investigate virus outbreak in prison

Shandong artists make clay figurines to support virus fight

TCM helps pregnant coronavirus patient recover in Shandong

Shandong reports slight increase in actual use of foreign investment in Jan

Shandong village donates 15 tons of vegetables to Hubei

Museum exploration: Qingdao Museum, Shandong province

Museum exploration: Shandong Museum, Shandong province

Shandong company wins intl AI award

Shandong farmers prepare for summer harvest

Jinan company develops first test kit for novel coronavirus pneumonia in Shandong

Shandong sends tenth medical team to help fight virus

Shandong county donates 300 tons of garlic to Huanggang

Shandong Library offers online reading services amid epidemic

Shandong artists make clay figurines to support virus fight

Shandong launches measures to help foreign firms resume production

Explore Shandong's natural beauty, culture online

Farmers in Shandong prepare for spring ploughing season

Shandong port cargo throughput up 6.3% in Jan

Shandong resumes construction on key transportation projects

Shandong artists support China's fight against the epidemic

Shandong companies make 100m yuan worth of donations

Shandong uses online resources to boost economy amid epidemic

460 Internet platform products launched in Shandong to help enterprises resume production

Museum exploration: Qingzhou Museum, Shandong province

Museum exploration: Weifang Museum, Shandong province

Shandong medical workers head for central Hubei province

Shandong goes on move to bail out epidemic-hit businesses

Shandong contributes to Wuhan's need for fresh vegetables

Local straw plaiting tradition pays off for Shandong farmers

Shandong sends third medical team to help fight virus

Shandong adopts modern technology to support fight against coronavirus

Shandong dispatches first emergency test group to Hubei

A letter to all foreign friends in Shandong on epidemic prevention and control

Shandong ensures veggies supplies after coronavirus outbreak

Shandong companies step in to help combat coronavirus

Shandong donates 350 tons of vegetables to Wuhan

Inter-city passenger bus services suspended in Shandong

Strawberry plantation helps couple shake off poverty in Rizhao, Shandong

Recommended scenic spot: Taierzhuang Ancient Town, Shandong

Recommended scenic spot: Yimeng Mountains, Shandong province

Building national park system in Yellow River basin in Shandong to promote ecological protection of the basin

In Shandong province, value of glass works is crystal clear

Li Rongkai: A role model in providing grassroots legal services from Shandong

Shandong to build national central cities

Governor backs construction of Computing Valley in Shandong

2019: A fruitful year for Shandong

Shandong GDP growth to exceed 6% in 2020

Shandong Provincial People's Congress opens annual session

Shandong to focus on high-tech innovation in 2020

Shandong foreign trade exceeds 2 trillion yuan in 2019

CPPCC Shandong Committee holds annual session

Shandong celebrates intangible cultural heritage in month

Shandong province arrests over 17,000 in mafia-style crime crackdown

Shandong to celebrate intangible cultural heritage month

Shandong establishes energy research institute

Shandong gets another 5A-level scenic spot

Shandong to open at least 20 heritage parks by 2025

Shandong to strengthen protection and utilization of cultural relics

Shandong promotes tourism nationwide

Shandong to invest more in transportation infrastructure

Traditional opera concert rings in New Year in Shandong

Shandong to implement measures benefiting Taiwan compatriots

Shandong tourism booms in 2019

Shandong Heavy Industry 2019 revenue exceeds 390 b yuan

Shandong sees robust trade growth with Belt and Road countries

Shandong cuisine spotlighted at gourmet festival

Xu Jiang art exhibition opens in Shandong

Shandong eyes boost to pig farming with new measures

Guo Zhenyu art exhibition opens in Shandong

Shandong youth oil painting exhibition opens in Tai'an

Shandong's first offshore wind power project launched in Yantai

Dance drama Yellow River to be performed in Shandong

Shandong sets tone for New Year celebrations

Shandong, Haibei launch training course to boost tourism sector

Exploring Shandong through photography

Shandong strengthens presence in South Korea, Japan

Creative ceramics exhibited at Shandong Museum

Shandong University sets up Mo Yan research center

Shandong, Japan pledge closer ties

Shandong artists depict contemporary life in traditional ways

Shandong promotes culture, tourism in Seoul

Shandong, Haibei strengthen cultural cooperation

Zone boosts Shandong's economic growth

TCM conference draws 1,000 professionals to Shandong province

First cotton-themed museum opens in Shandong

Explore Shandong culture on high-speed train

Intl fashion week brings style to Shandong

Rescue crews able to save 11 trapped by fire in Shandong coal mine

Shandong's global strategy generates rapid growth

11 trapped in Shandong coal mine accident

Third Shandong cultural consumption season comes to an end

China's Shandong province opens bookstore in Uganda

SCO Countries Vocational Skills Contest kicks off in Shandong

Shandong time-honored brands impress at CIIE

Conference promotes Shandong at CIIE

Shandong's 40 years of partner cities

Explore E China's Shandong province in six days

Former S Korean PM: Shandong a magnet for high-tech firms

Ministry of Civil Affairs following case of alleged live burial in Shandong

Shandong police probe live burial of baby boy

Shandong to drive high-quality growth

Road show promotes Shandong's culture, tourism industry

Online shops lift Shandong farmers out of poverty

Shandong frontier of NE Asian development and cooperation

Green development on the sea in Shandong

Shandong welcomes visitors for cities conference

Shandong rides National Day holiday tourist boom

China's Shandong receives 70 million visits during National Day holiday

Exhibition showcases 'Beautiful Shandong' in Sydney

Shandong makes strides in foreign trade

Miss Tourism World contestants debut in Shandong

Shandong celebrates 70th anniversary of New China

Shandong places listed for tourism demonstration bases

Explore beauty of Chinese painting at Shandong Art Museum

Photography exhibition promotes Shandong in New Zealand

Tourism, cultural sectors booming in Shandong

Intl cultural industries fair opens in Shandong

More to explore at Shandong cultural fair

Explore charm of traditional culture in Shandong

Shandong book fair kicks off

Confucius museum opens in Shandong

Confucius cultural festival kicks off in Shandong

National artistic design exhibition opens in Shandong

Shandong city accused of closing businesses to lift air quality rank

Confucius cultural festival to open in Shandong

Shandong enterprises eye import, export opportunities in BRI markets

Shandong tourism industry expo sees fruitful results

Shandong FTZ unveiled in Qingdao

Shandong FTZ seen as beacon for growth, prosperity

Cultural bonanzas to embrace Shandong

First of six new FTZs opens in Shandong

Shandong: Home of Confucianism

Shandong to host sumptuous gourmet festival

Cultural bonanza expected at national quyi week in Shandong

Yantai area of Shandong FTZ helps promote Sino-ROK cooperation

Original song contest promotes Shandong's culture, tourism

Shandong cultural fair to highlight Yellow River culture

Shandong Gold Group seeks to ride fresh boom overseas for top 10 slot

Contest on telling China's stories launched in Shandong

Confucian center founded in Shandong

Shandong cultural fair to engage more participants

Yantai helps overseas students sample Shandong culture

Shandong's first semiconductor services platform debuts in Yantai

Photography competition to promote Shandong worldwide

Typhoon Lekima batters Shandong province

Shandong on alert as Typhoon Lekima barrels down

Shandong announces major vocational training exercise

Shandong set to play bigger role in BRI with new ports group

Shandong cultural trade promotion conference held in LA

Shandong Gold making global move

Shandong releases first legislation to protect Changdao

Shandong company probed over substandard cement

Third Shandong Cultural Consumption Season set to kick off

Enjoy the rustic charm of Shandong

Shandong wigmakers advancing into high-end market

Shandong opens another Nishan House in Australia

Shandong's economic structure undergoing modern makeover

Shandong cultural legacies showcased to the world

Distinct Shandong snacks highlighted at Beijing news conference

Institute to support pilot free trade zone in Shandong province

Shandong offers vocational training to veterans

African sculpture art on show in Shandong

Shandong culture shines in Turkey

Shandong cultural industries fair to open in September

Shandong University 'buddy' policy clarified

Shandong can exploit its regional advantages to upgrade its economy

Shandong takes biggest bite of China's 2018 catering market

Belgrade exhibition highlights Shandong culture through ink and wash

Shandong tops China's catering sector in revenue

Shandong University appoints Samuel Ting as honorary dean

Shandong Day event opens at Beijing horticultural expo

A view of Shandong Garden at Beijing horticultural expo

Shandong sees robust trade with SCO countries

Shandong cultural heritages enchant Hong Kong

Tai'an makes a splash at Shandong intl tourism fair

Asia's largest 'ro-ro' passenger ship sets sail in Shandong

Shandong opera wins Wenhua Award

Shandong to promote film and TV industry development

Cross-Straits cultural and tourism exchange event held in Shandong

Ancient settlement site unearthed in Shandong

Shandong celebrates national tourism day

Museum housing ancient altar ruins opens in Shandong

Early summer view of Jinan, Shandong province

Shandong showcases cultural achievements at Shenzhen ICIF

Russian painting arts displayed at Shandong Art Museum

Shandong Higher People's Court President Zhang Jiatian underpins people-centered approach in enforcement

Cultural and creative design competition commences in Shandong

Shandong air quality worse in Q1

Overseas students experience diverse cultures at Shandong University

Artifact exhibition retraces ancient Shandong history

Photo exhibition helps Shandong cement ties with S Korea

Major arts and crafts event to open in Shandong

Shandong to host Mother's Cultural Festival in May

Tourism fuels booming Shandong cultural industry

Shandong manufacturing giant Nanshan eyes digital shift in industrial upgrading

Intl peony conference begins in Shandong

Shandong University joins hands with Australian National University to establish college

Shandong Iron & Steel posts 9.47% rise in 2018 net profit

Shandong scenic spots tap into night-time economy

China culture, art fair set for Shandong’s Weifang in April

Shandong eyes integration of culture and tourism

Research on the Development of Urban-Rural Integration in Linyi City, Shandong Province (No.6, 2019)

Shandong University pursues global excellence

Shandong strives to inherit fine traditional culture

Shandong education spending tops China in 2018

Shandong aims at prosperous cultural industry

Splendid Shandong cuisine art displayed in Yantai

Plum blossoms breathe life to Shandong University

UNESCO geopark in Shandong approved for expansion

Shandong community sets example for others to follow in rural areas

SDU joins hands with Shandong Commerce Group to establish new academy

Flash mobs held in Shandong to honor motherland's birthday

Shandong marine ranches facilitate industrial system

Over 76,000 candidates apply for entrance exam of Shandong art school

Shandong time-honored brands celebrate New Year at Palace Museum

Chefs showcase Shandong cuisine culture in Yantai

Shandong to boost marine ranching development

Shandong gears up for 2019 Happy Chinese New Year celebration

Shandong culture and tourism dept reviews 2018, looks ahead

Shandong Art Museum to exhibit artworks by Qi Baishi

Shandong's foreign trade hits record high

1-yuan charity restaurant serves elders in Shandong

Traditional folk crafts fuel rural vitalization in Shandong

Shandong artists celebrate Chinese New Year in South Korea

Infographic: 144-Hour Visa-free Tour in Shandong

Merger of cities in Shandong can benefit both if done right

Shandong births drop, hinting at trend

Shandong delegation attends Hong Kong Intl Licensing Show

Photo exhibition relives highlights of Shandong cultural consumption season

2,000-yr-old tomb sculptures discovered in Shandong

Proactive Efforts in Establishing the Quality and Safety Assurance System for Agricultural Products at County Level---- The Practice and Enlightenments from Shenxian County in Shandong Province (No.186, 2018)

"A dazzling array of splendid Shandong dishes was showcased at the Yantai gourmet festival on Dec 23, which is being held in celebration for the upcoming New Year's Day.

More than 30 Shandong cuisine masters and renowned chiefs showcased their talents in making dishes and pastries, exchanging their cooking expertise with each other.

Shandong cuisine, also known as Lu cuisine, is one of the Eight Culinary Traditions of Chinese cuisine and one of the Four Great Traditions.

The event also included a famous cuisine exhibition and an excellent food materials exhibition, in which a full set of Ejiao banquet, along with a donkey banquet and a melon carving themed exhibition were displayed.

As part of the ""Friendly Shandong Winter Tourism Promotion"" activities, the gourmet festival, which will last until February, 2020, aims to highlight Yantai's featured dishes for visitors from home and abroad.

Shandong dishes are on display at the Yantai gourmet festival. [Photo/WeChat Account: ytwlgw]

A dough modeling product is on display at the Yantai gourmet festival. [Photo/WeChat Account: ytwlgw]

A creative cod dish at the Yantai gourmet festival [Photo/WeChat Account: ytwlgw]"

"An art exhibition featuring works by renowned Chinese artist Xu Jiang opened on Dec 21 at the Shandong Art Museum in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

Jointly organized by the China Academy of Art, the China Oil Painting Society, the Shandong Federation of Literary and Art Circles and the Zhejiang Federation of Literary and Art Circles, Ode to the Sunflowers is the largest retrospective show of Xu's works yet, with more than 300 paintings and large-scale sculptures themed on sunflowers being exhibited.

Xu has held nearly one show a year on the theme both in China and abroad in the past few years.

According to Xu, the central theme of the exhibition is sunflowers, the plants that have become a symbol for his generation growing up after World War II and after the ""cultural revolution (1966-76)"". It is not only about Chinese history, but also about the lives of individuals that were subjected to profound changes.

The exhibition will run until Feb 23, 2020.

Xu is president of the China Academy of Art, vice-chairman of China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and chairman of the China Oil Painting Society.

The art exhibition featuring works by renowned Chinese artist Xu Jiang opens on Dec 21 at the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

More than 300 paintings and large-scale sculptures themed on sunflowers are exhibited. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The exhibition attracts many visitors to the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"A staff member works at a pigsty of Jinchuan pig farm of Jiangxi Zhengbang Breeding Co Ltd, Sept 19, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

East China's Shandong province is taking multiple measures to boost the pig-farming industry, including providing direct subsidies to stabilize the inventory of breeding sows, offering discounts on loan interest, giving subsidies for expanding and renovating sizable pig farms, and raising the insured amount of the agricultural insurance, according to the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Medicine Bureau of Shandong.

The province is expected to spend a total of 500 million yuan on carrying out these measures.

Over 65 million yuan has been used to ease the cost of pig feed and materials for disease prevention in 45 sizable breeding sow farms in the province during the past five months.

The province has carried out a favorable animal husbandry and veterinary loan to provide easy access for pig raisers who expand farms to get loans with favorable interest.

Policies on ensuring land use for pig farms and streamlining approval procedures for environmental protection evaluation for major pig farmers have also been implemented, said Tang Jianjun, head of the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Medicine Bureau of Shandong.

Tang said no fees will be charged on reclaiming the land for raising pigs.

Some cities in Shandong are also taking special measures to boost pig production. Jining has allocated a fund of 3 million yuan to subsidize breeding sow production for two years."

"An exhibition featuring artworks by Guo Zhenyu opened at the Shandong Museum in Jinan, capital of East China‘s Shandong province, on Dec 22.

The exhibition, tiled ""Original Energy"", displays 21 pieces of Guo's works, which use plants, bricks, wood, sand, scraps of paper and other raw materials to construct a world full of metaphor.

Jointly organized by the Shandong University of Arts, Shandong Artists' Association, Shandong Oil Painting Society and Shandong Art Museum, the exhibition will last until Jan 15, 2020.

Attendees at the exhibition's opening ceremony pose for a group photo at the Shandong Museum in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, on Dec 22. [Photo/WeChat account: China Art Weekly Shandong]

The exhibition attracts hordes of visitors to Shandong Museum. [Photo/WeChat account: China Art Weekly Shandong]

One of Guo Zhenyu's paintings is exhibited at the Shandong Art Museum in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: China Art Weekly Shandong]

Guo Zhenyu uses raw materials to construct a world full of metaphor. [Photo/WeChat account: China Art Weekly Shandong]"

"An oil painting exhibition highlighting works by young painters in Shandong opened on Dec 22 at the Tai'an Art Museum in Tai'an, Shandong province.

A total of 142 works are on display, which are selected from 2,225 entries.

Organized by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, the exhibition is part of the province's efforts to discover and promote young artists and display their creation and pursuit of art.

The exhibition will last until Jan 9, 2020. The paintings will also be exhibited in other cities in Shandong.

Visitors enjoy the paintings at the Tai'an Art Museum. [Photo/my0538.com]

A visitor takes photos of the exhibits at the Tai'an Art Museum. [Photo/my0538.com]

The Shandong youth oil painting exhibition attracts many visitors to Tai'an Art Museum. [Photo/my0538.com]"

"The ground-breaking ceremony for the offshore wind power industrial park project is held in Haiyang, Yantai, East China's Shandong province on Dec 18. [Photo/WeChat Account: gh\_47f01b3c403d]

An offshore wind power industrial park project broke ground at Haiyang Nuclear Power Equipment Manufacturing Park in Haiyang, Yantai, East China's Shandong province on Dec 18.

The project, first of its kind in Shandong province, is being supported by Envision Group, the world's digital energy technology leader, headquartered in Shanghai.

The project, with a total investment of 1.5 billion yuan ($214.28 million), will be constructed in three phrases.

The first phrase will cost 360 million yuan and will consist of an offshore wind turbine manufacturing center covering an area of 113 mu (7.53 hectares).

Four production lines are planned which are expected to produce 300 sets of offshore wind turbines a year, each turbine with a capacity of more than 5MW.

As the second largest supplier of intelligent wind turbines in China, Envision has established global R&D centers in Singapore, Denmark, Germany and the United States.

It is engaged in the production of wind turbines, intelligent wind farms, intelligent energy storage, and the development of energy internet of things platforms.

Haiyang, located on the shore of the Yellow Sea, boasts a 212-kilometer coastline and a sea area of 1,829 square kilometers, making it highly suitable for the development of wind power."

"The dance drama Yellow River, presented by the Shanxi Song and Dance Troupe, will be held at the Lishan Theater on Feb 14 and 15, 2020 in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

It will also be performed in other cities in Shandong, such as Qingdao and Dongying, following its tour in Jinan.

The performance, directed by Zhang Jigang, vividly depicts the unique lifestyle of the Shanxi people and recounts stories from along the Yellow River, which runs through the province.

Zhang is a famous contemporary choreographer and educator in China. He is also a national-level director, a member of the National Committee of the Eighth China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, chairman of the China Special Art Committee, and vice chairman of the Chinese Dancers Association.

A promotional poster for the dance drama Yellow River. [Photo/dzrb.dzng.com]

The drama depicts the unique lifestyle of the Shanxi people and recounts stories from along the Yellow River. [Photo/dzrb.dzng.com]

A scene from the dance drama. [Photo/dzrb.dzng.com]"

"A New Year symphony and folk concert will be held in January at the Shandong Grand Theater in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

The events are jointly organized by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the Shandong Song and Dance Theatre.

The symphony, which will run for 120 minutes, will be held on Jan 1, 2020.

The Shandong New Year Symphony will be held on Jan 1, 2020 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Audiences will have the chance to experience many European classics, including Kaiser-Walzer, Piano Concerto No 1,""Libiamo ne'lieti calici"" (Brindisi), Radetzky March, and the Butterfly Lovers' Violin Concerto.

Xu Bo, deputy head of the Shandong Song and Dance Theatre Symphony Orchestra, said that around 130 musicians will take part in the concert, including Liu Yunzhi, a famous violinist, and Yuan Jie, one of the ""top ten young pianists in China"".

Xu added that the upcoming symphony will be the largest and most prestigious symphony to be held in Shandong province in recent years.

The folk concert, which will run for 100 minutes, will be held on Jan 19, 2020.

The Shandong New Year Folk Concert will be held on Jan 19, 2020. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Ma Hailong, director of the Traditional Orchestra of the Shandong Song and Dance Theatre, said that it will treat audiences to Shandong-style kuaiban (a Chinese traditional talk show recited to the rhythm of bamboo clappers), Peking Opera, and satar (a traditional Uygur instrument that resembles an Indian sitar), morin khuur (a horse-head fiddle), and khoomei (a traditional throat-singing technique from Mongolia and Tova) performances."

"A training course on tourism development, jointly organized by the tourism authorities of Shandong province and Haibei, was held from Dec 10 to 13 in Qilian county, Haibei Tibetan autonomous prefecture, Northwest China's Qinghai province.

A total of 120 people from Haibei attended the course, including government officials and representatives from local travel agencies, enterprises, and the rural tourism sector.

Experts and experienced industry insiders from the Shandong College of Tourism and Hospitality, Shandong Normal University, Chengdu VENI Tourism Development Corp, and other institutions delivered lectures on topics such as the development of the regional tourism service system, creative product design, tourism brand-building, the promotion of study tours, vacation products in plateau regions, and the marketing of tourism destinations.

The training course combined lectures with practical exercises in order to provide insight into the development of tourism in Haibei Tibetan autonomous prefecture.

""Through the course I've learned advanced management concepts and methods of improving business administration and service quality,"" said a senior administrative employee of a local tourism enterprise.

An expert from Shandong Normal University gives a lecture on creative product design and tourism brand-building. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

An expert from Sichuan University's leisure and tourism research center gives a lecture on promoting study tours and vacation products in plateau regions. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The award-winning works of the 2019 ""Hometown of Confucius, Friendly Shandong"" International Photography Competition were recently announced by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

According to the organizing committee, the competition had received nearly 6,000 entries from China and abroad by Nov 20. The photography works focused on Shandong's unique cultural and tourism attractions, high-quality tourism services, natural scenery, and more.

A total of 170 works were awarded, including three ""best aerial shot"" winners, two gold medalists, five silver medalists, 10 bronze medalists, 50 winners of ""excellence awards"", and 100 general finalists.

Certificates and other awards will be presented to the winners, said the organizing committee.

An aerial photo of Qingdao city shrouded in mist wins ""best aerial shot"". [Photo by Dai Dongfeng/WeChat account: sdlyfb]

Rows of skiffs sitting on a beach in Shandong province, creating a striking contrast with the golden beach and blue waters. [Photo by Guo Jianming/WeChat account: sdlyfb]

An aerial photo of the snow-covered Linggui Lake in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo by Li Bo/WeChat account: sdlyfb]

An aerial photo of the Linggui Lake during the summer in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo by Li Bo/WeChat account: sdlyfb]

Foreigners sample Zhoucun sesame seed cakes, a traditional snack originating from the village of Zhoucun in Zibo, Shandong province. [Photo by Wang Chunyan/WeChat account: sdlyfb]

An aerial photo of terraced fields in Junan county, Linyi, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhang Jiping/WeChat account: sdlyfb]

Wuyang Lake in Boshan district, Zibo, Shandong province is enveloped in a dense fog in late autumn. [Photo by Liu Jian'an/WeChat account: sdlyfb]

People perform an ancient and sacred ritual in honor of the Dragon King in a fishing village in Shandong. In traditional Chinese culture, the Dragon King rules the seas and the weather, both of which are vital to fishermen. Thus, the deity's birthday is an important festival for coastal residents. [Photo by Zhang Yongsheng/WeChat account: sdlyfb]

Rice paddy art in Yong'an town, Kenli district, Dongying, Shandong province during the summer. Local farmers have planted various artworks throughout their paddy fields, which cover an area of 300 mu (20 hectares). [Photo by Guo Sen/WeChat account: sdlyfb]"

"Wang Lei, director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, led a government delegation to South Korea and Japan from Dec 1 to 8 to strengthen ties in the cultural and tourism sectors.

A promotional Shandong culture and tourism event was held on Dec 3 in Seoul, marking the end of Shandong Culture Year in South Korea.

More than 300 guests attended the event, including government officials and representatives from travel agencies, airlines, shipping companies, and tourism associations.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, presented certificates to several South Korean individuals, honoring them as ""Confucius tourism ambassadors of Shandong"".

In addition, the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism signed a cooperation agreement with the Seoul Arts Center, while the Shandong Artists Association signed a cooperation agreement with the Korean Art Society.

During their stay, the delegation visited a number of institutions, associations, enterprises, tourism offices, and cultural centers throughout South Korea and Japan and signed numerous memorandums to promote more cultural and tourism cooperation.

Furthermore, a series of activities were held to showcase Shandong's unique culture, long history, and many well-known tourist destinations.

Officials from Shandong and South Korea pose for a group photo with performers at the promotional Shandong culture and tourism event on Dec 3 in Seoul, South Korea. [Photo/whhly.shandong.gov.cn]

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism signs a cooperation agreement with a South Korean tourism association. [Photo/whhly.shandong.gov.cn]"

"An international exhibition of Chinese contemporary ceramics was held at the Shandong Museum in Jinan, East China's Shandong province on Dec 15.

More than 140 artworks, including ceramics, oil paintings, sculptures, and traditional Chinese paintings are currently being displayed.

The works were created by artists from Tsinghua University, the China Academy of Art, Nanjing University of the Arts, and Shandong University of Arts. The exhibition will last until Dec 22.

More than 140 artworks, including ceramics, oil paintings, sculpturing, and traditional Chinese paintings are being displayed at the Shandong Museum from Dec 15 to 22. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A creative ceramics artwork is displayed at the Shandong Museum. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The works are created by artists from Tsinghua University, China Academy of Art, Nanjing University of the Arts, and Shandong University of Arts. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"The unveiling ceremony for the Mo Yan and International Literature and Art Research Center of Shandong University was held on Dec 8 at the university's Qingdao campus.

The center is an important part of Shandong University's efforts to improve its Chinese education, said a top-level administrator from the university.

Zhang Shuai, Party secretary of the university's School of Literature, said that Mo, China's first winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, is a major subject of research in modern and contemporary Chinese literature.

Zhang said that the long tradition of literary and historical research at Shandong University and the rich cultural deposits of the School of Literature have provided a good foundation for relevant research.

Zhang noted that since the mid-1980s, Shandong University has been a world leader in researching Mo's works. A large number of works written by Mo in his youth about his hometown - Gaomi, a county-level city in Shandong province - were published in a journal sponsored by Shandong University

Zhang added that Shandong University is also the first university in China to employ Mo as an adjunct professor and postgraduate tutor.

""For decades, Mo has maintained close and friendly exchanges with teachers and students at Shandong University.""

Zhang expressed hope that the center will boost the Chinese studies program at Shandong University and become a world-class academic innovation platform with international influence.

Mo, born 17 February 1955, is a Chinese novelist and short story writer. Before 2012, he was mostly known for the two of his novels that formed the basis of the film Red Sorghum, directed by award-winning Chinese director Zhang Yimou. Mo is currently the only Chinese author who has won the Nobel Prize in Literature."

"A promotional conference on deepening opening-up and cooperation between Shandong and Japan is held in Tokyo on Dec 6, 2019. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A promotional conference on deepening opening-up and cooperation between Shandong and Japan was held in Tokyo on Dec 6.

The conference, held during a visit to Japan by Shandong government representatives, was meant to promote opening-up and cooperation between China and Japan and improve bilateral economic and trade cooperation.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, delivered a keynote speech at the conference saying that Shandong and Japan are friendly neighbors enjoying close ties in many areas.

He said that Shandong, with its competitive industrial foundation, abundant natural resources and scientific research strength, is now promoting high-quality development and a new era of opening-up, which will provide more opportunities for cooperation with Japan.

Shandong plans to build a platform for high-end industrial cooperation between China and Japan and improve its trade facilitation services. Measures will be implemented to encourage Japanese enterprises to invest in Shandong and promote port cooperation between the two sides, Liu added.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, delivers a keynote speech at the conference. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

He also expressed hope that the two sides would develop better cooperation between government departments, continue to deepen industrial and economic cooperation, encourage enterprises from both countries to participate in the Belt and Road Initiative, continue to expand cultural exchange, and work to develop a lasting partnership.

Kong Xuanyou, Chinese ambassador to Japan, said that China-Japan relations are now entering a new era and are presented with unprecedented opportunities for further development.

Kong said that Shandong attaches great importance to its relationship with Japan, and that the two sides have seen impressive results in economic, trade, and cultural cooperation. He expressed hope that both sides would work to achieve their full cooperation potential and share development opportunities through the promotional conference.

Hideki Makihara, Japan's Deputy Minister for the Economy, Trade, and Industry, said that Japanese enterprises have a strong presence in Shandong, while Shandong enterprises have made significant contributions to local development in Japan.

He said that the two sides should continue to deepen cooperation and push for a more sound and stable economic relationship.

Officials from Shandong's Jinan, Qingdao, and Yantai promoted the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone at the conference, while the Shandong Provincial State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission promoted the province's key projects and expressed a desire to replace old growth drivers with new ones.

A number of project deals were also signed at the conference."

"An art exhibition featuring paintings by artists from Shandong province is underway at the gallery of the Fine Arts College at Shanghai University through Dec 18. [Photo by Xing Yi/chinadaily.com.cn]

An art exhibition Youth Responsibility featuring paintings by artists from Shandong province opened in Shanghai on Dec 6.

Around 80 works, including oil paintings, ink wash paintings and sculptures, are on display in the gallery of the Fine Arts College at Shanghai University through Dec 18.

A large number of exhibited works try to incorporate contemporary topics in China through traditional painting techniques and subjects.

Li Encheng, deputy chairman of Shandong Association of Young Artists, presented his work Encounter, where he depicts several of China's endangered red-crown cranes fighting with bird nets.

""I heard the news about the birds being captured for money two years ago, so I want to raise people's awareness of protection of animals through my work,"" Li said, adding the red-crown crane often appears in traditional Chinese paintings and it's a symbol of longevity.

""Their encounter with nets is my artistic protest of killing the birds,"" he said.

An art exhibition featuring paintings by artists from Shandong province is underway at the gallery of the Fine Arts College at Shanghai University through Dec 18. [Photo by Xing Yi/chinadaily.com.cn]

Han Xiao, a painter at Ji'nan City Art Gallery, provided a selection from her series on people who contribute to China's scientific and technological achievements and the rise of the nation.

Named A Dream Realized Above the Sky, Han's portrait features an astronaut and the reflections of China's lunar rover in his helmet.

""I don't like to draw traditional subjects, such as landscapes or people in ancient palaces,"" she said. ""In my ongoing series, I use ink wash techniques to draw astronauts, pilots, firefighters, and soldiers in today's society.""

In a congratulation letter to the exhibition, Feng Yuan, vice president of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, said: ""Young artists are full of creativity and are the most active members of society. From their works, I can see their tireless quest for a muse through creative expression.""

""Youth is the other word for avant-garde in any era, and as we live in a great time, young artists will produce great art,"" he said.

Chen Qing, vice dean of the Fine Arts College of Shanghai University, said works by Shandong artists have a strong visual impact, as they tend to choose larger canvases and draw big subjects in grand style.

""I hope to see more paintings from Shandong artists in Shanghai, and hope this exhibition can start further dialogue and exchange between artists in the future,"" Chen said.

The exhibition was organized by Shandong Provincial Cultural and Tourism Bureau, the Shandong Commission of the Communist Youth League of China, Shandong Association of Young Artists, and Shandong Youth Federation in collaboration with the Fine Arts College at Shanghai University.

An art exhibition featuring paintings by artists from Shandong province is underway at the gallery of the Fine Arts College at Shanghai University through Dec 18. [Photo by Xing Yi/chinadaily]"

"A promotional Shandong culture and tourism event was held on Dec 3 in Seoul, South Korea.

The event was organized by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and marked the end of the Shandong Culture Year in South Korea.

During the event, performers from Shandong province staged songs, dances, traditional operas, and acrobatic performances for South Korean audiences.

Shandong's unique intangible cultural heritage items, including paper-cuts, egg carvings, porcelain sculptures and grain paintings, were also put on display.

Wang Lei, director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, briefed Shandong's profound culture, long history, and many well-known tourist destinations. She also invited more South Korean tourists to Shandong to explore the province, which is the birth place of Confucius.

In addition, the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism signed a cooperation agreement with the Seoul Arts Center, while the Shandong Artists Association signed a cooperation agreement with the Korean Art Society.

Before the activity, Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, met with representatives from local art and culture circles and discussed expanding the two-way cultural tourism market and deepening cooperation in cultural tourism.

He also presented ""Confucius tourism ambassadors of Shandong"" certificates to South Korean individuals.

South Korean individuals are issued ""Confucius tourism ambassadors of Shandong"" certificates during the event. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Shandong and South Korean cultural institutions sign cultural exchange and cooperation agreements at the activity. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"A Haibei-Shandong cultural exchange activity featuring traditional yet fresh morin khuur music, ancient and mysterious Tibetan opera performances, and pleasant folk songs was launched on Dec 2 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

Around 70 performers from Haibei Tibetan autonomous prefecture, Northwest China's Qinghai province, performed for Shandong audiences.

The event, jointly organized by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the People's Government of Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, is designed to bring the people of Shandong and Haibei closer together and promote cultural diversity.

Performers from Haibei Tibetan autonomous prefecture perform on stage on Dec 2 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The two sides have strengthened ties in recent years, and Shandong has been supporting Haibei through its development process.

Li Guolin, an official from the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, said that Shandong has invested enormously in the construction of industrial and tourism facilities in Haibei and has trained many professionals for the prefecture.

Li said that Shandong has also organized many activities to promote tourism in Haibei.

A Haibei-Shandong cultural exchange activity is launched on Dec 2 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

An ""aiding Qinghai"" cultural and tourism alliance was recently established in Haibei. The alliance, initiated by the Shandong government and co-sponsored by the Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu governments, will help promote Qinghai's cultural and tourism development.

""We want to use this cultural exchange activity to share Haibei's cultural achievements with the people of Shandong and learn from Shandong's experiences,"" said Liu Baochun, deputy head of Haibei Tibetan autonomous prefecture government.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the People's Government of Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture also signed a framework agreement on partner assistance and cooperation.

An exhibition highlighting Haibei’s intangible cultural items is currently underway at the Shandong Museum. [Photo by Zhao Xiao/chinanews.com]

An exhibition highlighting Haibei's intangible cultural items is also currently underway at the Shandong Museum.

The cultural exchange activity will run until Dec 7 and will be held in Binzhou and Liaocheng."

"Over 7,100 new companies, including nearly 4,000 private businesses, were registered in the industrial area in the first 10 months this year

The Weifang Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone in East China's Shandong province will further enhance government service quality to support key business projects as part of its efforts to maintain stable economic growth.

Goertek, an acoustics solutions and smart hardware provider headquartered in Weifang, is one of the largest mobile earphone and microphone producers in the world in terms of annual sales volume.

Amid global trade turbulence, some of its clients considered partnering with other foreign suppliers to lower overall costs, according to the company. After visiting some suppliers in South Asia and Southeast Asia, the clients came back to Goertek because either the quality could not meet the requirement or the costs were too high.

Goertek's professional team is key to boosting its bargaining power in global trade.

Goertek has 10,000 development engineers and 10,000 technicians to guarantee the quality of their products. Those experts are the most valuable assets of the company and will not be affected by the changing global environment, the company said.

The zone, which shoulders responsibilities in supporting Shandong's efforts in replacing old economic drivers with new ones, has made great efforts to support Goertek's development.

Goertek is constructing a smart hardware industrial park with a total investment of 10 billion yuan ($1.42 billion). The project is one of 10 key business projects recognized by the Weifang government this year.

Aimed at speeding up the construction, the zone established Zhuan Ban, literally meaning special service teams, to give Goertek more support.

Under this model, support teams formed by government officials have been assigned the responsibilities to oversee key projects in the zone to ensure that any difficulties in the construction process can be solved in an efficient manner, according to the zone.

According to local officials, meetings are organized for key projects weekly so that companies can raise problems with officials, with all related government departments required to provide feedback in limited time.

Attracted by the improved government working efficiency, more companies are investing in industrial parks in the zone. A drone-centered industrial park, an aviation industrial park, a healthcare industrial park and an internet of thingsthemed industrial park are under construction.

Attracting business

The zone has long been encouraging leading companies to expand along its entire industrial chain. By doing so, it will help businesses to gain more bargaining power on one hand, and will help attract more businesses to the region on the other hand.

Weichai, one of the leading heavy trucks and component developers in China, is a pioneer in the zone in practicing this strategy.

The company demonstrated its overseas expansion achievements during the second China International Import Expo, which was held from Nov 5 to 10 in Shanghai with more than 3,800 companies from around the globe exhibiting, by showcasing products under six foreign brands including alternative-fuel power system developer Power Solutions International, Moteurs Baudouin and Linde Hydraulics.

A 20-meter-long patrol boat, built by Weichai-controlled Italian shipbuilding company Ferretti Group, attracted great attention. The boat, the first exhibit to enter the expo venue in October, is equipped with two 1,900 horsepower engines that allow the vessel to reach a speed of 55 knots.

Weichai is building a new energy power industrial park for hydrogen fuel cells, a new energy innovation center, a Linde Hydraulics industrial park, a digitalized high-end engine production center and a facility to produce high-end large--bore engines in the zone to support regional industrial upgrading.

The company celebrated the groundbreaking of the Weichai International Engine Component Industrial Park in the zone on July 13.

The industrial park will be capable of serving more than 500 suppliers of Weichai upon completion. Factories of about 20 companies including Germany's Knorr-Bremse will begin running by the end of this year, according to the zone government.

This year, the zone government innovated its investment attraction model by partnering with some professional capital investor to more effectively identify excellent companies.

Local officials said investment companies are more professional in identifying and evaluating top businesses in industries compared to governments.

Beijing-based TSC Laser Technology Development, specializing in 3D printing, was attracted to the zone under the new investment attraction model.

TSC's new plant in the aviation and aerospace industrial park in the zone will begin production at the end of November. Headquartered in Beijing, the company has branches in Shenyang of Liaoning province, Xi'an of Shaanxi province and Tianjin municipality.

It chose to invest in the zone because of the connecting services provided by capital investors and premium government services, according to the company.

By the end of October, capital investors including Tsinghua Holdings Capital had introduced 18 projects to the zone. Capital investors will also introduce about 50 projects to the zone's aviation and aerospace industrial park in the next five years.

Strong support

For small and medium-sized enterprises in the expansion phase, the zone not only provides policy support but also strives to help them ease their financial burden.

Hoaco Automation Technology, which specializes in die-cutting machinery, celebrated the opening of a 30,000-square-meter facility last year.

What made Song Guanghui, chairman of Hoaco, feel excited about it was that the factory was built by the government, and the company only needed to pay for rental costs.

Song said the company can focus on research and development in the upcoming years thanks to the reduced financial burden.

From January to the end of October, a total of 7,197 new companies had registered in the zone. Nearly 4,000 of them are privately owned, which represents an increase of 103.3 percent year-on-year.

The zone said it will continue to innovate its investment attraction model to develop industries such as life science, software information, new materials and internet of things.

Six subsidiaries owned by Weichai exhibit their products at the second China International Import Expo in November. Photos provided to China Daily

From Left:The first fleet of buses using Weichai hydrogen fuel cells are put into operation on Aug 23. Technicians debug equipment at a plant in the Weifang Aviation and Aerospace Industrial Park. Photos provided to China Daily

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"The Sixth Traditional Chinese Medicine Science Conference is held in Jinan, capital city of East China's Shandong province, on Nov 23-24, 2019. [Photo provided by chinadaily.com.cn]

The Sixth Traditional Chinese Medicine Science Conference, which concluded on Sunday in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, attracted scientists and doctors from home and abroad to discuss a wide range of TCM topics, including medical discoveries, the integration of national strategies with TCM and international cooperation and exchanges in the field of TCM.

More than 1,000 participants joined the two-day conference in the province's capital city.

Shandong provincial government and the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine sign an agreement to jointly develop Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. [Photo provided by chinadaily.com.cn]

The vitality of TCM depends on developing TCM with modern scientific technologies. TCM and Western medicine should develop together and complement each other to better serve human health, Chen Zhu, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, and also chairman of the Central Committee of the Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party, said during the opening ceremony held on Saturday.

During the conference, Shandong provincial government and the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine signed an agreement to jointly develop Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

The conference was sponsored by the Central Committee of the Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party, and the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine."

"Raw cotton is on display at the Shandong Qilu Cotton Museum in Xiajin county, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: qysdfy]

The Shandong Qilu Cotton Museum recently opened to the public in Xiajin county, East China's Shandong province.

The museum, the first of its kind in Shandong, consists of an indoor exhibition area of 6,000 square meters and an outdoor experimental field covering an area of 5,000 sq m.

The museum features more than 400 cotton-related items on display in 10 exhibition areas. Exhibits focus on local culture, the history of cotton, planting techniques, and cotton textile products.

Xiajin is a major cotton production center in Shandong province. The county has had a productive cotton industry since as early as the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), according to a document uncovered from that time.

In 2018, the county produced 72.92 million tons of cotton over an area of 8,791 hectares.

The museum is the result of an effort by the local government to integrate cotton production with the culture and tourism industries. This combination is expected to bring more diversity to the local economy."

"Passengers can explore Shandong's culture and art on the province's first high-speed loop train.

The high-speed loop line links Shandong's eight cities – Jinan, Tai'an, Qufu, Linyi, Rizhao, Qingdao, Weifang and Zibo. The entire journey takes six hours to complete. The train embarked on its first trip on Nov 24 when it departed from Jinan West Railway Station.

Rabbit King figurines (a traditional toy in Jinan) are exhibited on Shandong's first high-speed loop train on Nov 24. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Tourist brochures, souvenirs and mascots of cities in Shandong are exhibited on the train. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Vivid dough sculptures are exhibited on the high-speed train. [Photo/dzwww.com]

An artist from Shandong demonstrates gourd painting on the high-speed train on Nov 24. [Photo/dzwww.com]

An artist works on a dough figurine on the high-speed train on Nov 24. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

An international fashion week took place in Ji'nan, East China's Shandong province, from Nov 19 to 21. Focusing on the fashion industry of China, Japan and South Korea, the week included a number of fashion shows from top designers. [Video provided by Jinan Times]

"A miner is rescued from a Liangbaosi Energy Co coal mine in Jiaxiang county, Shandong province, on Nov 21, 2019. All 11 miners trapped after a fire in the mine were lifted to safety by 10:18 am, and all were said to be in stable condition. [Photo/China News Service]

All 11 miners who had been trapped since Tuesday in the darkness of a coal mine in Jiaxiang county, Shandong province, had been lifted to safety as of 10:18 am on Thursday, with blindfolds protecting their eyes from the sun, local authorities said.

They were sent to the hospital and described as being in stable condition.

The miners were trapped underground after a fire broke out late on Tuesday in a mine run by Liangbaosi Energy Co, an affiliate of Feicheng Mining Group Co of Shandong Energy Group.

""I'm fine. I'm fine. I want to call my wife. Can I give a call to my wife?"" one of the rescued men said when asked how he felt.

A rescue effort was launched immediately after authorities learned of the accident, said Wang Duanwu, head of the Shandong Bureau of Coal Mine Safety Supervision.

""Four rescue teams involving 144 professional rescuers were dispatched to join in the work,"" Wang said.

Rescuers had been hampered by high temperatures underground and a high concentration of hazardous gases, including carbon monoxide. Robots were used to extinguish fires. Drilling equipment and satellite telecommunications devices also were used.

Workers from departments of public security, health, emergency management, power supply and telecommunications reached the site quickly, said Zhu Ruixian, head of Jiaxiang county.

Shandong Party Secretary Liu Jiayi went to the mine on Wednesday morning and said rescue efforts should follow scientific methods to ensure worker safety and prevent secondary accidents.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Liangbaosi manages more than 95 square kilometers of land used for coal mines, with reserves estimated at 569 million metric tons, according to the Feicheng website. The company has an annual production capacity of 3 million tons."

"Shandong, as one of China's first coastal provinces to implement the national strategy of opening-up, has long had an optimistic and welcoming attitude toward the outside world.

Since the start of reform and opening-up, the economic powerhouse on China's eastern coast has attracted a large amount of international capital, and many multinational companies have set up factories and branches in the province.

Foreign investment has become an important part of the province's economy. Its actual use of foreign capital in 2018 amounted to $12.39 billion, representing a year-on-year growth of 6.5 percent.

The number of foreign-invested enterprises in the province has surged from just one in 1981 to over 15,000 in 2018, bringing in 741 investment projects from 214 Fortune Global 500 companies.

The province's imports and exports have increased from $3 million in 1980 to $292.39 billion in 2018, with an average annual growth rate of 35.3 percent."

"[Photo/Xinhua]

An accident that has trapped 11 mine workers took place around 6pm in a coal mine in Jiaxiang county, East China's Shandong province.

Comprehensive rescue efforts are underway.

Liu Jiayi, the Party secretary of the province, rushed to the mine site to oversee rescue work this morning.

Liu ordered that rescue efforts should follow scientific methods to ensure worker safety and that no additional accidents occur.

The mine is owned by Liangbaosi Energy Co Ltd located at Jiaxiang county, Jining city.

This is not the first time production accidents took place in mines owned by the company. In August 2016, an accident in one of the company's mines claimed two lives and in July 2009, the collapse of another mine of the company killed two workers and injured seven."

"A number of cultural performances were held across Shandong province during a three-month cultural extravaganza that included movies, television plays, traditional Chinese operas, concerts, and acrobatic performances.

The third edition of the Shandong Cultural Consumption Season, which was organized by the provincial department of culture and tourism, recently came to an end in Shandong, a province in eastern China.

The third Shandong Cultural Consumption Season begins on July 23 in Qufu, a city in East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

According to a news conference held on Nov 18, 112 million yuan ($15.94 million) in discounts were offered during the cultural consumption season, a year-on-year increase of 19.33 percent. Consumers spent a total of 578 million yuan, up 25.67 percent over the second edition.

More than 145,868 cultural and tourism activities were held during the event, and about 376 million people and 1,542 cultural and tourism enterprises participated.

Museums, art galleries, and libraries throughout the province also launched nighttime activities to attract more visitors, and the province's 16 cities launched a series of cultural and tourism activities.

An Aladdin opera is performed during Shandong's third cultural consumption season. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Jinan, the provincial capital, has recently been focusing on its nighttime economy. It has highlighted a total of 99 places to enjoy local snacks, cultural tourism, and nighttime entertainment, including 10 large areas, 15 shopping malls, and 15 cultural recreation sites.

Rizhao has launched several night tours that include visits to Dongyi Town and Olympic Water Park, star gazing, night markets, light festivals, music festivals, and more.

According to the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, in next year's edition, it will highlight the international promotion of local cultural and tourism attractions via cross-border e-commerce platforms in order to take full advantage of the role of cultural and tourism consumption in leading industrial transformation and upgrading.

The department plans to launch more programs in rural areas and reduce poverty through the ""culture + e-commerce"" and ""tourism + e-commerce"" models.

Jinan, capital of Shandong province, launches its third cultural consumption season on Aug 15. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"China's Shandong province unveiled a bookstore on Monday at the Confucius Institute of Makerere University, Uganda's top university, in an effort to promote education and culture.

The Nishan House, named after the birth place of ancient Chinese educator and philosopher Confucius, is a bookstore chain created by Shandong Friendship Publishing House, with the aim to carry forward Chinese traditional culture and promote cultural exchanges between China and other countries.

Fu Zhifang, chairman of the Shandong Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, presented the Nishan House to Umar Kakumba, deputy vice chancellor for academic affairs at Makerere University.

With the Nishan House, students in the Confucius Institute will have easier access to hundreds of books on Chinese traditional culture.

Fu said that mastering Mandarin, which many Ugandans have taken interest in, will open up opportunities.

The Confucius Institute belongs to not only China but also the world, he said. He described it as a great platform for China and the world to know about each other.

Lauding the friendly Uganda-China relations, Kakumba said that Makerere has cooperation agreements with several Chinese universities.

Apart from hosting the Confucius Institute, the university has started a bachelor's program on China and Asia studies, he said."

"Participants communicate with each other during the marine aircraft design and production contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization Countries Vocational Skills Contest kicked off on Monday. Participants from 20 countries and regions will compete in 13 contest events such as mobile robots, welding, western food cooking and so on. [Photo/Xinhua]

Participants compete in the fashion technology contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization Countries Vocational Skills Contest kicked off on Monday. Participants from 20 countries and regions will compete in 13 contest events such as mobile robots, welding, western food cooking and so on. [Photo/Xinhua]

Participants compete in the western food cooking contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

Participants compete in the CAD (computer-aided design) mechanical engineering design contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

Participants compete in the fashion technology contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

Participants compete in the marine aircraft design and production contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

Participants compete in the prototyping contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

A participant competes in the welding contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

Participants compete in the European food cooking contest at Weihai Vocational College in Weihai city, East China's Shandong province, Nov 11, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"Shandong province's 23 time-honored brands received a large number of windfall orders during the second China International Import Expo (CIIE), although they originally planned to merely display their products, with no intention of selling them.

A dazzling display of Shandong province's time-honored brands and unique intangible cultural heritage items, including Dezhou braised chicken, Zhoucun sesame seed cake, and Zibo ceramics, were so well-received by businessmen from all over the world that they received numerous orders despite not being for sale at the expo.

Yefengsu, a food company that produces Shandong-style snacks and specialties based in Jinan, signed several cooperation agreements with Lagardere Services China (Shanghai) Co, a subsidiary of French travel retail giant Lagardere Group, during the expo.

According to Yefengsu, the agreement will help bring its products to the global market and facilitate more opportunities for cooperation between Lagardere and Shandong time-honored brands.

Jiwenzhai, a time-honored silver pot brand based in Haiyang, Shandong, received more than 300,000 yuan in orders during the expo.

""This is the first time Jiwenzhai has attended the expo. We originally wanted to simply market our brand, so we did not bring many products,"" said Jiang Weiqing, manager of Jiwenzhai.

""However, I found that CIIE is a great platform full of business opportunities. We have found many clients and our products have sparked heated discussion and keen interest among many foreign visitors. This will help us expand into overseas markets.""

The second CIIE, which was held from Nov 5 to 10 in Shanghai, attracted more than 3,800 companies from all over the world and had a total exhibition area of more than 360,000 square meters.

More than $71.13 billion in intended deals were reached during the six-day expo, up 23 percent from the first expo, according to the CIIE Bureau.

The expo was visited more than 900,000 times, achieving nationwide influence.

A colored glaze ware in the shape of a pomegranate from Zibo, Shandong is exhibited during the second China International Import Expo. Zibo is the birthplace of ceramic glaze and China's main production and export center for glass and daily ceramics. [Photo by VCG]

Visitors are fascinated by a Shandong pancake, a classic Shandong snack, during the second CIIE. [Photo by VCG]

Shandong province's time-honored brands are displayed at the China International Import Expo in Shanghai. [Photo/VCG]"

"Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, delivers a speech at the conference on Nov 6, 2019. [Photo by Xue Xinyi/chinadaily.com.cn]

A conference discussing ways to further open up the economy and industries of Shandong province took place at the second China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai on Nov 6.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, delivered a keynote address at the conference.

Shandong is now more open to economic development and foreign investment than ever before. The province has established a number of groundbreaking initiatives, including the rapid development of a comprehensive pilot area for new and old kinetic energy conversion, the demonstration area for local economic and trade cooperation between China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone and the open platform for Qingdao Multinationals Summit, said Liu.

The province has enacted a series of policies designed to stimulate trade, and attract industries and skilled workers. The provincial government has also promoted the development of a well-regulated business environment, Liu added.

A promotion conference on exploring new ways to open up Shandong province takes place at the second China International Import Expo in Shanghai on Nov 6, 2019. [Photo by Xue Xinyi/chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong is ready to work with investors and innovative entrepreneurs from all over the world, Liu promised.

Liu was followed by government representatives from Qingdao, Jinan and Yantai who introduced their respective areas of China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone.

More than 500 people, including senior executives from foreign economic and trade departments and multinational corporations, representatives of overseas projects, industrial and commercial organizations, business associations and entrepreneurs attended the conference."

"A visa-free transit policy was introduced in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Jan 1, 2019.

Under the policy, foreign visitors from 53 countries including the United States, Canada and all members of the European Union, who arrive at Qingdao through the city's airports or ports and have valid international travel documents and tickets to a third country, are allowed to travel around Shandong without a visa and stay for up to 144 hours (six days).

The information below provides a suggested itinerary for a six-day trip in the province.

Day 1: must-see sights in Qingdao

Known as ""China's sailing capital and beer city"", Qingdao is a regional hub for transport, trade and finance that also boasts a proud history. It has 131 excellent historic buildings, accounting for about 44 percent of the province's total, and 123 national A-level scenic spots, including May Fourth Square, Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center, Qingdao Trestle and Qingdao Beer Museum.

In the morning, you can visit Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center, a perfect place for you to learn something about Qingdao's sailing games and culture.

The center, located by Fushan Bay, covers about 45 hectares, with an overall investment of 3.28 billion yuan ($475.4 million). It was awarded the designation National Coastal Tourism and Leisure Demonstration Area – the only coastal tourism designation – by the National Tourism Administration in 2009.

An Olympic sailing museum was also opened here in August 2008, featuring objects from and pictures of Olympic sailing games and culture.

Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center [Photo/qingdaonews.com]

Facing the Olympic sailing center across the sea, May Fourth Square, one of the city's landmarks, is about a 600-meter walk from the sailing center. The square got its name from the patriotic May Fourth Movement in 1919, a turning point in contemporary Chinese history.

The 10-hectare square is composed of northern and southern parts. The northern part is where the offices of the Qingdao Municipal Government are located, while the southern part, close to Fushan Bay, is a coastal park, where the nation's first fountain with a 100-meter high spray was built.

The red sculpture, with a height of 30 meters and a diameter of 27 meters, is located at May Fourth Square, celebrating the patriotism of the May Fourth Movement in 1919. [Photo/IC]

In the afternoon, you can take a bus to Qingdao Trestle. Qingdao Trestle, another city landmark, was originally built in 1892 as a naval pier. It is 440 meters long and 8 meters wide, and is decorated with lotus lamps. Huilan Pavilion, at the southern end of the bridge, offers an excellent view of the sea, and Zhanqiao Park, at the northern, is renowned for its excellent beach.

Huilan Pavilion at the southern end of Qingdao Trestle [Photo/IC]

Qingdao Beer Museum is a must-see sight in the city. Established in August 2003, the museum was the first professional beer museum in China, covering over 6,000 square meters.

The museum is located at the ""birthplace of Tsingtao beer"" where for more than a century the time-honored Tsingtao Brewery has produced its quality beverage for domestic and international markets. It has been a multimedia tourist attraction comprising beer tasting, brewing archives and a state-of-the-art display area that gives visitors a rare insight into the origins and long history of Tsingtao beer.

Qingdao Beer Museum [Photo/qingdaonews.com]

With nightfall comes a chance to enjoy the city's nightlife. Filled with exotic charm and flashing neon, Beer Street (or Dengzhou Road) is one of the most popular nightspots in Qingdao. Located close to the Qingdao Beer Museum, the street is where you'll find authentic Tsingtao beer and various delicious seafood dishes.

Beer Street in Qingdao [Photo/iqilu.com]

After enjoying your tour in Qingdao, you can take a train to Weihai. It takes about two hours from Qingdao North Railway Station to Weihai Railway Station or Weihai North Railway Station.

Day 2: historical tour in Weihai

Bounded on three sides by the Yellow Sea, Weihai is a picturesque city in the eastern tip of Shandong Peninsula. In 2003, it won a World Habitat Award for its outstanding contribution to improving habitats and city environments. It is a famous port and tourist city with more than 80 places of interest such as Liugong Island and Huaxia City.

Liugong Island is a perfect place if you are interested in China's modern history. The island, covering 3.15 square kilometers, is located on the northeastern edge of Shandong Peninsula at the mouth of Weihai Bay. It played an extremely important role in national defense. Known as the ""birthplace of China's first modern navy"", it was the main battlefield for the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95).

Many places of historic and cultural interest can be found on the island, including the ruins of the Warring States Period (475-221 BC) and the European architecture built when the place was occupied by Great Britain from 1898 to 1930. A replica of Dingyuan, a warship from the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and a symbol of patriotism, is also available for visitors to pay their respects to heroic Chinese sailors.

Liugong Island [Photo/liugongdao.com.cn]

After that you can visit the Weihai Huaxia City, a large ecological culture-themed scenic area, showcasing the classic and traditional cultures of China.

Since 2003, 44 mining pits have been restored and become part of the scenic area, as part of a drive to integrate environmental improvement and tourism development. The scenic spots built on every pit have different themes, including one displaying the historic culture of the era of emperors Yao, Shun and Yu, dating back to approximately 2,600 BC.

At night you can enjoy a large open-air performance at the scenic area, which uses the landscape as part of the show to ensure the best display of local culture and traditions.

An evening show at Weihai Huaxia City [Photo/IC]

Then you can buy a high-speed train ticket to Yantai. It will only take you 33 minutes from Weihai Railway Station to Yantai South Railway Station.

Day 3: Penglai in Yantai

Penglai, a county-level city in Yantai, is renowned as a ""fairyland on Earth"" and is considered the cradle of China's fairy culture. It boasts more than 100 historic sites, including Penglai Pavilion, as well as numerous scenic spots, such as Penglai Ba Xian Guo Hai (The Eight Immortals Cross the Sea) scenic spot.

The existence of Penglai Pavilion provides strong support for Penglai being the cradle of China's fairy culture. It is said that Emperor Qingshihuang (259 BC-210 BC), the first person to unify China, even sought an elixir of life in the area.

The pavilion, situated on a cliff in the northwest of Penglai, is an ancient architectural complex that covers a total area of 32,800 sq m. Its main building was first constructed in 1061 during the Song Dynasty (960-1279). Renovations and expansions were made in the following dynasties, with several temples, palaces, attics and pavilions added.

One marvelous spectacle of Penglai Pavilion is the mirage, which attracts countless tourists every year. It and three other buildings: Tengwang Pavilion, Huanghe Tower and Yueyang Tower, are called the Four Great Towers of Ancient China.

Penglai Pavilion is situated on a cliff northwest of Penglai, a county-level city in Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo/VCG]

The scenic spot Penglai Ba Xian Guo Hai, facing Penglai Pavilion across the sea, was built with the theme of the legendary story in Taoist culture of the eight immortals crossing the sea.

With the sea on three sides, the place is a comprehensive historical and natural tourist area. Occupying an area of 55,000 sq m, it has more than 40 main scenic spots, including ancient-style architecture and stunning sea views.

The Penglai Ba Xian Guo Hai scenic spot looks like a huge calabash from a bird's-eye view. [Photo/IC]

When you finish touring the two scenic areas, you can take a high-speed train from Yantai Railway Station or Yantai South Railway Station to Jinan, the capital of Shandong province, which will take three hours and 40 minutes.

Day 4: natural tour in Jinan

Jinan, a city facing the Yellow River to the north and bordering Mount Tai to the south, has long been hailed as Quancheng (City of Springs), with more than 800 natural artesian springs dotting its landscape and creating a beautiful natural landscape. The most renowned ones are gracefully named Baotu, Black Tiger and Pearl springs, as well as the Five Dragon Pool.

More than 70 springs (including Baotu Spring, Black Tiger Spring and Five Dragon Pool), together with the city's moat and Daming Lake, form the World's Best Spring Scenic Area. It is the best choice for you to learn about the city's culture of springs, which has instilled spirit into the city for more than 4,000 years.

Besides the beautiful landscape, the area also has a profound historic and cultural heritage, with ancient walls, temples, mansions and gardens dating back to the Yuan (1271-1368), Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, such as the former residence of Li Qingzhao (1084-1151), one of the leading female poets of the Song Dynasty.

Baotu Spring in Jinan, Shandong province [Photo/VCG]

To the east of Baotu Spring and south of Daming Lake, a square called Quancheng was built in 1999. Occupying an area of 330 mu (22 hectares), in 2002 it became the first square in China given the title of International Art Square by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

It has long been the first choice for locals to receive guests from home and abroad, as well as the favored venue for holding various colorful activities. A music fountain show takes place at the square every morning, afternoon and at night unless it is raining or snowing.

Quancheng Square [Photo/IC]

Adjacent to Jinan is Tai'an, the place Chinese civilization originated. A high-speed train can carry you at an average speed of over 300 kilometers per hour from Jinan to Tai'an in just 17 minutes.

Day 5: spiritual tour of Tai'an

The symbol of Tai'an is Mount Tai. The name Tai'an is also derived from the mountain, implying that ""the country is prosperous and the people live in peace"".

Chief of the Five Sacred Mountains, Mount Tai is a symbol of the great Chinese national spirit and the epitome of Chinese civilization. Since ancient times, Mount Tai has been a sacred place for emperors from all dynasties to hold worship ceremonies and offer sacrifices to Heaven. Enshrined by such worship ceremonies, it also attracted believers of both Confucianism and Taoism, men of letters and famous people whose residencies and visits left behind more than 1,000 places of interest, such as the Diamond Sutra inscription rocks.

Besides, Mount Tai boasts magnificent natural views, including craggy cliffs, deep canyons, grotesque peaks with strange rocks, luxuriant vegetation, flowing springs and twittering birds. The mountain also has marvelous unique wonders: the rising sun at dawn, the jade plate of the sea of clouds, and rosy clouds at sunset.

A spectacular sunrise on Mount Tai [Photo/VCG]

At the foot of Mount Tai is Dai Temple, known as the temple to the god of Mount Tai, for that god was also called Dai in ancient times. The temple is the exact place where the worship ceremonies were held.

The layout of the temple accords with imperial palace architecture, featuring a bilateral symmetry on a north-south axis and spreading over 96,000 sq m.

Tiankuang Hall at the center of Dai Temple [Photo/IC]

After fully enjoying your spiritual tour in Tai'an, it's time to leave for Qufu in Jining, the last stop on your six-day trip through Shandong province. The best way to get from Tai'an to Qufu is to take a coach from the South District of Tai'an Bus Terminal; it will take about one and a half hours.

Day 6: Qufu in Jining

Qufu, a county-level city in Jining, is famous across the world for being the hometown of Confucius, who was a famous thinker, educator and founder of Confucianism who lived at the end of the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC).

The city has a variety of unique cultural relic sites, three of which are under State-level protection: the Confucius Temple, the Cemetery of Confucius, and the Kong Family Mansion.

The Confucius Temple in Qufu is the largest and most renowned one in China. It was first built in the year of 478 BC, the second year after Confucius's death, and was renovated and expanded dozens of times over the following centuries. Spanning an area of some 88 hectares, it is one of the top three ancient architectural complexes in China; the other two are Beijing's Palace Museum and Chengde Imperial Summer Resort in Hebei province.

The Confucius Temple [Photo/VCG]

The Cemetery of Confucius is where the tombs of Confucius and many of his descendants are found. Covering an area of more than 200 hectares and with some 100,000 graves discovered there, it is the largest, oldest and best-preserved family tomb and artificial garden in China. The Kong Family Mansion, located east of the Confucius Temple, is the place where descendants of Confucius live.

The memorial archway at the Confucius Forest [Photo/IC]

Finally, you can take a high-speed train from Qufu East Railway Station back to Qingdao, which will take three and a half hours.

Food Tips:

Qingdao

Being a coastal city, Qingdao is rich in seafood. Its cuisine is usually deep fried, braised, roasted or stewed, and commonly uses soy sauce, shallots and garlic.

Qingdao cuisine's most famous dishes are sea cucumbers with minced meat, Jiaodong chicken wings, and braised cuttlefish eggs.

The dish, sea cucumbers with minced meat, is famous in Qingdao. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Weihai

Weihai is also well-known for its high-quality seafood. Sea snails braised in soy sauce, oysters, braised sea cucumber with scallion, and steamed egg with scallops are good choices.

Yantai

Yantai cuisine, also known as Jiaodong cuisine, is usually deep fried, braised, roasted or stewed, commonly using soy sauce, shallots and garlic, and the dishes are known for their delicate aromas and light flavors. It is famous for its seafood dishes.

Dumplings stuffed with Spanish mackerel, sea intestines cooked with Chinese chives, Penglai noodles, and fried bean jelly are some of the famous local dishes.

Dumplings stuffed with Spanish mackerel [Photo/sdta.cn]

Jinan

Jinan cuisine, also known as Lixia cuisine, is one of the four schools of Shandong cuisine. It dates back to the Spring and Autumn period. The cuisine usually uses deep frying, roasting, boiling and stir frying, and excels at sweet dishes and soups.

Braised intestines in brown sauce, rose and pear croquettes, Shanghe horseshoe-shaped shaobing, and creamed rush shoot slices are recommended dishes for you to try in Jinan.

Braised intestines in brown sauce [Photo/sdta.cn]

Tai'an

Tai'an, renowned for Chinese cabbage, tofu and Mount Tai spring water, is more adept at cooking vegetable dishes than other renowned places in Shandong.

The dishes, including Mount Tai tofu feast and mushroom banquet, are good choices.

Mount Tai toufu feast [Photo/tarb.cc]

Qufu in Jining

Smoked bean curd, Confucius pastries, and pancakes are the most recommended dishes in Qufu."

"Han Seung-soo, former prime minister of South Korea, in an exclusive interview with China Daily on Oct 19 during his trip to the Qingdao Multinationals Summit held in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo/China Daily]

Editor's note: In an exclusive interview with China Daily at the Qingdao Multinationals Summit, Han Seung-soo, former prime minister of South Korea, said he thinks in the future many high-tech companies will be interested in coming to Shandong.

Q: President Xi Jinping has stressed at many occasions that China will never close its door to the outside world. The Qingdao Multinationals Summit is also a sign of China's firm determination and strong desire to open itself to the outside world. What changes will the summit bring to China?

A: Well, I am very pleased that the Qingdao Multinationals Summit is now being held in Qingdao. As you may know, Qingdao is really one of the most beautiful international cities where several very important international gatherings were already hosted like the summit of Shanghai Cooperation Organization last year and also the Global Health Forum of Boao Forum in June this year. So I am so happy that Qingdao is now becoming the host city for very important international gatherings, particularly for multinationals, which have played an important role during the process of multilateralism and globalization during the post-war period. China also benefits greatly from multinationals in China. As China is now moving forward to open more and also as the new foreign investment law is going to come into force next year, I think it's very timely that we are having this meeting here in Qingdao because lots of foreign businesspeople will be interested in knowing exactly what the future policy of China toward multinationals is going to be. So it's a very, very useful forum for all of us.

Q: What are your opinions and suggestions for the upcoming foreign investment law?

A: Unlike three foreign investment-related laws in the past, it has now been amalgamated into one for the investment law, which will introduce the pre-establishment national treatment and the Negative List management, as well as protect foreign investment and also intellectual property rights. This is very, very important for foreigners when they decide to come in, and I am sure that the enforcement of this law from next year will be very, very helpful for them. President Xi Jinping repeated this as China is going to further open the door. Also, Premier Li Keqiang paid a visit on Oct 14 to the Samsung Microchip Plant in Xi'an, Shaanxi province. There he said China is going to open further and will be happy to see many high-tech international corporations and multinationals come to China. These are the thoughts that create a very nice atmosphere in China. I am sure that many multinational corporations now attending this summit will take note of this change of mood in China.

Q: South Korea is Shandong's second-largest source of foreign investment and second-largest trading partner. Shandong and South Korea enjoy very frequent trade and personnel exchanges. What do you think of Shandong's business environment and what is the province's appeal to foreign companies?

A: Shandong is a special province to many Koreans. As you may know, we have already 60,000 Koreans living in Shandong province. We have about 3,000 companies working here in Shandong. And every week we have more than 200 flights between Shandong and South Korea, and also the nearest geography to South Korea. Shandong also has areas which were recently designated as free trade pilot zones, such as in Jinan, Yantai and Qingdao. So all in all, Shandong is becoming a very attractive place. It has already been an attractive place, but it's becoming a more attractive place to many Korean businesspeople, and I hope that the relation between the two could be further strengthened.

Q: The Shandong Pilot Free Trade Zone was launched recently. The province is also promoting its high-quality development and aims to build itself into a new high mark in opening-up. What will all these new opportunities bring to South Korean enterprises investing in Shandong?

A: Initially many Korean companies coming to Shandong came because of the low wages. But wages in China have grown up substantially now, and you are the second-largest economy in the world. So when they want to come to Shandong, I think they will come for other reasons, not for low wages. I think that in the future many high-tech companies will be interested in coming to Shandong, and also this area is one of the cleanest and environmentally friendliest regions of China. So we think the healthcare industry and pharmaceuticals will be interested in coming here. For example, one of the best hospitals in Korea is Yonsei University Severance Hospital, and Severance Hospital is now coming to Qingdao by establishing Qingdao Severance Hospital together with the Hiking Group. Also, Korea's oldest and best pharmaceutical company, Yuhan, decided to come to Qingdao, Shandong. So this will create lots of interest in Korea, and many people will really think twice before deciding to go elsewhere because it's the nearest to Korea, easy to come to, and offers living similar to Korea."

"[Photo/IC]

Latest updates:The grandfather of a baby boy involving in an alleged live burial case has been detained, police in Shandong said on Friday.The Ministry of Civil Affairs is following the case of an alleged live burial of a baby boy in Shandong province and on Thursday asked the Civil Affairs Department of Shandong to verify the reports.

""Whoever violates the laws and regulations on protecting juveniles will get punished,"" Zhang Weixing, spokesman for the ministry said at a news conference held on Thursday in Beijing.

He said the ministry attaches great importance to protecting children's rights and interests.

The opinions on dealing with guardians infringing on the rights and interests of juveniles released in 2014 make clear the punishments for those who sell, abandon, abuse and injure juveniles, he said.

The baby boy was allegedly buried alive in the village of Nanbaita village in Jinan, Shandong province in late August and later saved by villagers.

Two months after the baby was saved, a man in his 50s surnamed Liu, who claims to be the grandfather of the baby, turned himself in on Sunday at the Yangliu police station in Xintai, a county-level city in Tai'an, Shandong, claiming the infant's grandmother buried him after it seemed he died two days after being brought home.

The baby is the younger child of twins. He was diagnosed with several diseases at birth and could only live on a respirator, Liu said.

But the hospital where the twins were born said the baby was in stable condition when his family gave up treatment 44 hours after he was born and took him home.

Local police have sealed hospital medical records and are investigating the case.

The ministry will continue following the case and guide local civil affairs organs to enhance efforts on protecting the rights and interests of juveniles, said Zhang."

"[Photo/IC]

A viral video posted by villagers who found a baby boy who had been buried alive has prompted an investigation by Shandong police.

The baby was saved hours after being buried alive on Aug 21 in Nanbaita village of Jinan, Shandong province, by two villagers surnamed Zhou and Jiao while they were digging for mushrooms in a mountainous area.

One of them made a video and sent it to local media with the hope of finding his relatives.

On Sunday, a man in his 50s surnamed Liu, who claims to be the grandfather of the baby, turned himself in at the Yangliu police station in Xintai, a county-level city in Tai'an, Shandong.

The baby is the younger child of a set of twins. He was diagnosed with several diseases at birth and could only live on a respirator, Liu said.

His grandmother buried him after it appeared he had died at home, according to Liu.

Liu later learned the boy was still alive after watching a TV news broadcast on Saturday. Liu allegedly said he is willing to take him back.

Local police have sealed hospital medical records during their investigation, according to the information office of Xintai. They are also conducting a DNA test.

The boy was in stable condition when his family gave up treatment and took him home, according to the hospital where he was born.

The baby weighed 2.05 kg at birth and showed symptoms such as inflammation in his lungs and spinal deformity, said Yang Zhenying, a doctor at the Tai'an Hospital of Children. Yang said such symptoms are common among premature babies, and doctors have told the baby's family that he can be cured as long as he is treated properly.

Yang said the hospital never issued a death certificate for the baby.

The baby is now hospitalized in Jinan and has grown to around 4 kg. During the past two months, Zhou Shanghong, a rural doctor in Nanbaita village, has been caring for the baby and has spent almost 50,000 yuan ($7,060) for the baby's treatment, iqilu.com reported on Tuesday."

"Ships get ready for their voyages in the foreign trade container terminal of Qingdao port in Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Fangping / For China Daily]

Eastern Chinese province banks on FTZ to boost trade in Northeast Asian region

Shandong province is expected to be a new powerhouse in the Northeast Asian region, with the eastern Chinese province leading the way in high-quality opening-up, experts said at a high-end forum.

Evidence that the province will be an important conduit in China's economic growth became evident after the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone was set up as one of the six new FTZs in the country in late August.

Shandong, birthplace of Confucius, is an important economic powerhouse in the coastal areas, with a GDP surpassing 4 trillion yuan ($560 billion) in the first half of this year. It was ranked third after Guangdong and Jiangsu provinces. However, the province has faced a problem with lagging economic drive.

Zhao Zhongxiu, president of the Shandong University of Finance and Economics, said the FTZ in Shandong should focus on institutional innovation and find a unique way of high-quality economic growth, with its optimized geographic position and abundant resources.

""The province should take the free trade zone opportunity to become more involved in the China-Japan-South Korea regional economic cooperation, as well as the Belt and Road Initiative, and play a bigger role in improving exchanges of capital, technology, talent and information between east and west,"" said Zhao on the sidelines of the High-Level Forum of Shandong Pilot Free Trade Zone Development Strategy on Oct 17 in Qingdao, a coastal city in Shandong.

The forum invited officials and scholars from across the country to discuss how to build high-quality pilot trade zones.

An employee works on the assembly line of Shandong Lingong Construction Machinery Co in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

Zhao said that Shandong could also explore more economic integration of Northeast Asia by joining hands with Liaoning and Heilongjiang FTZs, and play a more active role in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Integration Plan and Yangtze River Delta region.

Shandong also needs to put more efforts into the innovation of marine sectors, as the province boasts first-class research facilities and topnotch talents in those sectors, Zhao said.

During the forum, a research institute backed by the School of International Trade and Economics at Shandong University of Finance and Economics was officially unveiled.

Zhao said that the research institute would focus on areas including big data in FTZs, financial reform and innovation at FTZs, policy assessment and talent training.

Chen Wenling, chief economist at the Beijing-based China Center for International Economic Exchanges, said the development of China's FTZs should be placed at the background of international economic restructuring and China's national strategies.

Chen suggested that the Shandong FTZ could first try to gather resources around Bohai Bay. Covering a total area of 120 square kilometers, the Shandong FTZ consists of three parts in Jinan, Qingdao and Yantai.

With three to five years of reform trials, the Shandong FTZ is set to develop into a high-level and high-quality zone with features including convenient access to trade and investment, sound financial services and drive development in surrounding areas, Ren Airong, vice-governor of Shandong, said during a news conference in August."

"The Shandong provincial publicity department and the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism jointly held a road show on the province's cultural creativity and boutique tourism industry on Oct 19 during the Qingdao Multinationals Summit.

More than 150 guests attended the event, including industry leaders, government officials, well-known scholars, and representatives from domestic and foreign top 500 enterprises and financial institutions.

Roadshows were held for six projects, including a 3D movie project based in Qingdao, a design valley in Weihai, and the Mount Tai press and publication town, which involve a combined total of 33.69 billion yuan ($4.76 billion) in investment and 8.28 billion yuan in financing.

The Weihai design valley project is a key cultural and creative project of Shandong province, blending architectural art with design resources, local officials said.

Located in Weihai's Wendeng district, the project, covering an area of more than 5,000 mu (333.33 hectares), is expected to attract 80 to 100 leading domestic designers, which will be provided with independent property rights for architectural space. It will also utilize educational and scientific research resources from eight first-tier domestic architectural colleges and universities to provide academic support for design enterprises operating in the valley.

Officials said that the project will be developed into a platform for exporting talents and high-quality design works.

According to Zhang Mingchi, vice director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, the event was designed to promote the province's cultural creativity, high-quality tourism industry, and investment environment in a bid to open up new channels for industrial connection and project cooperation with multinational companies.

Wang Shaojie, deputy group leader of Shandong's cultural and creative industry, said that in the past two years, Shandong has released development plans for cultural and creative industries and high-quality tourism, and will soon launch plans for the integrated development of the culture and tourism sectors in bid to promote the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional culture.

By 2022, the added value of cultural and creative industries in the province is expected to reach over 600 billion yuan, accounting for about 6 percent of its total GDP.

The province hopes that it will earn 1.5 trillion yuan in tourism consumption by 2020, with the added value of the tourism and leisure industry reaching 800 billion yuan, accounting for 8 percent of its total GDP.

Zhang Mingchi, vice director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, discusses the province's culture and tourism development at the event. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A road show on Shandong province's cultural creativity and boutique tourism industry is held on Oct 19 during the Qingdao Multinationals Summit. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"Ren Qingsheng, Party secretary of Dinglou village, Daji township, Caoxian county, arranges performance costumes at his warehouse for sale on his Taobao online store. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Traditionally, when girls in villages of Heze city, Shandong province, got married, their parents would buy gold and silver jewelry for their dowries. Now, gold and silver have been replaced by Taobao online stores.

""Taobao online stores have become popular, fashionable and practical for dowries in our village. Parents hope their children can become rich by running them,"" said Ren Qingsheng, Party secretary of Dinglou village, Daji township, Caoxian county, which is administered by Heze.

Taobao, the major e-commerce platform of Alibaba, is leading the rapidly growing e-commerce sector in Heze. The number of the city's ""Taobao villages"" - communities with annual transactions of more than 10 million yuan and more than 100 online stores - had risen to 307 by June from two in 2013, making Heze one of the cities with the most Taobao villages in China.

E-commerce has allowed farmers to achieve prosperous lives, said Ren.

Ren, 48, formerly a farmer in Dinglou, where farmers have been making stage costumes for more than 30 years, opened an online store on the e-commerce platform selling costumes in 2009.

Prior to this, he traveled across the country with bags of costumes, selling them to photography studios, but the profits were meager. He also tried working in cities, but was unable to make ends meet.

Now Ren owns his own online store with annual sales of 8 million yuan.

The annual sales of stage costumes generated from Taobao stores run by villagers in Dinglou have surpassed 500 million yuan and the annual net income has exceeded 80,000 yuan per capita, said Ren.

Ren Qingyong, a 70-year-old Taobao online store owner in Dinglou village, Daji township, Caoxian county, checks his online store on a computer. [Photo provided to China Daily]

""Every villager, young or old, can find a job in the costume business and earn money,"" Ren said, adding that a grandmother in his village can usually earn 50 yuan a day by making knot buttons.

The e-commerce boom has encouraged many young people working in cities to return to rural areas and launch startups.

Li Tong, who was born in the 1990s, returned to his hometown of Sunlaojia in Caoxian county in 2017 and opened an online store selling Chinese knots.

""For me, e-commerce technology and ideas are not problems, funding and making Chinese knots are,"" said Li.

""The good things are that the local government provided me with subsidies for building workshops and I can apply for loans specially designed for developing e-commerce,"" Li said.

""Now my enterprise can produce about 500,000 Chinese knots, generating sales of 3.5 million yuan,"" said Li.

Alibaba has set up a cross-border e-commerce base in Caoxian county supporting sales of local food. According to the government of Caoxian county, the sales volume of asparagus from the county accounts for two-thirds of the country's total.

E-commerce has proved to be an efficient tool for poverty-alleviation and revitalization of rural areas in Heze, said Lan Tao of the e-commerce office of Caoxian county.

A total of 12 villages have been lifted out of poverty through development into Taobao villages in Caoxian county, which has the biggest population in Heze.

Statistics show e-commerce deals maintained a year-on-year increase of more than 40 percent during the first seven months in Heze, reaching 227.2 billion yuan."

"A research institute backed by the School of International Trade and Economics at Shandong University of Finance and Economics was officially unveiled on Thursday in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

China's eastern Shandong province is expected to be a new frontier in the development of Northeast Asia and explore new high-quality opening-up experiences, according to an expert at a high-end forum on Thursday.

The views were explored in the context of establishment of the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone, which is among six new FTZs unveiled in late August.

Shandong, birthplace of Confucius, is one of the economic powerhouses in the country's coastal areas, with a GDP surpassing 4 trillion yuan ($560 billion) in the first half of this year, ranking third place after Guangdong and Jiangsu provinces. However, the province has faced a problem with lagging economic drive in the past.

Zhao Zhongxiu, president of the Shandong University of Finance and Economics, said the FTZ in Shandong should focus on institutional innovation and find its unique way of high-quality economic growth, with its optimized geographic position and abundant sources.

""The province should take this opportunity of FTZs to become more involved in China-Japan-South Korean regional economic cooperation, as well as the Belt and Road Initiative, and play a bigger role in improving exchanges of capital, technology, talent and information between east and west,"" said Zhao on the sidelines of the High-Level Forum of Shandong Pilot Free Trade Zone Development Strategy in Qingdao, a coastal city in Shandong.

The forum invited officials and scholars from across the country to discuss how to build high-quality pilot trade zones.

Zhao said that Shandong could also explore more economic integration of Northeast Asia by joining hands with Liaoning and Heilongjiang FTZs, and play a more active role in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Integration Plan and Yangtze River Delta region.

Shandong also needs to put more effort into the innovation of marine sectors, as the province boasts first-class research facilities and top-notch talents in those sectors, Zhao added.

During the forum, a research institute backed by the School of International Trade and Economics at Shandong University of Finance and Economics was officially unveiled.

Zhao said that the research institute would focus on areas including big data in FTZs, financial reform and innovation at FTZs, policy assessment and talent training.

Covering a total area of 120 square kilometers, the Shandong FTZ consists of three parts in Jinan, Qingdao and Yantai.

With three to five years' reform trials, the Shandong FTZ is set to develop into a high-level and high-quality zone with features including convenient access to trade and investment, sound financial services and driving development in surrounding areas, Ren Airong, vice-governor of Shandong, said at a press conference held at the end of August."

Shandong province has really changed so much over the past seventy years. And it's been really incredible to experience that in these past few days to see this place. It's been really incredible to see how it's rejuvenating its ancient culture and taking the green development from the land to the sea and it's made this place so vibrant.

"A total of 28 friendship ties were sealed on Wednesday during the Shandong International Friendship Cities Conference for Cooperation and Development. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""How happy we are to have friends from afar."" Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong, quoted the classic saying from the Analects when he delivered a speech on Wednesday to welcome more than 800 foreign guests attending the ongoing Shandong International Friendship Cities Conference for Cooperation and Development in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

A total of 886 foreign guests from 33 countries, including sister city delegates and foreign diplomats in China, are participating in the conference, scheduled to end on Sunday.

Since the province's first friendship bond was cultivated between Qingdao, a coastal city of Shandong and Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi prefecture of Japan in 1979, the province has fostered over 200 friendship ties with local governments in 61 countries over the past 40 years.

As an activity during the ongoing conference, the international friendship cities trade fair was held in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province, from Oct 15 to 17. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong has also established partnerships with 1,167 educational, medical, and other institutes in 75 countries.

The friendship, which has been enhanced through exchanges and cooperation, has achieved a lot in promoting culture and civilization integration, realizing economic prosperity and sharing benefits, Liu said.

Aiming to further boost trade cooperation and people-to-people exchanges between Shandong and the world, the conference features diverse activities including forums focusing on medium- and small-sized enterprises, culture and tourism promotion, a photo exhibition and a trade fair.

As an activity of the conference, an international friendship cities trade fair was held in Jinan from Tuesday to Thursday.

Covering an area of nearly 4,000 square meters, the fair displayed a wide range of commodities including cosmetics, food, arts and crafts, tourism products, household necessities and agricultural products from sister cities."

"East China's Shandong province proved to be a hit with tourists during the weeklong National Day holiday, attracting nearly 70 million visitors, up 7.6 percent year-on-year, officials said.

According to statistics from the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, the province's tourism revenue during the holiday reached 57.95 billion yuan ($8.11 billion), up 9.5 percent year-on-year.

Red tourism, namely visits to prominent historical sites during China's revolutionary period, saw a boost in popularity in the province.

The province launched 33 red tourism routes during the holiday, including red tours to the border areas of Hebei, Shandong, and Henan provinces, as well as red tour routes to Yimeng Mountain and tours to the Jiaodong area.

Special activities were also held in Shandong's 16 cities to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Cultural tourism was highlighted, as tourists crowded the province's museums, art galleries and libraries.

Shandong Museum alone received more than 100,000 visitors during the holiday, officials said.

Shandong Art Museum, which is hosting the Exhibition of Chinese Painting of the 13th National Exhibition of Fine Arts, attracted more than 10,000 visitors every day.

The Confucius Family Mansion in Qufu staged six performances of the classic Shandong Bangzi (Wooden Clapper Opera) every day, offering a refreshing experience to visitors.

Rizhao's major scenic areas carried out unique cultural and leisure activities themed around a National Day parade performance and autumn harvest festival. In short-video app Douyi, the topic of ""there is a kind of life called Rizhao"" was broadcasted 370 million times in total.

Officials said that Qingdao launched themed activities including ""tour the beer city"" and ""visit the Oriental movie city"" to lure more tourists during the Golden Week holiday, which greatly enhanced the popularity of Qingdao tourism in the world.

Suburban, self-drive and rural tourism also proved to be a hit for tourists during the holiday, with expressways waiving their normal fees for cars. Many visitors chose to enjoy a rural idyll at village homestays, where they gained an experience in farming and enjoyed rural cuisine and learned about local folklore.

Local government departments also stepped up their security and emergency response capabilities throughout the holiday to ensure visitors enjoyed a safe and pleasant environment during their stay.

Visitors take in blooming flowers at a scenic spot in Tai'an, Shandong province on Oct 2. [Photo/IC]

Students learn about the city's history at Binzhou Museum on Oct 1 in Binzhou, Shandong province. [Photo/IC]

Tourists enjoy a light show in a coastal park in Qingdao, Shandong province, on Oct 1. [Photo/IC]

The well-known Baotu Spring Park in Jinan, capital of Shandong province, is always a hit. It really pulled in the crowds on Oct 2. [Photo/IC]"

"A view of Nantian Gate of Mount Tai in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/IC]

Nearly 70 million visits were made by tourists to eastern China's Shandong province during the weeklong National Day holiday, up 7.6 percent year on year, local authorities said Tuesday.

From Oct 1 to 7, the province, home to famous attractions such as Mount Tai and the Confucius Family Mansion, raked in 57.95 billion yuan (about $8.1 billion) from its booming tourism sector, according to the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism.

During the holiday, the province also saw an increasing number of ""red tourism"" activities, namely visits to historical sites with a revolutionary legacy, to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Shandong's coastal cities, including Qingdao, Weihai and Yantai, are also popular tourist destinations."

"Visitors look at images on display, Sept 25, 2019. [Photo/Chinaculture.org]

As part of the cultural activities celebrating the 70th anniversary of the founding of New China, a photo exhibition was held at the China Cultural Center in Sydney from Sept 25 to Monday.

The exhibition, Confucius' Hometown - Beautiful Shandong, featured 60 images capturing natural landscapes of the Eastern Chinese province, including world heritage sites, such as Taishan Mountain and the Grand Canal.Chen Shuang, head of the Chinese cultural center, said that Shandong is the hometown of Confucius (the ancient Chinese philosopher) and the birthplace of China's Confucian culture, which cherishes the beauty of harmony between man and nature. He also invited locals to travel in Shandong to experience its unique charm.

At the event's opening on Sept 25, artists from Shandong and Chinese artists living in Sydney demonstrated Chinese painting and calligraphy on site.

A Chinese artist paints on site at the exhibition's opening on Sept 25, 2019. [Photo/Chinaculture.org]

Artists create Chinese paintings at the exhibition's opening on Sept 25, 2019. [Photo/Chinaculture.org]

An artist creates Chinese calligraphy at the event's opening on Sept 25, 2019. [Photo/Chinaculture.org]

People watch as artists create Chinese paintings at the exhibit on Sept 25, 2019. [Photo/Chinaculture.org]"

"The Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government held a news conference on Sept 29 to describe the province's foreign trade development in the past 70 years.

According to officials, the province has continued to implement the opening-up strategy, make better use of both international and domestic markets and resources, and further open the province up in more areas.

The total value of the province's imports and exports increased from $3 million in 1980 to $292.39 billion in 2018, an average annual growth rate of 35.3 percent.

A major agricultural products exporting province, Shandong was the country's first demonstration province for the quality and safety of exported food and agricultural products.

Its export of agricultural products has ranked first in the country for 20 years in a row.

The province has been an active participant in the Belt and Road Initiative. It has advanced infrastructural connectivity, increased the density of sea routes connecting Qingdao Port and 15 ports involved in the BRI, and the number of sister ports has risen to 20.

In 2018, the imports and exports, outbound investment, and foreign contracted projects between Shandong and countries and regions involved in the BRI accounted for 26.9 percent, 27.4 percent and 60.2 percent of the province's total.

The China-Europe freight train service, a significant part of the Belt and Road Initiative, was launched eight years ago in Shandong and has experienced rapid growth ever since, officials said.

Taking attracting investment and talent as a key driver for pursuing high-quality development, Shandong has held several major events, like the International Summit on Innovation and Development of Youth Entrepreneurs, the first Conference of Great Business Partners, the MFA presenting Shandong event, and Shandong Week in Hong Kong.

The number of foreign-invested enterprises surged from 1 in 1981 to over 15,000 in 2018, attracting 741 investment projects from 214 Fortune Global 500 companies.

Shandong has improved policies and measures for attracting talent. At present, 73 academicians are based in Shandong.

Focusing on global allocation of resources, the province has supported enterprises in carrying out international production capacity and equipment manufacturing cooperation, and establishing their industrial chain globally.

Shandong's outbound investment expanded from $140 million in 2001 to $7.03 billion in 2018, a 49.2-fold increase and an average annual growth rate of 25.8 percent.

The turnover of its foreign contracted projects increased from $560 million in 2001 to $12.19 billion in 2018, an increase of 20.8 times and an average annual growth rate of 19.5 percent.

The province planned a China-SCO local business cooperation demonstration zone according to high standards and integrated into the China-CEEC ""16+1"" cooperation framework.

There are 15 economic and technological development zones at the national level and 134 at the provincial level, as well as 10 special customs regulation zones in Shandong."

"Contestants in the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals make their debut on Friday in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]Contestants from 67 countries and regions participating in the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals made their formal debut on Friday evening in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province.Local government considers the event an opportunity to promote the city's unique culture and tourism resources and raise the city's international profile.A series of themed activities kicked off Sept 22 and will run through Oct 6. For the event, contestants have filmed promotional videos in several places in the coastal city, including unique scenic areas and focusing on intangible culture heritages.A contestant from China poses on the red carpet of the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals with four kids on Friday in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn] Contestants in the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals pose for a group photo on Wednesday at the May Fourth Square, one of the famous landmarks in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn] Contestants in the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals participate in a photo shoot in Jimo, Qingdao, Shandong province on Sept 23. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn] Contestants in the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals visit an ancient city site in Jimo, a district of Qingdao, Shandong province on Sept 23. [Photo provided to

chinadaily.com.cn] Contestants in the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals pose for a group photo on Wednesday on Daxue Road, Qingdao, Shandong province. The road is located in a neighborhood favored by tourists because of its rich culture. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn] Two contestants in the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals participate in a photo shoot at Qingdao Cruise Terminal on Sept 22. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn] Contestants from 67 countries and regions participating in the Miss Tourism World 2019 Global Finals pose for a group photo on Friday in Qingdao, Shandong province.

[Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"An art performance was held in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, on Sept 27 in celebration of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

A large-scale art performance is held on Sept 27 at the Shandong Grand Theater in Jinan, capital of Shandong province, in celebration of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. [Photo/iqilu.com]

An opera is staged, which takes place on Yimeng Mountain and depicts Shandong's glorious revolutionary history. [Photo/iqilu.com]

An electrifying performance is given, exploring the country's revolutionary history on Sept 27 in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A performance is staged, highlighting the spirit and unswerving faith of Chinese people in national independence. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A show highlights the contributions of female textile workers in the early days of New China. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Performers sing about the natural beauty of their hometown and express confidence in its future development. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Audiences are entranced by the performance. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"Three places in East China's Shandong province were included in the first batch of national all-for-one tourism demonstration zones, according to a list released by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on Sept 25.

Officials said that Qingzhou, a county-level city in Weifang, Laoshan district of Qingdao and Qufu, the hometown of the great Confucius, made the list.

The concept of all-for-one tourism was first mentioned in the Government Work Report at the fifth plenary session of 12th National People's Congress.

The phrase proposed a focus on upgrading and integrating tourist resources, public services and government regulations and policies to boost overall social development by using tourism as a new engine for growth.

In recent years, Shandong has attached great importance to the development of all-for-one tourism through policy support, service upgrade and brand promoting. Officials said that this has provided a solid guarantee for the high-quality development of its tourism sector.

Many cities in the province have launched specific policies and measures to implement the tourism strategy and attract more visitors from across the world with its unique regional culture and tourism resources.

The city of Qingzhou was capital of one of the nine zhous, or province-level administrative regions in ancient China for more than 1,600 years.

The city is still home to a number of old buildings and communities that bear silent witness to the architectural achievements and styles of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

The Qingzhou government has launched a series of measures to restore and preserve local historical and cultural heritage sites, which help attract millions of visitors every year.

The city has also beefed up measures to develop the nighttime economy, with steps to encourage post-dusk tourism activities and later closing hours at scenic spots.

Qingdao's Laoshan district is named after Laoshan Mountain, which is hailed as the cradle of Taoism and is a popular tourist destination in the country.

It is a coastal district, being near the Yellow Sea.

Officials said the local government has taken the ""tourism +"" strategy as the approach to build a holistic tourism product supply system and promote the integrated development of tourism and related industries.

Qufu, hometown of Confucius, has been built up into a leading tourism destination to worship the great sage. Study tours to the city are also quite popular for visitors, particularly students.

The city has built some high-quality cultural and tourism sites such as the Nishan Sacred Land, the Confucius Museum and the Confucius Institute. It has been promoting its tourism brands through many channels.

A sweeping view from Laoshan Mountain in Laoshan district of Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo/IC]

Visitors stroll down a street in Qingzhou ancient town. [Photo/IC]

A spectacular aerial photo shows the temple, family cemetery and family mansion of Confucius in Qufu. They are collectively known as the San Kong and were placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1994. [Photo/IC]"

"The much-anticipated Exhibition of Chinese Painting of the 13th National Exhibition of Fine Arts opened on Sept 26 at the Shandong Art Museum, offering a wonderful opportunity for locals to explore the art of Chinese painting.

Jointly organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and the China Artists Association, the exhibition is displaying 604 masterpieces which represent the first-class level of contemporary Chinese painting.

The exhibition, which runs to Oct 26, is also being held to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

The exhibits cover a broad range of topics, diverse content and varied expressive techniques, said Shang Hui, a member of the China Artists Association.

""Figures, landscapes, flowers and birds, industrial construction and modern themes are all included,"" Shang said.

""These works are both contemporary and artistic, from which we can see the characteristics of the times, but also can comprehensively understand the contemporary Chinese painting creative trends and levels,"" he said.

""The exhibition will become a hit during this year's National Day holiday.""

For art creators, the art exhibition has a different meaning. It's something that Zhang Wang, chairman of Shandong Artists Association and director of Shandong Art Museum, knows all about.

At the age of 32, he won a prize in the eighth edition of the exhibition, which further inspired his confidence to create art. Now, a judge of the exhibition, he is very excited to see it being held in Shandong.

The Exhibition of Chinese Painting of the 13th National Exhibition of Fine Arts opens on Sept 26 at the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo/sdam.org.cn]

Many parents visit the exhibition with their children at the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Visitors appreciate paintings at the exhibition. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"The Friendly Shandong, Hometown of Confucius exhibition was recently held in Auckland, New Zealand, offering a chance for locals to get a glimpse of the province's unique cultural charms and picturesque natural landscapes through the medium of photography.

The six-day exhibition, jointly sponsored by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the China Cultural Center in Wellington, displayed more than 100 photos in five sections covering the province's history, customs, festivals and cuisines.

Sun Jiye, vice governor of Shandong, said that Shandong is an economic powerhouse with a large population, rich cultural relics and tourism resources, while the province is also one of the cradles of Chinese civilization, known as the hometown of Confucius and Mencius.

Shandong and New Zealand have great potential and broad prospects for cooperation in culture and tourism, Sun added.

He expressed his hope that the photo exhibition will generate opportunities to further enhance mutual friendship, deepen cultural and tourism cooperation and common development.

Raymond Huo, the New Zealand Labour Party's MP, said that New Zealand and China have close economic and trade relations and frequent cultural and tourist exchanges.

He said that New Zealand was the first developed country to sign a free trade agreement with China and it is also the only western country to set up a Chinese Language Week in its official calendar.

The exhibition helped open a new window for local people to learn more about China and Shandong province, and further promote cultural exchanges and tourism cooperation between the two countries, he added.

A promotional video of Shandong's rich and colorful culture, as well as its popular scenic spots, was shown to visitors.

Shandong's unique traditional crafts such as kites, New Year paintings and color-glaze products were exhibited as well.

Also available to visitors was a dazzling display of the province's tourist souvenirs such as luggage tags, canvas bags and the English version of the Shandong Tourism Guide.

Artists from Shandong perform traditional folk music at the opening ceremony of the exhibition in Auckland, New Zealand. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Some of Shandong province's tourist souvenirs are displayed at the exhibition. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"Shandong's tourism and cultural sectors are booming, with new and improved market entities, as well as expanded industrial chains. The culture and tourism sectors, as well as related industries, have become an important part of the economic construction of Shandong, local officials said.

A news conference was held on Sept 23 by the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government to introduce the province's achievements over the past 70 years, during which the culture and tourism sectors were highlighted.

The added value of the cultural industry in Shandong increased from 183.44 billion yuan ($25.8 billion) in 2013 to 312 billion yuan in 2017, accounting for 4.29 percent from 3.32 percent of the whole GDP, with an average annual growth rate of more than 15 percent, far higher than the GDP growth rate in the same period.

The province's tourism consumption doubled from 500 billion yuan in 2013 to 1 trillion yuan in 2018.

Currently, there are 5,323 internet cafes, 3,607 KTVs and other entertainment venues, as well as 1,401 art management units in the province. There are also 2,565 travel agencies, including 229 outbound ones.

The province is now home to 11 5A scenic spots, which are China's highest ranking for tourism areas, 222 4A scenic spots, and 1,048 tourist scenic spots below 3A level.

There are 34 five-star hotels, 151 four-star hotels, 391 three-star hotels, and 25 culture-themed hotels in Shandong. It has selected eight provincial-level five-star home stay facilities and 39 four-star ones.

The province has been emphasizing the development of the regional cultural sector and tourism industry, and fostering cultural and tourism consumption as new economic growth drivers.

Over the past 70 years, Shandong's cultural and tourism cooperation and exchanges with other countries have deepened.

At present, it has established cultural exchange relations with more than 150 countries and regions. On average, art troupes at the provincial and municipal level go abroad every year to hold more than 1,000 performances, art exhibitions, and intangible cultural heritage exhibitions, making it one of the provinces with the most active cultural exchanges with foreign countries.

According to statistics, the province received 5.13 million inbound tourists in 2018, up 3.8 percent, generating revenue of $3.36 billion, up 6 percent year-on-year."

"The much-anticipated Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair kicked off on Sept 19 in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China with achievements in the culture sector.

Jointly hosted by the Shandong publicity department, the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism and the Jinan municipal government, the five-day event features an exhibition area of 103,000 square meters, with more than 5,000 international-standard stalls and 2,701 exhibitors.

The fair consists of one area specifically for business match-making and trade promotion activities and another nine exhibition areas covering creative design, calligraphy and paintings, fine arts and crafts and new media business.

More than 20 leading cultural technology enterprises, including Huawei, Tencent and Gooest Tech as well as 14 new media groups including the Twitter-like Sina Weibo Sina and Bytedance, have gathered at the fair to showcase their latest technologies and products in the cultural field.

Superb works from the 2019 ""Taishan Design Cup"" Cultural and Creative Design Competition are displayed in the exhibition area for creative design.

Also available to visitors is a dazzling display of cultural and creative products launched by such august names as the Palace Museum and the National Museum of China.

Cultural creative enterprises and institutions from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area are also present.

As one of the country's only two large-scale cultural exhibitions certified by the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, this year's event involves the largest exhibition area and has smashed the record for most exhibitors.

The number of participating countries and regions and foreign exhibitors has also exceeded previous years.

More than 365 international exhibitors from 51 countries including Germany, Britain, Japan, South Korea, Russia and Hungary are attending.

In addition, a total of 743 Chinese companies from outside the province are participating.

A joint exhibition featuring the cultural industries of provinces along the Yellow River is a highlight.

A total of 322 cultural industry projects are being promoted at the event, involving a total investment of 479.22 billion yuan ($67.49 billion).

An online trading platform has been launched where customers can buy more than 100,000 cultural products from at home and abroad.

Visitors crowd the exhibition areas of the eighth Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A performance attracts hordes of spectators during the eighth Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Exquisite porcelain products are displayed at the exhibition booth of Zibo, Shandong province. The city is a major production and export base for glass and everyday ceramics in China. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"More than 1,000 craft pieces created by national and provincial-level arts masters will be exhibited at the eighth Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair, which will be held from Sept 19 to 23 in Jinan, the province's capital.

According to the organizing committee, visitors can appreciate the exquisite crafts at the A1 Hall of the Shandong International Convention Center, involving jade carvings, traditional writing materials, creative jewelry, ceramics, and tea pottery.

Another highlight is that expo will for the first time introduced time-honored gems, jewelry, and gold ornament brands. The world's largest gold ring, which weighs 82.2 kg and possesses 76 sapphires, will be on display.

This year, the cultural fair will also launch a special exhibition area for brush, ink, paper, and inkstone, where enterprises will display traditional writing materials.

Visitors can explore the rich and dazzling porcelain and ceramic products from across the country at the event, as it will gather sancai works from Luoyang, blue and white porcelain from Jingdezhen in Jiangxi province, as well as Jun and Ru porcelain from Yuzhou and Ruzhou in Henan province. It will also include works from the Ding kiln in Quyang in Hebei province, the Ge kiln in Longquan in Zhejiang province, and works using purple sand clay from Yixing in Jiangsu province.

Leading ceramic companies will also showcase their latest products at the fair.

""The value of the cultural fair is not only the dazzling exhibits, the flow of visitors, and the trading volume, but also the vitality and influence of the folk culture,"" said an official from the organizing committee.

The cultural fair will include 10 exhibition areas in eight halls, with the exhibition area increasing from more than 30,000 square meters last year to over 100,000 square meters this year.

A set of Ge ware artifacts from Longquan, Zhejiang province. [Photo/dpm.org.cn]

The world's largest gold ring, which weighs 82.2 kg and possesses 76 sapphires, will be on display. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Shandong boasts a long history and splendid culture and is known as the hometown of Confucius, and ancient Chinese philosophers including the most famous of all, Mencius, and Sun Tzu, the author of The Art of War, who have left behind numerous precious cultural relics.

To celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Shandong Network Radio-Television Station has launched a series of short videos titled ""Amazing New Shandong"".

This episode highlights the charm of traditional culture in Shandong."

"The Qilu Reading Festival and 2019 Shandong Book Fair kicked off on Sept 10 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province, aiming to promote reading and the power of knowledge to the public as well as display the latest advances in traditional and digital publishing.

The main venue is set at the Shandong City of Books, covering an area of 12,000 square meters, which is divided into 12 exhibition areas.

The book fair has gathered 360 publishing houses nationwide and 900 public libraries, university libraries and primary and secondary school libraries in the province, with over 200,000 kinds of books, audio and video products and electronic publications on display.

Sub venues have been set up across the province's cities and counties.

A total of one million yuan ($146,600) worth of book vouchers will be released for local residents to purchase books and related products at Xinhua Bookstore outlets across Jinan.

In addition, customers will enjoy a 20 percent discount at Xinhua Bookstore outlets across the province.

More than 1,000 activities will be held across the province to promote reading, including book exhibitions, writer signing sessions, lectures, cultural salons and parent-child reading parties.

Books are displayed at the 2019 Shandong Book Fair. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Customers select books at the 2019 Shandong Book Fair. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"A portrayal of ancient philosopher Confucius is exhibited at the Confucius Museum in Qufu, Shandong province, May 26, 2019. [Photo/IC]

A museum dedicated to ancient philosopher Confucius opened Friday in his birthplace, Qufu, Shandong province, bringing nearly 700,000 cultural relics once kept in the Confucius Family Mansion to the public.

Located five kilometers from the mansion, the Confucius Museum features more than 300,000 Confucius family documents from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) to 1948, which record the family's history during feudal times.

The relics include more than 40,000 ancient books dating back to the Song Dynasty (960-1279), more than 8,000 well-preserved pieces of clothing and accessories from the Ming Dynasty and Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), as well as a large number of musical instruments that were used for worshipping Confucius.

""Such a large amount of exquisite and well-preserved Ming Dynasty clothing can only be seen in this museum,"" said Zhang Qiqi, museum staff member.

Visitors can also take a close look at 10 sets of bronze pieces from the Shang (c.16th century-11th century BC) and Zhou (c.11th century-256 BC) Dynasties at the museum.

The bronze works were royal gifts from emperor Qianlong (1711-99) of the Qing Dynasty after he attended a worship ceremony at the Confucius family mansion, said Zhang.

Having taken five years to complete, the museum covers 55,000 square meters. The main museum complex consists of a 17,000-square-meter display area, including sections on the life and wisdom of Confucius, as well as his influence on Chinese and world civilizations.

The museum was put into trial operation on Nov 26 last year and exhibited 2,500 relics. Over 232,000 people have visited the museum.

""Quite a number of cultural relics in Qufu couldn't be stored properly before we had this museum and those that have been stored were not able to be showcased to the public,"" Kong Deyong, a 77th-generation descendant of Confucius said when the museum was put into trial operation.

Building a museum that provides people with access to these Confucian relics is a major event for Confucian study and it will attract more people to learn about Confucian culture, he said.

To help people better understand Confucian culture, the museum uses state-of-the-art technologies in acoustics, light and electronics to give attendees the best experience possible."

"The opening ceremony of the 2019 China (Qufu) International Confucius Cultural Festival and the Confucius Museum was held on Sept 6 in Qufu, birthplace of the great philosopher in East China's Shandong province.

The National Cultural Heritage Administration and the Shandong Provincial People's Government also signed a framework agreement to join hands in the cultural heritage protection and utilization project in Shandong province.

The Confucius Museum is designed to inherit and carry forward the rich traditional culture represented by Confucianism. It is located at No 100 Confucius Avenue in Qufu, only four kilometers away from the city's Confucius Temple.

The museum was designed by Wu Liangyong, China's top architect and city planner.

Covering an area of 168,000 square meters, its total construction area is 55,000 sq m and it is a provincial-level specialized modern museum.

The museum is a cultural project showcasing Confucian teachings and relics collected by generations of Confucius, as well as a place to learn about traditional culture, said Yang Jinquan, deputy head of the Qufu bureau of cultural relics.

The museum started construction in 2013 and launched a trail operation on Nov 26, 2016. It has received 232,000 visitors.

The museum houses 700,000 cultural relics from the Confucius Family Mansion.

The relics include ceramics, jadeware, bronzeware, gold and silver objects, books, drawings, clothing, family archives, as well as well-preserved imperial robes from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).

They are believed to embody the Confucius family's values of holding tradition and education in esteem – and the relics explore the ups and downs of the family, as well as social changes over the centuries.

Educator and philosopher Confucius (551-479 BC) founded his eponymous school of thought that deeply influenced later generations. He was also the first Chinese person to set up private schools and enroll students from all walks of life.

The Confucius cultural festival will last for 20 days, during which a series of activities will take place, including a memorial ceremony to mark the 2,570th birthday anniversary of Confucius, as well as forums on traditional culture and tourism promotions.

The opening ceremony for the 2019 China (Qufu) International Confucius Cultural Festival and the Confucius Museum is held on Sept 6 in Qufu, Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"The 13th National Art Exhibition's artistic design section opened at the Art Gallery of the Shandong University of Art & Design on Sept 6 in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province.

Supported by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, and the China Artists Association, the Exhibition of Artistic Design Works is jointly held by the Shandong publicity department, the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, and the Shandong Literature and Art Association. It will run for two months.

The exhibition is also being held to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

After several rounds of selection, a total of 495 sets of works are on exhibition, which consists of six categories including graphic art design, industrial art design, fashion art design, environmental art design, and architectural art design.

The category of architectural art design has been included in the exhibition for the first time, displaying rich and dazzling works ranging from urban residential construction, rural dwellings, and reconstruction of traditional villages to highlights of Chinese traditional architecture.

The 13th National Art Exhibition's Chinese painting section will also be held in Shandong province. It will open on Sept 26 at the Shandong Art Museum, lasting for a month.

The opening ceremony for the 13th National Art Exhibition's artistic design section is held at the Art Gallery of the Shandong University of Art & Design on Sept 6. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A work featuring Chinese traditional architecture is on exhibition. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A set of exhibits are displayed at the national-level exhibition of artistic design works underway in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Household lighting works are displayed at the exhibition. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The exhibit shows the world famous Chinese ancient timber structures, which are connected with unique joints known as mortise and tenon. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A visitor is enchanted by the works displayed at the exhibition. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"To achieve an instant improvement of air quality, a district government in Linyi city, Shandong province, abused its power when it shut down or suspended a large number of restaurants, timber enterprises and parking lots for freight vehicles, the Ministry of Environment and Ecology has found.

It was the ""first shot"" fired in the ministry's effort to crack down on one-size-fits-all approaches used by some local governments as a way to cope with air quality inspections.

In recent years, as inadequate efforts have been made to control air pollution in Linyi, the city has ranked low in the national air quality index. Linyi was 10th from the bottom from January to June this year, and it had the lowest ranking in Shandong.

On July 15, after their poor performance on the most recent air quality rankings, seven cities in Shandong that ranked among the bottom 20 in the country－including Linyi and Jinan, the provincial capital－were ordered by provincial level officials to improve their air quality.

According to the notice released by the ministry a few days ago, the city government of Linyi announced in a meeting that the township level secretaries of the Party committee whose areas ranked among the bottom two positions in the air-pollution rating will be removed from office.

To improve the ranking, Lanshan district has forced many restaurants to close. Furthermore, over 400 timber plank enterprises were shut down, and 25 freight yard parking lots were closed for rectification, though one meant for public transportation was allowed to remain open.

On Aug 30, inspectors found that during mealtimes in the afternoon and evening, none of the restaurants opened in Yitang township of Lanshan district. This despite the fact that most of them had installed fume purification systems, the majority of the businesses were operating legitimately and most met environmental protection requirements.

Linyi is the biggest timber plank production and trading base in China. The timber enterprises are mainly located in Lanshan district, and represent the main industry of the district. In order to reduce emissions, the district temporarily halted the supply of steam, causing more than 400 timber enterprises that have experienced multiple rounds of environmental inspections to suspend their operations.

On Wednesday, Wang Yujun, Party chief of Linyi, said a joint-inspection team would be set up to deal with the abuse of power in Lanshan district. Those responsible would be punished severely.

The ministry is engaging in a special campaign to crack down on such practices that damage the basic rights and interests of legitimate enterprises.

The ministry established a hotline (010-12369) to accept complaints from Sept 1 to Nov 30. It also will make the rectification results public on its website.

At this year's National People's Congress gathering in March, Li Ganjie, minister of the Ministry of Environment and Ecology, made clear that one-size-fits-all approaches should be strictly prohibited."

"The 2019 China (Qufu) International Confucius Cultural Festival is set to open on Sept 6 to commemorate the 2,570th birthday anniversary of the great philosopher in Qufu, East China's Shandong province, which is also the birthplace of Confucius.

A news conference was hosted on Sept 3 by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government to detail the arrangements and schedule of the festival.

Officials said that nine major activities will take place during the event, including an opening ceremony, the award ceremony for the 14th UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy, a memorial ceremony to mark the 2,570th birthday anniversary of Confucius, as well as forums on traditional culture and tourism promotions.

The Confucius Prize for Literacy is the first international award to be named after a Chinese person by UNESCO. Established in 2005, the annual award ceremony has now been held in Qufu for 13 consecutive years.

Yan Jianbo, deputy Party secretary of Jining, said that in addition to the nine major events, the festival will include a series of cultural activities to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, promote traditional culture, and implement cultural programs to benefit the public.

The Confucius Museum in Qufu will also be officially inaugurated during the festival. The museum was designed to house 700,000 cultural relics from the Confucius Family Mansion and is located five kilometers away from the mansion.

The relics, including ceramics, jadeware, bronzeware, gold and silver objects, books, drawings, clothing, family archives, as well as well-preserved imperial robes from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), are believed to embody the Confucius family's values of holding traditions and education in esteem, exploring the ups and downs of the family, as well as social changes over the centuries.

The statue of Confucius in Qufu, a county-level city in the administrative area of Jining, Shandong province. [Photo/sdchina.com]

The Confucius Museum in Qufu, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: Jiningfabu]"

"The Belt & Road Brand Expo in Shanghai, June 30, 2018. [Photo/IC]

The markets involved in the Belt and Road Initiative have become a new growth hub for the foreign trade sector in East China's Shandong province as many enterprises are looking for diverse markets as part of efforts to cushion the pressure coming from trade tensions between China and the United States.

The trade potential between Shandong and the BRI economies is rising and has become a new engine to power foreign trade in the province, said Shao Bai, head of Qingdao Customs.

Imports and exports by the province generated with BRI economies during the first half of this year reached 278.66 billion yuan ($38.8 billion), a year-on-year increase of 20.2 percent and accounting for 28.7 percent of the province's total foreign trade.

Small-and medium-sized enterprises hurt by higher US import tariffs are embracing the change and new strategies to thrive by exploring more overseas markets, said Xu Yuxiu of the Shandong Group Work Win Co Ltd, a company located in Weifang which focuses on helping SMEs expand through an online network.

A report from the company showed that since last September when the China-US trade dispute began, more than 4,000 enterprises have used the online network platform to expand in markets in the BRI economies, the European Union and Southeast Asia.

Many enterprises are using their technologies to make customized commodity products geared to local conditions, said Xu.

Heng'an Radiator Co Ltd is one of the enterprises converting problems into opportunities, said Xu, who added the company has upgraded its heat exchangers to meet customer demand in Pakistan, Russia and Egypt.

Local governments are also carrying out a series of measures such as integrated customs, tax, finance, foreign exchanges and credit insurance to support enterprises in maintaining their foreign trade.

Years of effort spent on upgrading the economic structure and replacing the old growth drivers with the new drivers that are innovative, efficient and environmentally friendly have also boosted Shandong's exports, said Zhao Fengjie, deputy head of Jinan Customs.

Statistics showed that among exports in the first half of this year, life science and technology-featured products generated a year-on-year increase of 9.8 percent, electronic products jumped by 27.7 percent, computer integrated manufacturing technology products climbed 26.7 percent and aerospace technology products soared by 130 percent."

"The first Shandong International Boutique Tourism Industry Expo came to an end on Aug 31 in Jinan, capital city of East China's Shandong province, with the amount of business transactions reaching 270 million yuan ($37.68 million).

More than 1,200 cooperation agreements were signed during the three-day event, which was organized by the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism.

The expo gathered more than 160 tourism organizations from 43 countries and regions, as well as 420 cultural and tourism enterprises. Its exhibition area covered more than 20,000 square meters.

It also invited 37 cultural and tourism departments from across the country to attend the expo.

During the expo, 12 forums and over 80 promotion activities were organized, and more than 1 million brochures were handed out by exhibitors.

It attracted more than 67,000 visitors and businessmen from neighboring cities and provinces like Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Henan, Hebei, and Jiangsu.

In addition, the expo was viewed by over 800,000 people on eight live streaming platforms.

Overseas tourism agencies from 43 countries and regions including Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas launched theme tours and customized tours to attract more tourists from China.

Tourism agencies in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Egypt, India, and other countries promoted nearly 100 kinds of high-quality tourist routes and products at the expo.

An official from the Beijing office of the Iceland Tourism Bureau said that tourism has become the most important driving force of Iceland's economic growth, and that the number of Chinese tourists coming to northern Europe has been increasing year by year.

He added that Iceland is improving its reception capacity and Shandong tourists are welcomed to feel the charm of the Nordic country.

Malaysia, the Philippines, Kazakhstan, Singapore, Japan, and other countries promoted more convenient and profitable travel options for tourists at the expo.

Specialties and distinctive souvenirs from across the world were also highlighted at the expo, attracting hordes of visitors.

Visitors are attracted by the handicrafts displayed at the first Shandong International Boutique Tourism Industry Expo. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Various decorative plates are displayed at the first Shandong International Boutique Tourism Industry Expo. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Specialties and distinctive souvenirs from different regions are displayed at the first Shandong International Boutique Tourism Industry Expo. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"Wang Qingxian (left), Party chief of Qingdao, and Meng Fanli, mayor of Qingdao, unveil the Qingdao area of the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone on Saturday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Qingdao Area of China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone (FTZ) was officially unveiled in the coastal city of Qingdao, Shandong province on Saturday.

As the largest part of the newly launched Shandong FTZ, the Qingdao area covers 52 square kilometers and focuses on five fields, including international trade, marine sectors, shipping logistics, modern finance and advanced manufacturing sectors.

The Qingdao area is located in the Qingdao West Coast New Area. It comprises four functional zones: the Qingdao Qianwan Free Trade Port Zone, the West Coast Area Integrated Free Trade Zone, the Qingdao Economic and Technological Development Zone and the Sino-German Ecopark.

Top officials from Qingdao grant business licenses to representatives of enterprises settling in the Qingdao area of the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone on Saturday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Among 112 pilot tasks for the Shandong FTZ, 106 will be implemented in the Qingdao area, accounting for nearly 95 percent of the total, officials said.

The Qingdao Area is expected to attract at least 30,000 enterprises and its import and export volume is forecast to hit $30 billion by the end of 2022.

The Shandong FTZ was officially unveiled on Friday, following China’s announcement on Monday to establish six new FTZs across the country."

"The new Shandong free trade zone, widely seen as providing an engine for growth and innovation that will add to the nation's economic advancement, was inaugurated on Friday.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province and Gong Zheng, governor of Shandong province, jointly unveiled the nameplate for the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone on Aug 30 in Jinan, capital city of East China's Shandong province.

Covering a total area of 119.98 square kilometers, the Shandong FTZ comprises three areas in Qingdao, Yantai and Jinan. The Jinan section covers an area of 37.99 sq km, the Yantai part covers 29.99 sq km while the Qingdao area is the biggest, covering 52 sq km.

The nameplates for the three areas were also unveiled, as well as the leading group office of the Shandong FTZ.

Liu said in his keynote speech at the unveiling ceremony that the establishment of the Shandong FTZ was a major opportunity for Shandong's development and the province would proceed to carry out reform tasks in line with its strategic positioning and characteristics according to the overall plan released by the State Council on Aug 26.

According to the plan, the Yantai area covering an area of with an area of 29.99 square kilometers consists of the Sino-Korea (Yantai) Industrial Park and the west part of Yantai Bonded Port Area. It  will focus on the development of high-end equipment manufacturing, new materials, new generations of information technology, energy conservation and environmental protection, biomedicines and producer services.

The area aims to establish a pilot zone for China-Republic of Korea trading and investment cooperation, a marine intelligent manufacturing base and a demonstration zone for national scientific and technological achievements and international technology transfers and transformation.

Major projects which will settle in the Shandong FTZ's three areas, were also signed at the event.

The nameplates for Shandong FTZ's three areas and the zone's leading group office are also unveiled. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"According to Shandong government officials, three national-level cultural exhibitions covering painting, art design, photography, calligraphy, and engraving will be hosted in the province from this September to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

A news conference was held on Aug 29 by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government to introduce the arrangements and schedule of the exhibitions.

The 13th National Art Exhibition's Chinese painting section will open on Sept 26 at the Shandong Art Museum and will last for a month, while the art and design section will open on Sept 6 at the Art Gallery of the Shandong University of Art & Design, running for two months.

The 27th National Photography Exhibition will open on Sept 27 in the cultural blocks of Shihu Garden in Weifang and will last for 10 days.

The 12th National Exhibition of Calligraphy and Engraving will open on Nov 8 at the Shandong Art Museum and will last for one month.

This is the first time that three national-level exhibitions to be hosted in one province, which provides a rare opportunity to promote the development of Shandong's culture and art sectors, as well as display the new image of the province, officials said."

"Liu Jiayi (left), Party chief of Shandong, and Gong Zheng, governor of Shandong, unveiled the Shandong FTZ on Friday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong Pilot Free Trade Zone was officially unveiled on Friday, following China's announcement on Monday to establish six new FTZs.

Covering a total area of 119.98 square kilometers, the Shandong FTZ consists of three parts in Jinan, Qingdao and Yantai.

With three to five years' reform trials, the Shandong FTZ is set to develop into a high-level and high-quality zone with features including convenient access to trade and investment, sound financial services and driving development in surrounding areas, Ren Airong, vice-governor of Shandong, said at a press conference held in Jinan on Friday.

Jinan will focus on the development of artificial intelligence, industrial finance, medical and health care, the cultural industry and information technology to develop into an important national and regional economic center, logistics center and scientific and technological innovation center, said Sun Shutao, mayor of Jinan.

The coastal city of Qingdao will focus on modernising the marine industry, international trade, shipping logistics and modern finance. As a coastal city, Qingdao will look to advance manufacturing to transform into an international shipping hub in northeast Asia, an important innovation center in the eastern coastal areas and act as a demonstration zone for the development of the marine economy, said Meng Fanli, mayor of Qingdao.

Yantai will also utilise its geographical coastal advantage to deepen cooperation with Japan and the Republic of Korea, focusing on high-end equipment manufacturing, new materials, new generations of information technology, energy conservation, environmental protection, bio medicine and producer services.

A provincial-level working office for the Shandong FTZ, as well as the three parts in Jinan, Qingdao and Yantai were unveiled officially on Friday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

As one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilization, Shandong is famous for Confucius and Mencius — well-known ancient Chinese philosophers. With a tradition of hospitality, Shandong beckons travelers from all lands. "Friendly Shandong" welcomes you.

"East China's Shandong province will host a large-scale gourmet festival in its 16 cities from Sept 7 to Oct 7 to celebrate the coming 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, officials said.

A news conference was held on Aug 28 by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government to detail the arrangements and schedule of the event.

Organized by the Department of Commerce of Shandong province, the event's main venue will be located in Jimo ancient town of Qingdao. Officials said the festival was also designed to promote Shandong's delicacies, advance the development of the local catering market as well as boost the tourism sector.

A bonanza of activities will take place across the province's 16 cities to display the province's rich and palatable dishes, including chef contests, food shows and promotion events.

Shandong cuisine, more commonly known in Chinese as Lu cuisine, originates from the native cooking styles of Shandong province. Its history can be dated back to the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC).

The culinary style has become one of China's eight great cuisines since Song Dynasty (960-1279). It is the most prevalent distinct regional cuisine in China, popular throughout Beijing, Tianjin and Northeast China.

According to the Department of Commerce of Shandong province, cities have planned and prepared their own gourmet activities.

Zibo, a major production and export base for glass and everyday ceramics in China, will host a festival to display the cuisine and its exquisite tableware.

Dongying, located in the delta where the Yellow River, China's mother river, joins the Bohai Sea, will host a beer and food festival.

Jining, home to China's sixth largest fresh water lake -- Weishan Lake -- will host a rural tourism and food festival.

The Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government hosts a news conference on Aug 28 by to detail the arrangements and schedule of the event. [Photo/e23.cn]

Braised pork ribs with shallots, a typical Shandong dish. [Photo by Ye Jun/provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"A bonanza of activities will take place during the National Intangible Cultural Heritage Quyi Week -- being staged on Sep 6-10 in Jinan, capital city of eastern China's Shandong province -- local officials announced.

Quyi is a traditional Chinese art form spanning a variety of categories such as ballad singing, storytelling, comic dialogue and Chinese crosstalk.

At a news conference, hosted by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government on Aug 26, arrangements and schedule of the event were presented.

Hu Yan, deputy director of the intangible cultural heritage department under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, said that quyi is an important category in the country's intangible cultural heritage.

""The inheritance and development of quyi is of great significance to carrying forward fine traditional Chinese culture, enhancing cultural confidence, prospering literature and art and meeting the people's growing needs for a better life,"" Hu said.

Hu said that the event, which has been approved by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, will showcase the inheritance, protection and development results of the traditional folk art.

Hu added that the first Quyi Week was launched last year during the National Cultural and Natural Heritage Day celebrations, which covered all 127 quyi categories on the National-level Intangible Heritage List for the first time.

This year's edition will present 131 quyi categories from across the country, of which 60 are at national-level and 34 are provincial-level.

Folk artists from all over the country will stage performances in Jinan's theaters and residential areas, reaching out for more participants and helping inform the public about the traditional artform.

Professional forums and discussion activities will take place as well, getting folk artists, experts, academics and government officials to offer advice on the better protection and inheritance of the traditional folk art.

A poster for this year's National Intangible Cultural Heritage Quyi Week, which will be held on Sep 6-10 in Jinan, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

The Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government hosts a news conference on Aug 26, detailing the arrangements and schedule of the quyi event. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"China's Ministry of Commerce announced the establishment of the Shandong Pilot Free Trade Zone, which includes areas in Jinan, Qingdao, and Yantai, on Aug 26.

The Yantai area of Shandong FTZ, with an area of 29.99 square kilometers, consists of the Sino-Korea (Yantai) Industrial Park and the west part of Yantai Bonded Port Area, which is located in Yantai Economic and Technological Development Area.

The area will focus on developing high-end equipment manufacturing, new materials, new generation information technology, biomedicine, and producer services to fuel the Shandong FTZ.

It has gathered more than 3,000 industrial companies, 124 financial institutions and 215 scientific and technological innovation platforms of various types.

Yantai will also give full play to its advantages as a coastal city to boost the high-quality development of marine economy and step up collaboration with South Korea by attracting more investment and encouraging companies to expand overseas.

Accordingly, a total of six new pilot free trade zones were set up at the time. The other five are in Jiangsu, Hebei, Yunnan and Heilongjiang provinces and Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region.

To date, there are 18 FTZs across the country. Wang Shouwen, vice-minister of commerce, said the move reflects the government's resolve to achieve high-level opening-up and support an opening world economy."

"The final round of an original song contest promoting Shandong's unique culture and tourism resources was held on Aug 24 in Linyi, East China's Shandong province.

After preliminary evaluation, online voting and scoring on-site by the judges, the competition selected one first prize, three second prize and five third prize works.

Themed on natural landscapes, local conditions and customs, the contest was designed to integrate Shandong's traditional culture and tourism resources with modern pop music.

Organizers said that the aim was to launch high-quality cultural tourism products, create top tourism performance projects, as well as enhance the brand value and influence of ""Cultural Shandong"" and ""Friendly Shandong"".

The contest was launched in May. After more than a month of activity both online and offline, by the end of June, nearly 300 songs were collected.

Entries include a variety of music styles including pop, folk, rock and roll and older styles, with themes ranging from Shandong's history and culture, to natural scenery, folk traditions and city life.

Online voting started in August for all entries. More than 90,000 votes were cast online within the allotted time.

The contest gathered music artists and fans from the province as well as from other 20 provinces and cities – including Zhejiang, Anhui, Hubei, Beijing and Gansu – with the participation of music professionals from major music universities and musician associations.

Supported by the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, the event was jointly organized by the Linyi municipal bureau of tourism and culture, the Mount Meng tourism resort management committee and Shandong Culture Media Co.

The final round of an original song contest, promoting Shandong's unique culture and tourism resources, takes place. It was held on Aug 24 in Linyi, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Zhang Guilin, deputy director of the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, delivers a speech at the event. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"A joint exhibition featuring the cultural industries of provinces along the Yellow River will be highlighted at the eighth Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair from Sept 19 to 23 in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

The Yellow River, known as China's ""Mother River"" and the cradle of early Chinese civilization, runs through nine provinces and autonomous regions. It empties into the Bohai Sea in Dongying, Shandong province.

With a length of 5,464 km, it is China's second-longest river after the Yangtze River and it is the sixth longest in the world. The river waters 12 percent of China's 1.3 billion population, 15 percent of its farmland and generates about 14 percent of its GDP.

The cultural fair, jointly organized by the Shandong provincial publicity department, the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, and the Jinan municipal government, is designed to showcase latest achievements in cultural and creative industries, as well as promote projects, enhance exchanges, and facilitate trade and cooperation.

The organizing committee of the cultural fair has hosted special promotion events in Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia Hui autonomous region, Inner Mongolia autonomous region, Shaanxi, Shanxi, Sichuan, and Henan to invite local enterprises, organizations, and folk artists to attend the fair, as well as strengthen economic cooperation and cultural exchanges.

""Yellow River, as well as the Great Wall and the Yangtze River, are all important symbols of the Chinese nation and the spirit of the nation. While promoting the development of the tourism industry along the Yellow River, the provinces and regions along the river also inherit the Yellow River culture, displaying unique cultural connotation and self-confidence,"" said Zhao Shanhai, an official from the organizing committee.

A forum focused on the cultural and tourism industrial development along the Yellow River will also be held during the cultural fair.

An aerial view shows the Yellow River bed in Luoyang, Central China's Henan province. [Photo by Zeng Xianping/for chinadaily.com.cn]

The Yellow River, the second longest river in China, flows into the Bohai Sea in Dongying, East China's Shandong province. [Photo by Wei Dong/chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Workers go through their paces at Barrick Gold Corporation's Veladero gold mine in Argentina's San Juan province on April 26, 2017. Shandong Gold Group, in partnership with Barrick, operates the mine. [Photo/Agencies]

Miner opens foreign office in Toronto, looks for sustainable and long-lasting resource reserve

After a multiyear survival mode, gold companies are finally enjoying a growth cycle in the market. Shandong Gold Group has embraced the opportunity and is boosting its development by setting up an office in Toronto, dubbed the world's mining capital.

At its opening ceremony on July 25 in downtown Toronto, the company, along with a group of mining companies, investment banks and officials, gathered to celebrate the boom and discuss the future opportunities in the industry.

Ranking first in China and 12th in the world by reaching an annual gold output of 47.75 metric tons, the company has made remarkable strides toward the strategic objective of ""a world top 10 mining enterprise"" set out in its 13th Five-Year Plan.

However, according to Chen Yumin, chairman of Shandong Gold Group, the gold reserve is limited compared to other parts of the world, so they have to look more at the global level to build a sustainable and long-lasting resource reserve.

""When we are looking for gold, its resources are distributed in many parts of the world, and we have come into contact and worked with many major global mining companies,"" said Chen. ""The opening of the Canada office is a milestone for our overseas investment strategy. But we are looking more globally than just Canada.""

The company reached a partnership with Barrick Gold Corporation in 2017 in operating Veladero-the largest gold mine in Argentina-followed by an initial public offering in Hong Kong in 2018.

""Our partnership with Shandong Gold in Argentina is transforming relationships at the local, national and international levels,"" said Rob Krcmarov, executive vice-president of Barrick.

""Clearly, we have much to do. Shandong Gold's presence in Toronto will help foster new relationships and better understanding of Chinese investors by Western investors and operators. It will add value to the collaboration our two companies are forging,"" Krcmarov added.

Richard Tory, head of Canadian investment banking at Morgan Stanley, admired the Chinese investor's courage to face the ongoing challenges.

According to him, after years of cost reductions and lower capital expenditures, gold production continued to decline. New discoveries are not being made, and reserves are not being replenished, so gold companies will need to be creative in finding ways to continue to grow strongly and make profits over the coming years.

""Chinese investors are willing to respond to these challenges. Companies like Shandong Gold have shown the vision to become the leading gold company in China and an emerging leader globally,"" Tory said. ""They have developed partnerships with others by sharing the risks of operating the most complex mining in the world.""

Meanwhile, Chinese investors are advised to be prepared to face a culture shock and make an effort to understand local regulations and practices. For example, Chinese investors need to have good relations with First Nations communities, local governments and environmental groups.

""By introducing green technology, we adhere to the safety standards and environmental protection of the community,"" Chen said. ""We have to respect the local community instead of challenging traditions or cultures, and more importantly, we have to share interests and rewards with them.""

Keith Spence, member of the board of directors of the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada, said Chinese investors are welcome in the country.

""China has been one of the big funders of mining globally, including in Canada,"" said Spence. ""If you look around the world, in the past few years, the real two big funders were China and private equity, while the traditional financiers-commercial banks-were out of the market, so China was seen as a big source of alternative finance."""

"A preliminary contest on telling China's stories was launched on Aug 23 in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

The event is part of the ""Tell China's Stories"" Contest 2019. Supported by the Information Office of the State Council and hosted by the China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration, the contest was launched in April and is designed to share exciting stories from various Chinese cities, as well as help the world to better understand China.

The Shandong round is supported by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government and jointly hosted by the China Internet News Center and the Institute of Contemporary China and the World Studies.

Wei Changmin, director of the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government, delivered a speech at the launch ceremony.

""Shandong is an important cradle of Chinese culture and the province is the birthplace of Confucius and Confucianism,"" said Wei. ""Over the past 70 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the people of Shandong have made pioneering efforts and forged ahead, achieving transformative changes in the province.""

Wei said that the event will involve people from all walks of life to share their stories, as well as to witness Shandong's remarkable development over the past 70 years.

Wei added that the event will also help to tell Shandong's stories to the world, help the world to learn more about Shandong, and increase the province's international profile.

According to the organizing committee, entries for the Shandong section contest should be videos or short videos, with themes ranging from the Chinese dream, Shandong people, Shandong culture, and Shandong cities to Shandong's villages and Shandong brands.

The Shandong round of the contest is the eighth of its kind launched in the country, following those in Hubei province, Hunan province, Chongqing municipality, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, Fujian province, Sichuan province, and Yunnan province.

Wei Changmin, director of the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government, delivers a speech at the launch ceremony of the Shandong section of the ""Tell China's Stories"" Contest 2019 on Aug 23 in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo/china.com.cn]

Officials and representatives from the organizing committee announce the commencement of the Shandong section of the ""Tell China's Stories"" Contest 2019 on Aug 23 in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo/china.com.cn]"

"The Nishan World Center for Confucian Studies was inaugurated on Aug 25 in Nishan, the birthplace of Confucius in Qufu, Shandong province, to build a global platform for the research and study of Confucianism.

Supported and founded by the Ministry of Education, the Shandong Provincial People's Government and relevant educational research institutions, the center, which is headquartered in Nishan, will build several branches at home and abroad to carry out academic research, talent cultivation, communication, and international cooperation.

Chen Lai, director of the Academy of Chinese Learning at Tsinghua University, said that as Nishan is the hometown of the great philosopher, it is a solid choice to establish the Confucian center here, heralding a new age of Confucianism research and development.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, said that the center in Nishan would play a big role in promoting traditional Chinese culture in an innovative way.

Liu stressed that Shandong should further improve its cultural consciousness and confidence in the international arena, strengthen the study of Confucianism to integrate traditional culture with modern culture, as well as meet the needs of the development of the era and society.

He added that efforts should be made to build Shandong into an important Belt and Road base for facilitating exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

Sun Yao, a vice-minister of education, said that with the profound changes in China's economy and society, the growing openness to the outside world, as well as the rapid development of internet technology and new media, it is imperative to deepen the understanding of the importance of traditional Chinese culture, including Confucianism, as well as to strengthen policy support and build a system for the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture.

He expressed his hope that the center will bring together more first-rate experts, scholars, and academic institutions at home and abroad to carry out systematic academic research, inherit and promote traditional Chinese culture, as well as make contributions to building a community with a shared future for mankind and creating a better world.

Confucius (551-479 BC) was born in Nishan, in the Shandong city of Qufu. His philosophical teachings, known as Confucianism, are a crucial part of Chinese traditional culture.

Officials unveil the nameplate of the Nishan World Center for Confucian Studies on Aug 25 in Qufu, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong province, delivers a speech at the founding conference of the Nishan World Center for Confucian Studies on Aug 25 in Qufu, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

More than 350 representatives take part in the founding conference of the Nishan World Center for Confucian Studies on Aug 25 in Qufu, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Shandong Party chief Liu Jiayi (third from right) browses through books about traditional Chinese culture in the Nishan Sacred Land of Qufu, Shandong province on Aug 25. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"According to the organizing committee of the eighth Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair, 40 cultural sites, enterprises, and parks have been selected as sub venues of this year's cultural fair, following rounds of application, screening, and on-the-spot investigations.

According to the organizing committee, this year's edition is set to attract more participants than previous years by involving more celebration and exhibition sites.

A dazzling series of branch activities will be staged across the city to enrich the lives of local residents, promote the province's rich and colorful cultural resources, as well as gain more interaction with the public.

The city's famous scenic spots, such as Furong Alley, Zhujiayu scenic area and Baimai Spring scenic area, cultural and creative industrial parks, museums, as well as parks are included on the list.

The cultural fair will be held from Sept 19 to 23 at Shandong International Convention Center with 10 exhibition areas in eight halls. The exhibition area has increased from more than 30,000 square meters last year to over 100,000 square meters this year.

According to the organizing committee, the biennial event will become an annual one and will be settled in Jinan from this year going forward.

Fantawild Oriental Heritage, a large theme park in Jinan has been selected as a sub venue of the eighth Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

The Baimai Spring scenic area in Jinan has been selected as a sub venue of the eighth Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo by Wang Liangchao/provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Thirty-one overseas students from well-known colleges including Harvard, Yale and Duke universities recently enjoyed a 12-day trip to Shandong province.

At the invitation of Yantai's foreign and overseas Chinese affairs office, the group had the chance to visit several popular cities in Shandong, including Jinan, Qufu and Yantai, which gave students the chance to learn about different elements of Chinese culture such as martial arts, paper-cutting, Peking Opera and dough sculpturing.

Cheng Zhihao, a student from Stanford University in the United States, spoke highly of the activity and said that through the trip he was able to improve his Chinese and gained a deeper understanding of traditional Chinese culture.

Sponsored by the Chinese Language and Culture Education Foundation of China, the event aims to help more overseas students learn about traditional Chinese culture.

Overseas students learn about traditional Chinese characters and paintings during their trip. [Photo/yantai.sdchina.com]

The group poses for photos at some of Shandong's renowned scenic spots, including Yantai Mountain, Baotu Spring, Daming Lake and the Confucius Temple in Qufu. [Photo/yantai.sdchina.com]

Overseas students learn Peking Opera during their trip. [Photo/clef.org.cn]"

"Yantai semiconductor technology services platform is launched at YEDA on Aug 15. [Photo/yantai.dzwww.com]

Yantai semiconductor technology services platform was launched at Yantai Economic and Technological Development Area (YEDA) on Aug 15, making it the first of its kind in Shandong province.

Jointly built by the Mige Laboratory and the Shandong Zhiyu Intellectual Property Operation Center, the platform is set to attract high-end talents or lab resources from home and abroad and also focus on the marketization of technologies in the fields of semiconductors, chips and new materials.

Accordingly, YEDA has a slew of leading semiconductor companies in the design, materials, sealing and testing fields including Yantai Raytron Technology Co, Barbond Co and CECEP Valiant Co.

The city is making efforts to implement its advanced manufacturing cluster program and by 2020, the total value of its semiconductors industry is expected to hit 10 billion yuan ($1.44 billion)."

"The Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism will host an international photography competition to promote local tourism resources worldwide, as well as raise the province's international profile.

With a theme of ""Hometown of Confucius, Friendly Shandong,"" the competition results will be announced in November. In order to expand the influence of the competition, as well as attract more photographers and photography enthusiasts to participate in it, the organizing committee is now collecting photography works from home and abroad.

All entries must be original and be shot after January 2018. Photography works should feature Shandong's unique cultural and tourism resources, quality tourism services, natural scenery, as well as related themes.

Interested entrants can send their works to gjlysyds2019@163.com with detailed information including title of works, author's name, contact number, and shooting places before Nov 20.

The organizing committee will select two gold medal winners, five silver medalists, 10 bronze medal winners, as well as 10 best aerial shots.

Certificates and rewards will also be offered for winners.

A seaside view of Shandong province. [Photo by Wang Xiaofei/WeChat account: sdgjls]

A beautiful urban landscape in the twilight in Shandong. [Photo by Zhou Qingyang/WeChat account: sdgjls]"

"Typhoon Lekima approaches Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, Aug 11, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

Five people were killed and seven were missing in China's Shandong province as of Monday noon, after Typhoon Lekima hit the province over the weekend, local authorities said.

Lekima, the ninth and strongest ever typhoon of the year, has affected a total of 1.66 million people, with nearly 183,800 having been relocated to safe places as of 5:50 am on Monday, according to the province's emergency management department.

The affected area covers 522 towns in 14 cities in the province, said the department.

Typhoon Lekima made its second landing at 8:50 pm on Sunday on the coast of Huangdao district, the coastal city of Qingdao, packing winds up to 82.8 km per hour, according to China Meteorological Administration.

The typhoon also damaged 175,400 hectares of farmland and collapsed 609 houses, said the Shandong department, which estimated the direct economic loss amounted to nearly 1.5 billion yuan ($212 million). The loss in agricultural sector reached 939 million yuan.

The province's Shouguang city, also called China's town of vegetables, was severely hit by rain. A video footage on the internet showed some vegetable greenhouses submerged in water on Sunday.

Lekima is expected to whirl through Shandong Peninsula and Laizhou Bay, turn northeast forward before weakening, according to a piece of latest news at close to 11 am from website of China Weather, which is run by China Meteorological Administration.

The website said the typhoon is expected to bring strong wind in coastal areas of Shandong Peninsula, Liaoning, Hebei and Tianjin. It will also bring torrential rain in parts of Shandong, Hebei, Tianjin, Liaoning and Jilin.

The typhoon has been battering the eastern coastal provinces Jiangsu and Zhejiang, as well as Shanghai since Friday.

At least 38 people were killed and 10 were still missing in Zhejiang province as of 10 am on Monday, according to the province's flood control and drought relief headquarters."

"Typhoon Lekima approaches Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, Aug 10, 2019. [Photo/VCG]

East China's Shandong province issued this year's first red alert for storm on Saturday evening, as the deadly Typhoon Lekima approached the province.

Torrential downpours caused by the typhoon swept most part of the province, with 61 gauging stations across the province showing over 100 millimeters of precipitation. One station in Linyi saw the highest 299.3 millimeters.

Shouguang, a coastal city administrated by Weifang, was severely hit by storms. The city is dubbed as China's town of vegetables.

An online video footage posted by Economic View showed that vegetable greenhouses were submerged in water on Sunday.

This happened one year after Shouguang was flooded by Typhoon Rumbia, the biggest deluge for more than 40 years, affecting more than 500,000 people in Shouguang and causing vegetable prices to rise.

A villager Zhang Yimin said he was helping his father-in-law guard their vegetable greenhouses, which were flooded last year.

According to him, it took them 20,000 yuan to maintain the soil and plant the eggplant seedlings for each greenhouse, which would be totally destroyed once the water floods in.

""With lessons learned from last year, the situation may not be as bad as the previous year. However, we are not sure whether greenhouses would be flooded as this year's rainfall is much heavier,"" he told China Daily on Sunday.

In order to reduce the potential losses of greenhouse farmers, the Shouguang government encouraged local farmers to buy insurances for their greenhouses and vegetables. Sixty-five percent of the insurance fees were subsidized by the government, according to provincial news outlets.

Shandong Party chief Liu Jiayi led a team heading to Shouguang and supervising flood prevention as well as rescue and relief work.

According to China Meteorological Administration, Typhoon Lekima is travelling north at a speed of 25-30 kilometers per hour and is expected to land in Rizhao or Yantai before Sunday evening, both of which are two coastal cities of Shandong province.

The province has issued yellow alert for Typhoon Lekima. Ships have returned to port, some railway services have been suspended and flights have been canceled. Scenic spots such as Taishan Mountain and Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center have also been temporarily closed.

Lekima, the ninth typhoon of this year, landed around 1:45 am Saturday in Zhejiang, bringing heavy rainstorms and triggering flash floods.

China has a four-tier color-coded weather warning system, with red representing the most severe weather, followed by orange, yellow and blue.

Ye Qian contributed to the story."

Over three million times of training on vocational skills are scheduled to be carried out in East China’s Shandong province from 2019 to 2021, according to the recently released plans for upgrading the vocational skills in the province.“By 2021, vocational skill-armed labor force will account for at least one quarter of the labor force in Shandong,” Xia Luqing, deputy head of the Human Resources and Social Security Department of Shandong province, said at a news conference held in Jinan on Thursday.Workers at enterprises, college students, ex-servicemen, rural migrant workers, junior and high middle school students not attending colleges, professional farmers and poverty-stricken people are the major groups that will get trained.In addition to training classes at places such as enterprises and schools, classes will be available online including through smart phone apps and WeChat public accounts to meet demands of as many people as possible.

"Containers carrying goods for export are seen in Qingdao Port, East China's Shandong province, on Oct 19, 2018. [Photo/VCG]

Shandong province will play a bigger role in the Belt and Road Initiative with the help of the newly consolidated Shandong Province Port Group, which will expand its operations into the country's inland areas, industry officials and insiders said.

Launched on Tuesday in Qingdao, the company has integrated the major ports in the province, including Qingdao Port, Yantai Port, Rizhao Port and the Bohai Bay Port Group.

""By integrating port facilities and services, the coastal ports in Shandong province will enhance connections with more 'waterless ports' in inland provinces along the Silk Road Economic Belt,"" said Huo Gaoyuan, the new group's first chairman, adding that the new group will provide services for hinterland areas involved in the Eurasian Continental Bridge.

Official statistics showed the cargo throughput at all coastal ports in Shandong province in 2018 amounted to 1.6 billion metric tons, ranking second in the country. With a cargo handling capacity exceeding 500 million tons last year, Qingdao Port was ranked among the Top 10 ports in China.

Yantai Port and Rizhao Port, whose cargo handling capacity is over 400 million tons, also rank among the Top 10 ports in the country.

Huo hoped the group would bolster the province's opening-up and become a world-class port conglomerate.

The move of port resource integration was made by the Shandong provincial Party committee and the provincial government to maximize port resources and eliminate regional competition.

Launched in March 2018, the Bohai Bay Port Group, which now is in charge of Binzhou Port, Dongying Port and Weifang Port, was the first step toward port integration in Shandong province.

In early July, Qingdao Port announced a merger with neighboring Weihai Port. At the end of last month, the new port's leadership was announced and began working.

Huo said the four ports in the new group will give full play to their distinct advantages and potential. In addition, Qingdao Port is also seeking opportunities brought by the demonstration area for economic and trade cooperation between China and members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The demonstration area is expected to add momentum to cooperation between China and SCO economies. It has a multimodal transportation center connected to countries and regions involved in the BRI, with 10 domestic and eight international freight train services.

""The multimodal transportation center is directly linked with Qingdao Port by a railway line, which enables the port to better serve as a transportation hub connecting Japan, South Korea and SCO-related economies,"" said Jia Cunyu, a senior official of the demonstration area.

Port asset integration at the provincial level has become a trend in China, with provinces including Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Liaoning establishing unified port groups or corporations in the past few years.

China saw an overall growth in cargo throughput at ports in the first half of 2019, said official data released on July 28 and reported by Xinhua News Agency.

Chinese cargo throughput at ports reached about 6.7 billion tons in the first six months, up by 4.5 percent compared with the same period of 2018, said a report released on the website of the National Development and Reform Commission."

"East China's Shandong province held a cultural trade promotion conference on July 30 in the United States city of Los Angeles, which was organized by the Shandong provincial department of commerce.

The Shandong delegation -- composed of nearly 30 representatives from government departments and enterprises of Shandong cities such Jinan, Qingdao, Yantai and Rizhao -- gave a detailed presentation on the province.

They also presented a detailed picture of each city's economic development, pillar industries, development planning as well as investment policies.

Nearly 200 representatives from local enterprises, movie companies, financial institutions and the mainstream media took part in the event.

Wang Jin, Culture Consul of Chinese Consulate-General in Los Angeles, spoke highly of Shandong's long history and rich culture in her speech and extended her warm congratulations on the opening of the Shandong cultural trade promotion conference.

She said that people-to-people and cultural exchanges between China and the United States are an important part of Sino-US relations, and Shandong has a great advantage in this respect.

She hoped that through the promotion, local people could gain a deeper understanding of Shandong, so as to further promote the cultural, economic and trade exchanges between the province and Los Angeles.

Congresswoman Judy Chu said in a speech that she highly appreciated the cultural, economic and trade exchanges between Shandong and California.

She said that she was deeply impressed by the trade promotion event held in Los Angeles by Shandong province, the hometown of Confucius.

""Of the many activities I have participated in, this event is the only one from China that has lasted for five consecutive years in my constituency,"" Chu added."

"Guests cheer the opening of the Shandong Gold Group Canada office in Toronto on Thursday. NA LI / CHINA DAILY

After being in survival mode for several years, gold companies have finally enjoyed a growth cycle. Shandong Gold Group is embracing the opportunity and has set up an office in Toronto, considered the world's mining capital.

At the office's grand opening on Thursday in downtown Toronto, the company, along with a group of other mining companies, investment banks and officials, gathered to celebrate the recent boom and discuss opportunities.

Ranked No. 1 in China and No. 12 in the world with annual gold output of 47.75 tons, the State-owned company run by the government of Shandong province in East China has made major strides toward its strategic objective of ""a world Top 10 mining enterprise"" set forth in its 13th Five-Year Plan.

However, according to Chen Yumin, chairman of Shandong Gold Group, gold reserves are limited in China compared with other parts of the world, so the company has to look globally to build sustainable and long-lasting reserves.

""When we are looking for buried gold, its resources are distributed in many parts of the world, and we have come in contact and worked with many major global mining companies,"" said Chen. ""The opening of the Canada office is a milestone for our overseas investment strategy. But we are looking more global than just Canada.""

The company, headquartered in Jinan, formed a partnership with Toronto-based Barrick Gold Corp in operating Veladero — the largest gold mine in Argentina, in 2017— followed by an IPO on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange in 2018.

""Our partnership with Shandong Gold in Argentina is transforming relationships at the local, national and international levels,"" said Rob Krcmarov, vice-president of Barrick.

""Clearly, we have much to do. Shandong Gold's presence in Toronto will help foster new relationships and better understanding of Chinese investors by Western investors and operators. It will add value to the collaboration our two companies are forging,"" Krcmarov added.

Richard Tory, head of Canadian investment banking at Morgan Stanley, said he admires the Chinese company's courage to face challenges.

According to Tory, because of lower capital expenditures, amid other reasons, gold production is declining. New discoveries are not being made, and reserves are not being replenished. Gold companies therefore will need to get creative to find ways to continue to grow strongly and profitably.

""Chinese investors are willing to respond to these challenges. A company like Shandong Gold has shown the vision to become the leading gold company in China and an emerging leader globally,"" Tory said. ""They have developed partnerships with others by sharing the risks of operating the most complex and prospective mining in the world.""

Meanwhile, Chinese investors are being advised to prepare for a possible cultural shock and make an effort to understand local regulations and practices.

For example, Chinese investors will need to have good relations with First Nations communities, local governments and environmental groups.

""By introducing the green technology, we adhere to the safety standards and environmental protection of the community,"" Chen pledged. ""We have to respect the local community instead of challenging the traditions or cultures, and importantly we have to share interests and share rewards with them.""

Keith Spence, a member of the board of directors of the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada, said Chinese investors are welcome despite the current diplomatic rift between Canada and China.

""China has been one of the big funders of mining globally, including in Canada,"" he said. ""If you look around the world, in the past few years, the real two big funders were China and private equity, while the traditional financiers' commercial banks were out of the market, so China was seen as a big source of alternative finance."""

"Shandong government released a legislation to help protect the ecological environment in Changdao county in Yantai on July 26, making it first of its kind in Shandong province.

Regulations on Changdao Marine Ecological Protection rolled out a raft of measures in terms of ecological restoration and cultivation, pollution treatment and regional function planning.

According to the law, activities that destroy marine ecology should be prohibited and existing projects that do not meet the planning requirements should be closed or moved out. The regulation will be taken into effect on Oct 1.

As the only island county in Shandong province, Changdao enjoys unique geographical advantages, rich marine resources and profound culture, but its ecosystem is relatively vulnerable. The regulation is of great significance to protect its ecological marine environment.

Changdao county, located at the north end of China's Shandong province, enjoys an abundance of wildlife. Marine species like barracudas can also be seen swimming in the nearby sea areas, while sharp-eyed visitors can track signs of coastal erosion in the rocky outcrops.

It has 32 picturesque islands each with their own unique features, which attract a large number of tourists every summer. For seafood lovers, the island is home to Chinese abalone, scallops and seaweed.

Changdao is home to seagulls. [Photo/WeChat Account:shandongfubu]

Changdao is known for its clean sandy beaches and limestone cliffs. [Photo/WeChat Account:shandongfubu]

A cute harbor seal takes a rest on a rock in Changdao Island, Yantai, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat Account:shandongfubu]"

"Police in Zaozhuang, Shandong province, are looking into allegations a local company produced and sold substandard cement to a school in Henan province for the building of student dormitories.

The city's Taierzhuang district government held a news conference Sunday morning to announce local police had detained two suspects at Zaozhuang Pengyuan Building Materials Co.

Cement samples collected from the Zhicheng Experiemntal School in Henan's Luyi county were sent to examiners in Shandong and Jiangsu provinces, and both said the samples were of inferior quality.

The district's market regulator said the school purchased 25 of a total 200 metric tons of problematic cement. Investigations traced 150 metric tons through sales records so far.

The inquiry came after the public was outraged by recent media reports claiming the cement used for the student dormitory in March could easily be crumbled by hand.

School authorities said it has more than 900 boarding students, mostly left-behind children whose parents work in big cities for better salaries.

The school then lodged complaints to Shandong regulators, which fined the company but failed to trace other problematic cement, or give explanations as to why such cement was approved in the first place.

The district government said it has urged the company to negotiate compensation with the school.

It will seriously investigate the company, as well as the market regulator for any possible dereliction of duty. The authority will also establish a credit system and long-term supervision to ensure the quality of cement and other building materials."

"The Shandong Provincial Government Information Office hosts a news conference on July 18 to release the implantation plan of the third Shandong Cultural Consumption Season. [Photo/sdnews.com.cn] The third Shandong Cultural Consumption Season is set to kick off on July 23 and will last until October. It has been planned with guidance funds of more than 100 million yuan ($14.53 million) and designed to promote spending on cultural products in the province.

The Shandong Provincial Government Information Office held a news conference on July 18 to release the implantation plan, which includes general requirements, the main framework, and safeguard measures for the activity.

The cultural carnival will open in Nishan Holy Land, Qufu, and will then be jointly celebrated in the province's various administrative divisions.

The theme for the event is ""integrating culture and tourism to benefit life."" It will feature an enriched activity program with more organizational highlights.

Zhang Kun, deputy director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, revealed that this year's Cultural Consumption Season has improved and innovated in the following aspects:

The first is to deeply integrate culture and tourism. Shandong finds it is best to combine tourism with culture in order to develop both, so consumption of the integrated industries becomes one of the expected highlights of the event.

Local industry players have actively signed up to participate in the cultural consumption season, and currently 128 national 3A level and above tourist attractions and enterprises have gotten involved.

They will organize a series of themed cultural tourism activities, launch boutique cultural tourism routes and study tour travel routes, as well as experiment with tourism products recommended by tour groups. The aim is to promote Shandong’s cultural and tourism products and services to attract more consumers.

The second is to vigorously serve rural revitalization. This year's event will also focus on bringing culture to the countryside, which is an important way of serving rural revitalization.

Specifically, Shandong will extensively carry out cultural activities in the countryside, provide rural residents with consumption subsidies, as well as promote the development of the rural cultural industry and rural tourism.

Platforms and enterprises participating in the consumption season will be encouraged to set up physical and virtual stores, as well as other channels to support consumers in poverty-stricken areas.

Cultural products and tourism destinations in these areas will also be publicized to help create a source of income for those living under the poverty line.

The third is the linkage of online and offline platforms. Participating enterprises that adopt an online-and-offline integrated business model are expected to attract a large number of consumers, who will be driven by the considerable subsidies provided to them.

Efforts have been made on constructing a cloud consumption service platform, which will rely on e-commerce platforms and public welfare cultural activity platforms that have signed contracts with the organizers.

Offline activities will be organized at various cultural tourism scenic spots, cultural consumption gathering areas, cultural venues, theaters, bookstores, cultural and sports squares, as well as other sites.

On the agenda are cultural tourism products exhibitions and promotion of public welfare cultural activities. Consumers can scan QR codes provided at the site to shop online, as well as obtain coupons and subsidies, according to an organizer."

"Recently, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism released the first batch of villages to be included in the list of key rural tourism villages in China. Let's take a look at the ten selected villages in Shandong and enjoy the rustic charm.

1. Zhuquan village in Tongjing town of Yinan county, Linyi city

A traditional stone dwelling is adorned with vibrant flowers and lush green trees in the Zhuquan village of Yinan county in Linyi, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

2. Taokezi village of Yuandongtou town in Yishui county, Linyi city

Taokezi, a picturesque village in the remote Yimeng Mountain, boasts a glorious revolutionary history and picturesque and tranquil landscapes. [Photo/iqilu.com]

3. Yayougou village in Lanling county, Linyi city

Yayougou village is secluded in the lush green trees, offering a charming pastoral scene. [Photo/iqilu.com]

4. Dongchudao village in Rongcheng city

Dongchudao is a seaside village with pleasant scenery in Rongcheng, a county-level city in Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

5. Jingtang village in Qingzhou city

Visitors dabble their feet in a babbling brook in the Jingtang village in Qingzhou city, a county-level city in Weifang, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

6. Liyu village in Daolang town of Daiyue district, Tai'an city

The photo shows the resting area of a homestay in the Liyu village of Daiyue district, Tai'an, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

7. Zhonghaoyu village in Chishang town of Boshan district, Zibo city

The photo displays the refreshing landscapes of Zhonghaoyu village in Boshan district of Zibo, with blue hills and green streams. [Photo/iqilu.com]

8. Jiushan village in Shiqiang town of Zoucheng city

Tourists visit a homestay in Jiushan village in Shiqiang town of Zoucheng, a county-level city in Jining, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

9. Jiagudui village in Dalukou town of Liangshan county, Jining city

The photo shows the idyllic scenery in Jiagudui village of Liangshan county in Jining, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

10. Zhaojiashihe village in Dongguan town of Ju county, Rizhao city

A traditional stone dwelling is seen in the Zhaojiashihe village of Ju county in Rizhao, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"Wigs, made from human hair or synthetic fiber, are becoming increasingly popular, not only in the entertainment industry but also in daily life. [Photo/IC]

Wigmakers in Juancheng county, East China's Shandong province, are making great strides toward the high-end market after several years' stable development.

Juancheng is a small county with a history of 2,200 years in Shandong province, and has a history of more than 40 years in the hair-processing industry.

Hair-processing is one of the pillar industries for Juancheng, which is known for hair products, and also an important raw material distribution center and processing and export base for wig products. Currently, Juancheng has a population of 900,000, among which 75,000, or nearly one-in-12 work in the hair-processing industry.

According to Juancheng's official website, 220 hair-processing enterprises have been set up in this county, processing more than 15 million units of wig products annually. In 2017, the hair-processing industry achieved 1.09 billion yuan in import and export, accounting for 74.67 percent of the total.

In the peak season, there were nearly 2,000 small and micro businesses engaged in wig production, a man surnamed Liu from a local wig company told Chinese financial news outlet Yicai.

Wigs, made from human hair or synthetic fiber, are becoming increasingly popular, not only in the entertainment industry but also in daily life.

China's wig producers have high regional concentration, and mainly focus on Henan and Shandong provinces, according to Northeast Securities. In 2017, Henan's export in wig products was $1.61 billion, accounting for 50.7 percent, while in Shandong, exports reached $768 million yuan, accounting for 24.16 percent.

According to Liu, his father began to get into this industry in 1988. In 2011 when Liu graduated from university, he started a company with his father. Last year, the export value of his company was 48 million yuan, and more than 90 percent of products were exported to Europe, Africa and the United States.

""Our raw material mainly comes from Hunan, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, as well as Myanmar, India, and Ukraine,"" Liu said, adding that the price of domestic raw materials is higher than that of imported raw materials.

There is stiff competition among domestic wig producers, who reduce the price to compete for market share, squeezing profit margins, Liu said. His company is reducing business in the African market because the net profit margin is only about 3-4 percent.

Compared with wigmakers in Japan and South Korea, Chinese enterprises should enhance their market competitiveness in high-end wig products, Liu said.

In the United States, local customers prefer high-end products made from real hair over cheaper fiber wigs. Liu said his company plans to put more investment in real hair this year, and has employed several veterans as products advisers.

In Europe, wig products usually have higher prices and profit margin. A delicate wig can be priced at 1,000 - 1,500 pounds sterling, which is the price of a Louis Vuitton bag, Liu said, adding that the European market is one of priorities in his company transformation.

Domestic wigmakers have to transform more actively, put more effort into research and development, and promote brand awareness, Liu added."

"The Shandong Friendship Publishing House launched a Nishan House bookshop in the Chung Wah Association on July 14 in Perth, Australia.

The book house is the sixth of its kind in Australia and it is the 40th overseas branch of Nishan House, a bookstore chain created by the Shandong Friendship Publishing House as an important project to carry forward the fine traditional Chinese culture and push the ""going-out"" strategy of Chinese culture.

Nishan, or Mount Ni, is regarded as the birthplace of Confucius.

Founded in 1909, the Chung Wah Association is the largest and most established Chinese organization in Western Australia, which has been recognized by local governments as the voice for the Chinese community in Western Australia.

More than 20 representatives from the Shandong Friendship Publishing House, the China Consulate in Perth and local culture and education circles participated in the unveiling ceremony of the bookstore.

Han Gangli, vice president of Shandong Friendship Publishing House, said that the Chung Wah Association is not only the spiritual home of the Chinese people in Western Australia, but also the bridge and bond to spread Chinese culture. As it has been recognized by the Federal, State and local governments, it is the voice of 140,000 Chinese people in Western Australia.

Han said that the launch of Nishan House bookstore in the Chung Wah Association will help locals learn more about the excellent traditional Chinese culture and Shandong culture by reading books provided by the bookstore.

Ding Shaoping, president of the Chung Wah Association, said that Chinese culture should not be separated from the descendants of Chinese immigrants, as culture is the ""root"" and ""soul"" of a nation. The bookstore will help local Chinese learn more about China's culture and history.

Founded in 1986, the Shandong Friendship Publishing House is a professional publishing company affiliated with the Shandong Publishing Group. It has set up several branches that implement the going-out strategy of culture.

The Nishan House bookstore is inaugurated on July 14 in the Chung Wah Association on July 14 in Perth, Australia. [Photo/WeChat account: sdyychubanshe]

Attendees at the launching ceremony pose for a group photo. [Photo/WeChat account: sdyychubanshe]

Visitors glance over books provided by the Shandong Friendship Publishing House. [Photo/WeChat account: sdyychubanshe]"

"Visitors examine special productions of Shandong province, including seawater rice and maglev trains that can travel up to 600 kilometers per hour, during a promotional event of the province in Beijing on Tuesday. ZHU XINGXIN/CHINA DAILY

Following a planned explosion, a 150-meter-high smokestack that stood for 15 years at a traditional thermal power generation plant in Weifang, Shandong province, collapsed last Wednesday, making room for a new energy industrial park.

The park, which is designed to feature five new energy projects, is expected to be completed in 2025. Facilities related to the hydrogen fuel cell project, a major national science and technology undertaking, are under construction.

The park is part of the local government's efforts to upgrade its economic structure from traditional industries, such as heavily polluting chemical factories and coal-fired power plants, to new ones that are highly efficient and environmentally friendly.

Boasting rich resources, a long coastline and ample talent, Shandong has long ranked third nationally in terms of GDP, following Guangdong and Jiangsu provinces, after the launch of reform and opening-up in 1978.

But the gap between Shandong and the other two provinces has widened in recent years due to its previous policies focusing on developing State-owned companies and heavy industries, which to some extent resulted in a lack of economic dynamism.

Last year, Shandong built China's first comprehensive pilot area of shifting economic growth drivers.

""We must take advantage of this opportunity (of the pilot zone) to eliminate old industries and establish modern and emerging industries such as modern agriculture and the high-end chemical, new energy and health industries,"" Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong, said at a news conference on local economic and social development on Tuesday in Beijing.

In recent years, the province has been upgrading its heavy industries and making efforts to promote innovative industries.

Since 2016, Shandong has phased out outdated production capacities and upgraded five advantageous industries - including the chemical industry, agriculture, finance and tourism - and has fostered emerging industries, such as the new generation of information technologies, high-end equipment, new energy and new materials, modern marine, medical and elderly care, and health.

Statistics show that over 2,600 new enterprises in the high-tech sector were set up in Shandong last year, bringing the total number to 8,912.

Production of the branch of the Hangda new material enterprise in Zhucheng, Weifang, is in full swing. The branch, which mainly makes auto parts for new energy vehicles, was attracted to Zhucheng by the city's automobile industrial chain as well as the city's preferential policies on land use that enables the branch to be put into production quickly.

""Our technology can ensure a higher material utilization rate, which means 70 percent of the raw materials can be used for products, while the average ratio in this field is around 60 percent,"" said Zeng Deyuan, deputy general manager of the branch.

""The province has also forged a competitive edge on marine industries,"" Shandong Governor Gong Zheng said at the conference.

Located in the Bohai economic rim and sitting on the lower reaches of the Yellow River, Shandong boasts 3,345 kilometers of coastline, accounting for one-sixth of the country's total and providing Shandong with abundant marine resources.

Furthermore, one-third of Chinese academicians in the marine sector are working in Shandong.

""The output from the marine industries accounts for 20 percent of the country's total. Shandong is also the only province in China that boasts three ports that can handle 400 million metric tons of cargo each,"" Gong said."

"Some of Shandong's iconic intangible cultural heritages were displayed at an exhibition during a news conference by the State Council Information Office, which convened on July 16 in Beijing to detail Shandong province's economic and social development since the founding of the People's Republic of China.

A dazzling display including Weifang kites, Yangjiabu woodcut New Year paintings, Dezhou black pottery, Laiwu tin ware, as well as Shandong-style inner paintings and mahogany carvings demonstrated their special charms to all the guests and attendees at the event.

A foreign guest tries his hands at the traditional Yangjiabu woodcut New Year painting craft, which is one of the three famous folk New Year paintings in China. According to historical records, it first appeared during the early Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and its processing technology matured in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). [Photo by Wang Qian/chinadaily.com.cn]

Bian Chengfei (left), a folk artist from Feixian county of Linyi, Shandong province, displays her hand-sewn embroidery products to visitors. [Photo by Wang Qian/chinadaily.com.cn]

Weifang kites in various shapes are displayed at the exhibition. The city of Weifang in Shandong province is known as the world capital of kites due to its 2,400 year history of manufacturing and flying them. [Photo by Wang Qian/chinadaily.com.cn]

Cultural creative products themed around Confucius are seen at the exhibition. Shandong is one of the cradles of Chinese civilization and the hometown of Confucius, founder of Confucianism. [Photo by Wang Qian/chinadaily.com.cn]

Various hand-sewn embroidery products from Shandong's Feixian county are displayed at the exhibition. [Photo by Wang Qian/chinadaily.com.cn]

A visitor takes photos of the exquisite gourd pyrography at the exhibition on July 16 in Beijing. [Photo by Wang Qian/chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong's intangible cultural heritages attract hordes of visitors on July 16 in Beijing. [Photo by Wang Qian/chinadaily.com.cn]

The Luban pillow, a wooden object thought to be invented by Luban, a well-known Chinese carpenter, engineer, and inventor who lived around 507-444 BC, is also on display. The pillow suitable for laying one's head on it to sleep, also serves as a portable stool. A miniature version of a Luban pillow could even be used as a foldable penholder. [Photo by Wang Qian/chinadaily.com.cn]"

"More than 20 kinds of distinctive and flavorful Shandong delicacies, including Dezhou braised chicken, Zhoucun sesame seed cake, bean cakes, and bamboo slice cakes were highlighted during a news conference held by the State Council Information Office in Beijing on July 16, which convened to detail Shandong province's economic and social development since the founding of the People's Republic of China.

More than 20 kinds of distinctive and flavorful Shandong delicacies are served during a news conference on July 16 in Beijing. [Photo by Zhu Xingxin/chinadaily.com.cn]

A pastry cook prepares a delicious repast featuring snacks and delicacies from Shandong province for attendees at the news conference. [Photo by Zhu Xingxin/chinadaily.com.cn]

Traditional Shandong-style cakes are served to attendees at the news conference on July 16 in Beijing. [Photo by Zhu Xingxin/chinadaily.com.cn]

Zhoucun sesame seed cakes are served at the news conference. With a history of 1,800 years, the cake got its name from its place of origin, Zhoucun village of Zibo, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhu Xingxin/chinadaily.com.cn]

Dezhou braised chicken is served in small pieces. Featuring a red glossy skin, a tender texture, an aromatic smell, and a juicy taste, the delicacy from Dezhou, Shandong province has a history of more than 100 years. [Photo by Zhu Xingxin/chinadaily.com.cn]

Bamboo slip cakes are served. The delicacy is a dish of the Confucius family cuisine, which was included as part of China's national intangible cultural heritages in June 2011. [Photo by Zhu Xingxin/chinadaily.com.cn]

The Shandong delicacies and snacks help to promote the province's local cuisine culture to the whole world. [Photo by Zhu Xingxin/chinadaily.com.cn]

A pastry cook prepares for the repast featuring snacks and delicacies from Shandong province, that were served to attendees at the news conference. [Photo by Zhu Xingxin/chinadaily.com.cn]"

"This bird's-eye view of Qingdao, East China’s Shandong province, features the city at night. [Photo/VCG]

A research institute that focuses on the development of pilot free trade zones was founded in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, on Monday in a bid to provide intellectual support for the province's campaign on building a pilot FTZ.

Backed by the School of International Trade and Economics at Shandong University of Finance and Economics, the institute will emphasize sectors such as big data in FTZs, financial reform and innovation at FTZs, policy assessment and talent training.

Local media reported Shandong has been actively exploring the building of a pilot free trade zone and has submitted plans to higher authorities.

""The move is an effort to implement President Xi Jinping's speech at G20,"" said Zhao Zhongxiu, president of the university, referring to China's plan to expand the opening-up of its economy.

Six new pilot free trade zones are to be established, President Xi said in his speech at the recent G20 summit in the Japanese city of Osaka.

Xi also said the negotiation process of the trilateral free trade agreement between China, Japan and South Korea would be promoted.

This offers opportunities to Shandong which possesses unique regional advantages to participate in international cooperation, especially in cooperation with Japan and South Korea, Zhao said.

Shandong is home to most of the South Korean-funded enterprises in China. The area also released measures in building a China-South Korea industrial park in Yantai, a coastal city of the province, in November last year.

Covering over 80 square kilometers, the park aims to attract more than 100 new South Korean projects by 2025.

Statistics from the Shandong commerce department showed that more than 4,380 South Korean enterprises have been operating to develop in Shandong by the end of last year.

The province has benefited from the free trade agreement between China and South Korea which was signed in 2015.

In the agreement, Shandong's coastal city of Weihai and Incheon in South Korea were selected as demonstration zones for regional cooperation. Since then, the two cities have carried out a series of cooperation ventures in the fields of science and technology, medical and healthcare, tourism and cultural exchanges.

The cooperation has boosted the economic development of the two countries. The total volume of imports and exports between Weihai and South Korea in 2017 reached $8 billion, nearly double the number of 2015, a report by the China Business News said."

"[Photo/IC]

JINAN - East China's Shandong Province kicked off its first employment training program for veterans Monday as the province steps up efforts to offer them better services.

The training program, to be concluded in mid-October, include courses on flying drones, facilities cleaning and maintenance, legal services and e-commerce, as part of the province's efforts to support veterans to start their own businesses, according to Shandong's veteran affairs department.

Over 200 veterans will participate in the program with companies invited to provide technical support and guidance, said Yu Songyan, vice director of the department.

Shortly before the program, a job fair for veterans was held, attracting 1,107 companies along with 27,931 job opportunities.

China set up the Ministry of Veterans Affairs in March 2018 as authorities announced to take more concrete measures to help veterans with resettlement and employment."

"Art lovers can see sculptures from more than a dozen African countries at an ongoing exhibition at the Shandong Art Museum in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

The Spirit of Life exhibition is jointly organized by the Shandong Art Museum and the National Museum of China. It features 140 traditional and modern sculptures, such as wood, stone, and bronze carvings.

These works were made from several tribal artists from more than 10 African countries including Togo, Nigeria, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin, Senegal, Angola, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Gabon, and Chad.

With their imagination and creativity, African artists express their endless awe and admiration for life.

According to the content of the exhibits, the organizers designed the exhibition into a ""Mother and Child"" series, ""Ancestor"" series, ""Mask and Top Decoration"" series, ""Architectural Components"" series, and ""Daily Necessities"" series.

""African sculpture is an important part of world culture. With its appropriately exaggerated deformations and powerful rhythm, it has a touching beauty of primitive roughness. Its strong symbolism, tribal aesthetics, and distinct spiritual independence have influenced the works of many masters such as Matisse and Picasso, forming a strong influence in different countries and ethnic groups. There are many similarities between its rich imagination of knowing the world and historical values of dealing with the world with primitive Chinese sculpture art,"" said Zhang Wang, curator of the Shandong Art Museum.

""The exhibited works are selected from nearly 4,000 pieces of African sculptures collected by the National Museum of China, with a variety of themes. We hope that visitors can further understand the evolution of African culture and the development of human civilization through the exhibition, as well as adopt a more open and inclusive attitude to accepting different civilizations and promoting common development.""

Babis, a student from Cameroon, brought more than 20 friends to see the exhibition. He said that he felt at home as many of the exhibits were similar to ones he had seen in his childhood and studied with his grandparents.

""This exhibition arouses my homesickness. I hope more Chinese people can experience African customs and cultures through the exhibition,"" he said.

The exhibition will last until Sep 15, during which a series of lectures on sculptures will be launched.

The Spirit of Life African sculpture exhibition is underway at the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

African artists perform on djembe drums during the opening ceremony of the exhibition at the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A child experiences the African-style of braiding hair at the opening ceremony of the exhibition at the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The African drum performance attracts many children at the opening ceremony of the exhibition at the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The exhibition will provide more insights into African culture. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A total of 140 traditional and modern sculptures, such as wood, stone, and bronze carvings, are exhibited. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The Confucius' Hometown, Beautiful Shandong exhibition opened on July 8 in Ankara, capital of Turkey, displaying Shandong province's unique cultural charm and picturesque natural scenery through painting and photography works.

The five-day exhibition is one of a series of activities held by the Chinese Embassy in Turkey to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Deng Li, Chinese ambassador to Turkey, delivered a speech at the opening ceremony. He detailed Shandong province's development achievements, long history, and profound cultural reserves.

He noted that Shandong is the hometown of Confucius and an important cradle of Chinese civilization. The outstanding traditional Chinese culture, mainly based on Confucianism, is the ""spiritual wealth"" that China has contributed to the world. China's diplomatic philosophy of pursuing peaceful development and building a community of shared future for mankind draws on the essence of the fine traditional Chinese culture.

Deng said that this year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. China has joined hands with other countries to build the dream of development through promoting the Belt and Road Initiative.

He added that as China-Turkey cooperation continues to deepen under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, the people-to-people and cultural exchanges between the two countries will become even closer, pushing bilateral cooperation to a new height and breadth.

The exhibition offers local visitors an insight into the natural landscape and cultural atmosphere of Mount Tai, the Yimeng Mountain, the Yellow River, the Grand Canal, three Confucius sites, the Great Wall of Qi, the Yimeng Mountain, and other locations in Shandong province.

Visitors can also participate in activities such as writing Chinese calligraphy, as well as interacting with photographers and calligraphers to better understand Chinese and Shandong culture.

Deng Li, Chinese ambassador to Turkey, delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the Confucius' Hometown, Beautiful Shandong exhibition on July 8 in Ankara, capital of Turkey. [Photo/chinaculture.org]

Visitors take a close look at the introduction of the exhibition. [Photo/chinaculture.org]

Visitors to the exhibition pose for a group photo with a big image of the Chinese character ""fu"", which means luck, blessings, happiness, and good fortune. [Photo/chinaculture.org]

A visitor learns to write calligraphy under the instruction of a Chinese teacher at the exhibition. [Photo/fmprc.gov.cn]"

"The eighth Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair is set to be held from Sep 19 to 23 at the Jinan West Exhibition Center in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

According to the Shandong provincial publicity department, the fair will highlight the achievements of the province's cultural and creative industries to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

The organizing committee will give full play to the event's role as an aggregation platform to promote projects, enhance dialogue as well as facilitate trade and cooperation.

This year's edition will make the most of modern scientific and technological means such as the internet-of-things and artificial intelligence, and launch interactive activities both online and offline to involve more participants.

The Shandong provincial publicity department, the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism and the Jinan government has jointly formulated an implementation plan for the event, according to which, the two other sub-venues is located in Zaozhuang and Weihai, while the main venue in Jinan, consists of one comprehensive exhibition area and nine professional exhibition areas.

A series of cultural activities, forums, project promotions, design competitions and exhibitions will also take place during the fair.

Visitors are enchanted by the adorable Rabbit King figurines at the seventh Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair on Oct 12, 2018. The Rabbit King is a traditional toy made from mud for the Mid-Autumn Festival in Jinan. [Photo/jnrb.e23.cn]

A folk artist shows how to make clay sculpture to visitors during the seventh Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair on Oct 12, 2018. [Photo/jnrb.e23.cn]

A visitor experiences VR shooting games during the seventh Shandong International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/jnrb.e23.cn]"

"[Photo/istudy.sdu.edu.cn]

Shandong University said in a statement on Friday that it has apologized for the bad social impact caused by its buddy policy that implies local female students will be selected to aid foreign students who live and study at the school.

The university said that online comments on its buddy policy aroused public attention recently.

During the implementation of the policy, due to insufficient checks, the improper expression, ""making friends with foreigners of the opposite sex"" appeared on the application form, the school said.

""We would like to express our sincere appreciation for people from all walks of life concerning the development of Shandong University, and be sincere about the criticism and suggestions of the vast number of netizens,"" the statement said.

The university said the policy aims to facilitate academic achievements and cultural exchanges of native and foreign students by learning from each other.

The students all voluntarily applied to the program and are required to strictly obey related rules if they are selected. The students will study in groups, and there will be no such situation as one male foreign student and three females.

The program has been welcomed by native and foreign students.

The university will carry out a comprehensive assessment of the program, summing up the experiences and improving the work, and will live up to the expectations of people from all walks of life at Shandong University.

When the university's policy appeared online recently, some netizens questioned whether foreign students enjoyed too many privileges, while others criticized the buddy policy for pairing students of the opposite sex."

"This bird's-eye view of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, features the city at night. [Photo/VCG]

WITH THE CHINESE ECONOMY shifting to high-quality development, Shandong province should actively seek to upgrade its traditional economic structure. 21st Century Business Herald comments:

Shandong has long ranked only behind Guangdong and Jiangsu provinces in terms of GDP after the launch of reform and opening-up, but the gap between it and the other two provinces has widened in recent years. One reason is that in response to the external economic shocks in 2008, Shandong launched a series of industrial policies and measures, which resulted in the shift of its economic structure to State-owned enterprises and heavy industries, and this to some extent stunted its economic dynamism. Another reason is that in the context of industrial upgrading, Shandong has not made sufficient efforts to promote innovative industries.

Shandong plays a key role in China's economic reform cause, and if it does well in pushing for economic transformation and realizing the shift from the old to new economic drivers, it will offer valuable experiences and confidence for other provinces and regions behind it. Shandong should realize the urgent task of transforming its traditional economic structure as soon as possible.

Shandong is not taking the lead in advancing reform, opening-up and pilot free trade zone building compared with the Yangtze River and Pearl River Delta regions, but it boasts geographical advantages to participate in international cooperation, especially cooperation with Japan and the Republic of Korea.

However, multinational enterprises from the two neighboring countries have not invested in major projects in Shandong, which may indicate that the province still needs to strengthen its opening-up to the outside world to give full play to its geographical advantage.

It also needs to continuously improve its rule-based market economy and actively better its business environment to meet a deeper opening-up scenario.

With this in mind, it has been actively exploring the building of a pilot free trade zone and submitted its plan to the higher authorities.

However, at a deeper level, Shandong can also develop the Yellow River Delta region. There are industries, markets and ports, which can attract a large number of domestic and foreign enterprises and migrants, just like Shenzhen.

It can also play a role in connecting the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei economic circle with the Yellow River Delta region and Qingdao, a port city and the largest city economy in the province.

If Shandong can actively grasp the opportunities of economic transformation, under the planning and guidance of the central government, it can realize transformation and upgrading and enhance the kinetic energy between the old and new industries."

"This bird's-eye view of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, features the city at night. [Photo/VCG]

BEIJING - China's catering market saw continued growth in 2018, with East China's Shandong province ranking first among 31 provincial regions in China, an industrial report showed.

The income of China's catering industry increased to over 4.27 trillion yuan ($621.67 billion) in 2018, up 9.5 percent year-on-year, according to a report by the China Hotel Association.

Shandong's catering income reached 399.5 billion yuan last year, up 10.9 percent year-on-year and the biggest catering provincial market across the country.

The province was followed by Guangdong, Jiangsu and Hebei, whose catering revenue all topped 300 billion yuan.

West China's Sichuan province, known for its hot pots, ranked sixth by raking in 280.74 billion yuan.

The total income of the top 10 accounted for 66 percent of China's catering industry, cementing their roles as key drivers for China's catering market."

"An exhibition featuring ink and wash painting created by Shandong artists opened on June 28 in Belgrade, the capital and largest city of Serbia.

Sponsored by the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, and organized by the Shandong Art Museum, the Ink Imagery exhibition displays 46 representative works by 23 Shandong artists, covering landscape, flower-and-bird, figures, and genre paintings.

According to the Shandong Art Museum, the exhibits integrate traditional Chinese ink wash with artists' deep understanding and grasp of reality.

The exhibition, which will last until July 7, is designed to tell Chinese stories to the world and spread Shandong culture through the unique language of Chinese ink and wash paintings.

More than 100 guests, including government officials, artists, media journalists, and art lovers from both countries, attended the opening ceremony.

Yu Jie, vice governor of the Shandong provincial government, delivered a speech at the ceremony. He said that Shandong is the hometown of Confucius and an important birthplace of Chinese civilization. The profound history and culture have created the important influence of Shandong art in China.

Yu expressed his hope that the exhibition would show the unique features of Chinese painting to Serbians, deepen bilateral exchanges in the fields of culture and tourism, as well as jointly promote China-Serbia cultural exchanges and cooperation.

Serbian Minister of Culture and Information Vladan Vukosavljevic, said that the traditional friendship between Serbia and China goes back to ancient times and the development of bilateral relations enjoys a good foundation.

He also spoke highly of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, which has brought Serbia economic and technological cooperation, as well as cultural and artistic exchanges.

According to Vukosavljevic, Serbia and China differ greatly in their population, territorial areas, and cultures, and he hoped that the exhibition will promote the cooperation between the art scenes of the two countries, as well as give a strong impetus to bilateral cultural exchanges and the friendly cooperation between China and Serbia.

Before the opening of the exhibition, Shandong Art Museum signed a framework cooperation agreement with the National Museum of Serbia.

Yu Jie (left), vice governor of Shandong provincial government, delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the Ink Imagery exhibition on June 28 in Belgrade, capital of Serbia. [Photo/chinaculture.org]

Serbian Minister of Culture and Information Vladan Vukosavljevic delivers a speech at the opening ceremony. [Photo/chinaculture.org]

Artists from Shandong province introduce theirs paintings to visitors at the exhibition. [Photo/chinaculture.org]

Participants at the opening ceremony watch a promo video of Shandong. [Photo/chinaculture.org]

Chinese and Serbian artists discuss painting techniques of an ink and wash painting on exhibition. [Photo/chinaculture.org]"

"A chef takes a roast duck out of an oven at a Quanjude restaurant in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo provided to China Daily]

East China's Shandong province has topped the list in catering sector revenue in China, reaching 399.5 billion yuan ($58 billion) last year, according to a report released Wednesday.

Jointly released by Xinhuanet and China Hospitality Association in Beijing, the report shows the total catering sector revenue in the country hit 4,271.6 billion yuan last year, a year-on-year growth of 9.5 percent, with Shandong the most, followed by the provinces of Guangdong, Jiangsu and Hebei, whose revenue all surpassed 300 billion yuan.

Sichuan province, which is known as a hotpot province, is positioned in sixth place with 280.74 billion yuan worth of revenue. Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin ranked in the 16th, 17th and 18th positions, respectively.

The report shows 875.7 billion yuan in total revenue was generated from hotpot in 2018, a growth of 52 percent compared with 2014.

The number of hotpot restaurants in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province, had surpassed 3,800, double the number two years ago, according to the Shandong Hotpot Catering Association.

The number of hotpot restaurants in Shandong accounted for 6.4 percent of the total restaurants in the province, said Ma Jisheng, head of the association.

""Although the ratio is not very high, the total output from hotpot restaurants in Shandong ranks among the top three in China because Shandong has a large population,"" said Ma."

"Chao Chung Ting, a Chinese-American scientist and Nobel Prize winner in physics, was appointed as honorary dean of the advanced technology research institute of Shandong University (SDU) during his visit to SU from June 28-30.

Fan Liming, president of SDU, presented the appointment letter to Ting. She noted that since 1994 when Ting visited the university for the first time, he has been working hard to guide the university's teachers and students on the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer (AMS) project.

AMS is a large-scale international scientific cooperation project with the objective of searching space for the presence of dark matter, antimatter, as well as new physics and astrophysics phenomena such as strangelets. The project has offered the university's teachers and students a chance to work with the world's top scientists, helping SDU train talents and boost its subject development.

Shandong University established the advanced technology research institute in November 2018 under Ting's suggestion. The institute aims to join in the scientific experiments of AMS, host part of the experiments, and become a key base for international dark matter research. In addition, the institute will gather a group of the world's top scientists, introduce new scientific facilities, as well as improve the university's scientific level and innovation capability.

According to Ting, the AMS project plays a significant role in human beings' landing on Mars and the moon in the future. He also praised Shandong University's contribution to the AMS project.

""In the past eight years, Shandong University, with a highly respected team, had maintained its world's top scientific research competence and experimental technology level,"" he said.

Ting expressed hope that the institute will attract more world-leading science teams, conduct cutting-edge scientific research, build world-class research platforms, help SDU teachers and students participate in more international science projects, as well as make new contributions to the development of space science.

Shandong University will offer full support to Ting's sci-tech research and talent training to transform the institute into an international platform for academic research and communication, as well as contribute to global scientific research.

Samuel Chao Chung Ting, a Chinese-American scientist and Nobel Prize winner in physics, is appointed as honorary dean of the advanced technology research institute of Shandong University. [Photo/media.sdu.edu.cn]

Samuel Chao Chung Ting, a Chinese-American scientist and Nobel Prize winner in physics, visits Shandong University from June 28 to 30. [Photo/media.sdu.edu.cn]

Samuel Chao Chung Ting, a Chinese-American Nobel laureate. [Photo/media.sdu.edu.cn]"

"The ""Shandong Day"" event kicked off on June 20 at the ongoing International Horticultural Exhibition in Beijing, showcasing the picturesque landscapes and abundant cultural resources of East China's Shandong province.

The three-day event, themed under ""Building dreams in the new era, displaying a beautiful and new Shandong,"" is designed to present the province's natural environment, traditional culture, arts, and horticultural achievements through a series of activities.

The Shandong Garden, which covers an area of 3,000 square meters, is designed using elements of the majestic Mount Tai, traditional Shandong culture, and classical Chinese gardens, all presenting the unique style of Shandong province.

Traditional handicrafts such as Shandong embroidery, Yantai paper-cuts, and egg carvings are also displayed in the garden.

The Beijing horticultural expo, themed ""Live Green, Live Better,"" is the world's largest expo of its kind and opened to the public on April 29 in Yanqing district. It will last until Oct 7.

The ""Shandong Day"" event at the International Horticultural Exhibition in Beijing starts on June 20. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The opening ceremony for the ""Shandong Day"" event is held on June 20 at the ongoing International Horticultural Exhibition in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Guests from home and abroad attend the opening ceremony of the ""Shandong Day"" event, which offers an effective platform to showcase the province's beautiful landscapes and rich culture to the whole world. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Performers from Shandong province stage the province's unique dances and songs at the opening ceremony of the ""Shandong Day"" event in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Folk artists from Shandong province showcase the province's traditional handicrafts at the ""Shandong Day"" event during the ongoing International Horticultural Exhibition in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Artists from Shandong province stage traditional Chinese folk music performance at the Shandong Garden to celebrate the ""Shandong Day"" event of the International Horticultural Exhibition in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"The ""Shandong Day"" event is underway at the 2019 Beijing International Horticultural Exhibition from June 20 to 22 with a series of promotion activities to showcase the province's beautiful landscapes, rich culture, arts, and horticultural achievements.

The Shandong Garden, which covers an area of 3,000 square meters, is an outstanding destination for visitors to get to know the province as it reproduces many of the province's well-known tourist attractions, as well as displays Shandong's traditional handicrafts and characteristic plants and flowers.

Let's take a tour to the garden through some photos.

The entrance of Shandong Garden is full of classic charm. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Visitors can enjoy the micro edition of the majestic Mount Tai at the Shandong Garden. The mountain is a UNESCO natural and cultural heritage site in Shandong's Tai'an, which boasts lush vegetation, marvelous landscapes, and sublime ancient architectural complexes. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A traditional northern style garden awaits visitors at the Shandong Garden during the 2019 Beijing International Horticultural Exhibition in Yanqing district of Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Visitors can enjoy a vast collection of flowers, fruit trees, Chinese herbal medicines, and plant landscaping techniques, as well as ideas for green development while touring the 2019 Beijing International Horticultural Expo. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A miniature Mount Tai is seen at the Shandong Garden during the 2019 Beijing International Horticultural Exhibition.

The Shandong Garden is designed with elements of the majestic Mount Tai, traditional Shandong culture, and classical Chinese gardens, presenting the unique style of Shandong province to visitors of the 2019 Beijing International Horticultural Exhibition. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"Containers carrying goods for export are seen in Qingdao Port, East China's Shandong province, on Oct 19, 2018. [Photo/VCG]

JINAN - East China's Shandong province has seen robust trade with member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, statistics from Qingdao customs showed.

From June 2018 to May 2019, the total trade volume between Shandong and SCO member countries climbed 30.9 percent year-on-year to 156.1 billion yuan ($22.5 billion), according to Qingdao customs.

The province's trade with Russia and India grew 33.4 percent and 26.9 percent respectively, while its trade with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also increased by 24.7 percent and 23.8 percent respectively during the period.

Shandong mainly exports machinery and electronic products, auto parts, textile and clothing, steel and agricultural goods to SCO countries and imports crude oil, agricultural products, food and consumer goods from them.

Since the coastal city of Qingdao in Shandong hosted the SCO summit in June 2018, trade between the province and SCO countries have grown rapidly thanks to customs clearance facilitation, said Du Chaopeng, a customs officer in Qingdao."

"A much-anticipated exhibition featuring intangible cultural heritages from Shandong province is underway at Hong Kong Central Library.

Titled Genesis and Spirit, Enchanting Shandong, the exhibition displays a dazzling array of Shandong's iconic cultural legacies, including intricate paper-cuttings, lifelike clay figurines, exquisite microscopic carvings, handmade wickerwork pieces, and the ancient art form of inner painting.

The province's intangible cultural heritage inheritors have been invited to showcase their expert skills to help visitors better understand the traditional Chinese crafts.

In addition, visitors can also enjoy narrative singing and traditional performing arts of Shandong, including Jinan shadow puppetry, Lyu opera, Shandong Qinshu, Laixi puppetry, Liuzi opera, and Shandong folk songs.

Lectures about traditional Shandong culture and customs have also been organized, with topics covering Shandong traditional folk songs, dwellings, regional operas, embroidery, and woodblock prints of New Year paintings.

Shandong is considered one of the cradles of Chinese civilization. With a history that dates back to antiquity, as well as a rich and solid cultural base, the region has nurtured a wealth of intangible cultural heritages over time.

Using text panels, photographs, video screenings, and traditional handicraft exhibits, as well as on-site demonstrations, performances, and cultural lectures, the exhibition is designed to display the unique charm of Shandong culture.

The exhibition is presented by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Home Affairs Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. It is organized by the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, and will last until June 23.

A poster of the Genesis and Spirit, Enchanting Shandong exhibition. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A folk artist from Shandong displays the printmaking of Yangjiabu woodblock New Year paintings at Hong Kong Central Library. Weifang's Yangjiabu village has a more than 600 year history of making New Year paintings dating back to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Traditional opera performers, as well as officials from Shandong and Hong Kong pose for a photo. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Visitors show off their own portrait paper-cuts at the exhibition. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Yangjiabu woodblock New Year paintings attract many visitors at the exhibition. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Visitors watch a folk artist make an inner painting piece. The art form requires artists to draw from inside a bottle. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The Tai'an delegation gave an all-round promotion of the city's tourism resources at the just-concluded Shandong (Jinan) International Tourism Fair in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

The delegation consisted of more than 60 members. It included officials from the city's culture and tourism departments, as well as representatives from local travel agencies, tourist attractions, rural tourism sites, hotels, and tourism products enterprises.

The Tai'an exhibition area at the fair received more than 15,000 visitors for tourism consultation. More than 100,000 copies of its travel brochures were given out, such as guidebooks and tourism routes. In addition more than 3,000 of its souvenirs were distributed.

More than 100 enterprises and travel agencies had reached initial cooperation agreements with the Tai'an delegation.

The three-day fair comprised an area of 30,000 square meters and featured a total of 1,000 booths. It attracted more than 3,000 exhibitors and purchasers from 33 countries and regions.

The fair, jointly hosted by the Jinan government and the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, is designed to be an important platform for showcasing Shandong's tourism and cultural resources, as well as to promote tourism cooperation.

Visitors sample honey products at the Tai'an exhibition area during the Shandong (Jinan) International Tourism Fair. [Photo/WeChat account: SDTXTA]

Performers from Tai'an pose for a group photo during the Shandong (Jinan) International Tourism Fair. [Photo/WeChat account: SDTXTA]

A booth displaying Tai'an city's tourist products attracts many visitors during the Shandong (Jinan) International Tourism Fair. [Photo/WeChat account: SDTXTA]"

"Asia's largest ""ro-ro"" ship sets sail from Rongcheng city, Shandong province on June 8, 2019. [Photo/VCG]

The largest and most luxurious ""ro-ro"" (roll-on/roll off) ship in Asia, Zhonghuafuxing (Rejuvenation of China), set sail from Shidao Bay in Rongcheng city, Shandong province on Saturday morning.

The ship, built by Shandong-based Huanghai Shipbuilding Co Ltd, is 212 meters long and 28.6 meters wide with a gross tonnage of 45,000 tons. It features a 3,000-meter-long driveway and is able to hold 2,000 passengers, with a maximum travel speed of 5,000 nautical miles.

Equipped with a string of high-tech systems, it is estimated to be put into use between the two coastal cities Yantai and Dalian, starting in October."

"A large-scale national opera production from Shandong province named Ma Xiangyang's Journey to the Countryside won the Wenhua Award at the closing ceremony of the 12th China Arts Festival on June 2 at Shanghai Grand Theatre.

The Wenhua Award is a triennial award established by the Culture and Tourism Ministry to honor outstanding stage performances.

Ma Xiangyang's Journey to the Countryside, produced by Qingdao Performing Arts Group and created by Qingdao Singing and Dancing Theater, tells the story of Ma Xiangyang, an agricultural academy assistant researcher who serves as a Party secretary in the countryside, and his poverty relief efforts in the rural area.

With its rich themes and vivid depiction of daily lives in villages, the opera left a deep impression on audiences about the government's poverty alleviation efforts and the vibrant image of the country's rural areas.

An additional nine productions, including The Eternal Wave, were also awarded the Wenhua Award, one for professional stage performances.

Two other productions from Shandong won the Qunxing (Galaxy) Award, the country's top prize for amateur artistic works.

This was the first time Shanghai has hosted the event, the largest and most important national celebration of art and culture organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, which has taken place every three years since it was launched in Beijing in 1987.

The festival aims to present the country's latest developments in art, theater, and culture through exhibitions and stage shows by both professional performance groups and grassroots organizations.

As 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, this year's repertoire centered around the lives of modern Chinese people, as well as the diversified and prosperous art development in the modern era.

A stage still from the opera Ma Xiangyang's Journey to the Countryside. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Qunxing (Galaxy) Award, the country's top prize for amateur artistic works, is presented at the closing ceremony of the 12th China Arts Festival on June 2 at Shanghai Grand Theatre. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A total of 10 productions are conferred the Wenhua Award at the closing ceremony of the 12th China Arts Festival on June 2 at Shanghai Grand Theatre. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"A symposium on Shandong's film and TV creation and industrial development was held in the eastern coastal city of Qingdao, Shandong province on May 29.

Representatives from government departments, film and TV enterprises, and show business attended the symposium and shared insights on a series of issues, such as how to promote the creation of film and TV products, talent cultivation, industrial park construction, and resource integration.

Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong, said that Shandong is a populous province with competitive economic strengths and abundant cultural, marine, and tourism resources.

Liu said that the province has been promoting high-quality development and fostering new economic growth drivers, while the film and TV industry plays a vital role in boosting Shandong's cultural industry.

He expressed hope that the attendees would speak freely and give suggestions on the development of Shandong's film and TV industry.

Zhang Hongsen, vice-minister of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, and Television, said that Shandong has profound cultural resources and has created numerous high-quality TV dramas.

He hoped that Shandong film and TV practitioners will inherit the fine tradition of ""Shandong TV drama,"" while keeping on creating and innovating to launch more excellent works, as well as promote industry development.

Liu Jiayi (right), Party secretary of Shandong, meets the attendees before the symposium on May 29 in Qingdao. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A symposium on Shandong's film and TV creation and industrial development is held in Qingdao, Shandong province on May 29. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Some of the attendees at the symposium. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"The first cross-Straits cultural and tourism exchange conference was held on May 27 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

About 350 guests attended the conference, including officials from relevant government officials and representatives from the fields of culture, education, tourism and the press.

Li Qun, vice minister of Culture of Tourism, delivered a speech at the conference. He said that the conference serves as a new platform for cross-Straits culture and tourism exchanges and cooperation, which is designed to promote the exchange of information, sharing of resources and experience, expanding the market and deepening friendship between the two sides.

Experts and professors from Communication University of China and Chung Hua University shared their insights on cultural and tourism integration development.

Tourism industry insiders also delivered speeches on rural tourism and characteristic town development.

The conference was part of a cultural and tourism exchange event held from May 22 to May 30 in Shandong to promote cross-Straits cultural and tourism exchanges and cooperation.

The event was jointly organized by the Chinese Culture Friendship Association, the Cross-Straits Tourism Exchange Association, the Shandong provincial government and the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism.

Inspect tours to Shandong's cultural organizations, museums and scenic spots were also organized for in-depth exchanges and cooperation.

The first cross-Straits cultural and tourism exchange conference is held on May 27 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Li Qun, vice minister of Culture of Tourism, delivers a speech at the conference on May 27 in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Fan Zhou, director of Culture Development Institute of the Communication University of China, delivers a speech at the conference on May 27 in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"A well-preserved Neolithic settlement site has been discovered in East China's Shandong province, local archaeological authorities said.

The provincial cultural heritage administration said the site was found near Ximengzhuang Village in the city of Tengzhou, and an excavation of the site has been launched.

Archaeologists said the settlement was part of the Longshan Culture, a late Neolithic civilization in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River.

Covering an area of 6,000 square meters, the site was badly damaged due to human activities since the 1970s. Fortunately, the bottom of the site was well-preserved.

So far, two foundation trenches of walls, 15 housing sites, 21 pits, one tomb and a low-lying area have been found. Archaeologists believe that those pits were built in the middle of the Longshan Culture period and the rest of the findings were built during earlier part of the period.

""Most of our knowledge about Longshan Culture's social organization was learned from large-scale city settlements. The discovery is of great significance to the study of the grassroots settlement and social structure,"" said Zheng Tongxiu, director of the provincial cultural relics and archaeology research institute."

"A grand ceremony was launched on May 19 at the Nishan Cultural Tourism Resort in Qufu, Shandong province to mark this year's National Tourism Day.

China's National Tourism Day, which was first announced by the Chinese government in 2011, falls on May 19 each year, the date when Xu Xiake, a famed travel writer in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) started writing his famous travel books.

Tourists from China and abroad can enjoy free entry to the country's wealth of scenic spots, public museums, memorial halls and patriotic education bases on and around the annual tourism day.

Shandong province launched a series of cultural and tourism activities at the ceremony in a bid to promote its scenic spots and dazzling cultural resources.

A series of measures to promote tourism has been launched as well, including a reduction in ticket prices for some scenic spots, hosting exhibitions and opera performances with free entry and rolling out more customized tourist products.

Under the theme of ""integrating culture and tourism and creating beautiful life"", the event was jointly organized by the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, Jining municipal government and the Shandong Radio & Television Station.

A ceremony is held on May 19 at the Nishan Cultural Tourism Resort in Qufu, Shandong province to observe this year's Naitonal Tourism Day. [Photo/ ctnews.com.cn]

Performers stage traditional dances at the celebrating ceremony of this year's Naitonal Tourism Day on May 19 in Qufu, Shandong province. [Photo/ ctnews.com.cn]

The celebrating ceremony attracts many spectators in Qufu, Shandong province on May 19. [Photo/ ctnews.com.cn]

Traditional dances and music are staged at the Nishan Cultural Tourism Resort to celebrate the Naitonal Tourism Day on May 19 in Qufu, Shandong province. [Photo/ ctnews.com.cn]"

"JINAN -- An on-site museum housing China's first altar ruins from the Western Zhou Dynasty (1046-771 BC) opened Friday in the city of Zibo in East China's Shandong province.

The musuem, with an exhibition area of 3,100 square meters, includes an underground space housing the altar ruins unearthed in 2009, ancient tombs of the royal families of the Western Zhou Dynasty, bronze weapons and sacrificial vessels.

It also displays the ancient townscape of the early Western Zhou Dynasty via AR and VR technologies and holographic projection.

The Chenzhuang-Tangkou ruins where China's first altar ruins of the Western Zhou Dynasty was found was listed in China's top 10 archaeological discoveries of 2010."

"In the early summer, Jinan, the City of Springs, is blanketed with greenery, which is the perfect time for tourists to walk around the city and take photos, before temperatures start to skyrocket.

The Red Leaves Valley is surrounded by lush green hills and crystal water in the early summer. [Photo/Xinhua]

Visitors row and enjoy a gentle breeze at Daming Lake in the early summer. [Photo/Xinhua]

Photo taken on May 11 shows an aerial view of Jinan Garden Expo Park, Jinan, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

Visitors take a tour at Jiuru Mountain Scenic Spot, Jinan on May 11. [Photo/Xinhua]

A tourist takes photos at the Pearl Spring Park, Jinan on May 10. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"The Shandong delegation made a strong impression with the province's latest cultural achievements at the 15th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair (ICIF), which opened at the Shenzhen Convention and Exhibition Center on May 16 and will last until May 20.

The Shandong pavilion has the theme of ""cultural Shandong, spirit of Confucian merchants,"" and covers an exhibition area of 1,208 square meters.

This is the ninth time that Shandong has appeared at the Shenzhen ICIF with the largest exhibition area, as well as the largest number of exhibitors and exhibits.

About 96 outstanding cultural enterprises from Shandong are participating in the event with more than 8,520 exhibits.

The main exhibition area of the Shandong pavilion focuses on the new aspects of the province's cultural industry, as well as traditional aspects that have been upgraded and transformed through modern methods.

It is divided into five major sections based on industrial types, including film and television publishing media, cultural tourism, cultural science and technology, traditional cultural inheritance and innovation, as well as intangible cultural heritage and folk handicrafts.

The exhibition section for film and television publishing media showcases Shandong's achievements in developing its film and television industry chain, as well as its film and television industry clusters.

It aims to promote famous brands such as ""Oriental Movie Metropolis"" and ""Lu Opera"". It also highlights the province's new achievements in strengthening the construction of new mainstream media, promoting the integrated development of media, developing the digital publishing, and accelerating the transformation and upgrading of the printing industry.

The exhibition area has gathered 15 film and television publishing media companies including Shandong Film and Television Media Group, Shandong Publishing Group, Shandong Radio & TV Media Group, and Qingdao Haier Brothers Pictures Co.

In the form of a high-tech digital sand table, it will present the development results of building a national leading and world-class film and television industry base with Oriental Movie Metropolis as the leader.

The Shandong exhibition area at the 15th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A visitor takes photos of the posters displaying Shandong's beautiful landscapes at the 15th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The booth of Shandong Publishing Group displays many books and cultural creative products at the 15th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The cultural tourism section highlights traditional cultural tourism such as Yimeng red cultural tourism, cultural leisure tourism, and rural cultural tourism.

It mainly promotes key Shandong cultural tourism projects including Nishan Holy Land, Taierzhuang ancient town, and Qingdao Music Valley, as well as tourism brands, performing arts, development achievements of creative tourism products, and cultural tourism commodities.

The exhibition area for traditional cultural inheritance and innovation features 27 outstanding enterprises to showcase the industrialization and branding of Shandong's well-known traditional culture. The exhibitors included Huaguang Ceramics Co and Shandong Sea porcelain Culture Co, as well as other brand enterprises.

The cultural science and technology section displays achievements in the integration of culture and technology, as well as the digital cultural industry. Nine leading cultural and technological enterprises including Hisense Group and Goldon Digital Creative Co have brought new products and technologies to the fair covering AI smart TVs, artificial intelligence, cultural education cloud platforms, and 3D printing.

The exhibition area for intangible cultural heritage and folk handicrafts mainly displays those that have achieved industrial development through creative transformation and innovative inheritance, such as Lu painting art, New Year pictures on Weifang kites, Lu brocades, and Linshu willow weaving.

A total of 26 intangible cultural heritage and traditional craft enterprises or inheritors were selected to participate in the exhibition.

The exhibiting company Kong Fu Seal Pavilion has applied an online model to the traditional seal cutting culture industry, generating sales of 170 million yuan ($24.72 million) in 2018. The products of Liangzi Black Pottery Co cover thousands of varieties and have been exported to more than 70 countries and regions through online and offline sales.

A booth displaying Shandong's traditional jade carvings and seals attracts many visitors at the 15th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Ceramics produced by Shandong-based enterprises are on display at the 15th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A performer from Qufu's Nishan Holy Land tourism area transcribes quotes from Confucian classics at the 15th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"A total of 90 oil paintings created by renowned Russian artists were displayed at Shandong Art Museum in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, on May 6.

Hosted by Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism and the foreign affairs office of Shandong government, the oil painting exhibition is attracting thousands of painting enthusiasts from Russia and China to exchange oil painting art.

Themed around ""Impression of Shandong"", the artworks on display are painted by Russian masters based on their experiences in Shandong's Jinan, Qingdao, Qufu and Tai'erzhuang city.

""These artworks showcase a diversified Shandong through the eyes of Russian artists,"" said Wang Lei, the director of Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism.

The exhibition provides a bridge for the two sides to enhance cultural understanding and deepen partnerships.

Russian oil paintings, featuring humanistic spirit with a deep and dignified simplicity, enjoy a formidable reputation across the world.

Russian arts are also favored in China and some works by Russian oil painters are sought after by Chinese collectors.

Shandong Art Museum has joined hands with Russian artistic agencies for many important exhibitions in an effort to promote cultural exchange between the two sides.

The exhibition is slated to run until May 10.

An artwork created by a Russian artist based on Shandong scenes at the Shandong Art Museum. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Russian artists talk about the artworks at the Shandong Art Museum in Jinan. [Photo/chinanews.com]

Artists pose for a group photo at Shandong Art Museum in Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Shandong Higher People's Court President Zhang Jiatian appears on the ""Justices' Talks"" program. [Photo/ court.gov.cn]

Shandong Higher People's Court President Zhang Jiatian, communicated with online users on ""Justices' Talks"", a program hosted by the information bureau of the Supreme People's Court (SPC) and chinacourt.org during the national two sessions on March 6.

""The people-centered approach is the 'fundamental standpoint' of political and legal work in the New Era,"" he said.

According to Zhang, Shandong courts have been constantly innovating measures for the benefit of the people by giving full play to the judicial function and putting the people-centered development idea into practice in all aspects of their work.

He mentioned the people-oriented approach repeatedly, saying that Shandong developed a smart platform for case filing, prepayment of litigation fees and online applications for refund of those fees, all docked with the social credit reporting system.

The system has been promoted across the province in an all-round way since June 1, 2018 and by the time of the interview more than 560,000 cases had been filed and the litigation fees of 270,000 cases paid online, he added.

2018 marks the decisive year of the goal of ""substantially solving the difficulties in enforcement"". Shandong courts played a leading role and spared no effort in performing their responsibilities and duties last year.

Statistics show that since 2016, Shandong courts have handled about 1.39 million cases involving enforcement, including 1.35 million cases that were closed. The sum of money collected through enforcement was 329.4 billion yuan ($49 billion), up 20.5 percent, 19.1 percent and 26 percent for each respective year.

The courts also rolled out a guideline on solving the difficulties in enforcement throughout the whole process, Zhang noted.

He said that in 2019, all courts in the province will adhere to the people-centered approach and focus on the goal of ""making people feel the fairness and justice of every case"".

He added that the courts will speed up construction of the judicial team and greatly contribute to celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China."

"The 2019 ""Taishan Design Cup"" Cultural and Creative Design Competition commenced in Jinan, capital of Shandong province on May 7.

Under the guidance of the Shandong provincial publicity department, the event is jointly organized by the Shandong provincial departments of industry and information technology, agriculture and rural affairs, culture and tourism as well as the Shandong Cultural Creative Design Industry Association.

The contest includes six categories: public poster design, brand and packaging design, cultural product design, industrial product design, digital product design and environment and space design.

The event is divided into four stages: initiation, work collection, selection and evaluation, an exhibition of winning works and the actual production of the designs.

Participants can learn about the competition by logging into the official website. The submission will open on June 15. The uploading and copyright registration of entries should be completed before July 15.

Prize-winning works will be exhibited during the Eighth Shandong Cultural Industry Fair. The organizing committee will promote cooperation with financial institutions and enterprises to realize the conversion of design works into actual products.

The design competition has been held for two consecutive sessions, which is the largest and highest level of an event of this type in Shandong province.

A total of 7,617 works were collected in last year's edition, transforming a contract value of 33.11 million yuan ($4.9 million). Among them, 20 key projects have been included into the development plan of cultural and creative industry of Shandong province (2018-22).

A poster for the 2019 ""Taishan Design Cup"" Cultural and Creative Design Competition. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Details about the 2019 ""Taishan Design Cup"" Cultural and Creative Design Competition is introduced at a news conference on May 7. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Cultural and creative designs from last year's edition. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Aerial photo taken on May 19, 2018 shows clouds over the Laoshan mountain scenic zone in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province.[Photo/Xinhua]

The air quality in East China’s Shandong province became worse in the first quarter of this year compared with a year earlier, according to a news conference held by the Information Office of Shandong Province on Tuesday.During the first three months, the average density of fine particulate matter PM2.5 across the province rose 17.6 percent year-on-year to 80 micrograms per cubic meter, Cui Fengyou, deputy head of the Ecology and Environment department of Shandong province, said at the news conference.The average density of particulate matter PM10 across the province rose 14.3 percent year-on-year to 136 micrograms per cubic meter.Factors like the increasing amount of pollutants and unfavorable meteorological conditions for pollutants to disperse caused the air quality in Shandong to worsen, said Cui.The province has started a monthlong campaign to deal with the worsening air pollution since April 18. The first phase of the campaign inspected 1,829 enterprises and places. Among these, 661 were found to have problems in protecting the environment, including 25 companies that hadn’t installed pollution treatment facilities and another 18 whose pollution treatment facilities were not working well.The provincial government has requested local governments to enhance efforts on rectifying the problems and report their progress in time."

"Shandong University in Jinan, East China's Shandong province unveiled its 18th International Cultural Festival at its central campus on April 26, offering locals a chance to experience unique cultures from 25 countries around the world.

Overseas students from Russia, France, Thailand, Afghanistan, Italy, Uganda and Laos wore traditional costumes as they showcased food, dances, handcrafts and souvenirs from their home countries.

Since 2001, the international cultural event has evolved into an important channel for the university to promote its campus culture featuring understanding, inclusiveness, openness and progress.

The 18th International Cultural Festival is held at the central campus of Shandong University on April 26, gathering students from 25 countries. [Photo/sdchina.com]

A Sri Lankan student poses for a photo to showcase the country's culture. [Photo/IC]

Students at the Laos booth showcase the country's unique culture. [Photo/sdchina.com]

A student from South Korea promotes Korean delicacies at the South Korea booth. [Photo/sdchina.com]

Overseas students wearing their national costumes stage a fashion show at Shandong University. [Photo/sdchina.com]"

"[Photo by Jiang Dong/China Daily]Qi a state that existed from the 11th to the third century BC was a flourishing regional kingdom that boasted political, economic and cultural significance in ancient Eastern China. Its capital city in present-day Linzi, in Shandong province, was known as a booming major city in ancient China.

The state's legacies were so powerful that today, Shandong is also referred to as ""the land of Qi"".

[Photo by Jiang Dong/China Daily]An artifact exhibition at the National Museum of China, which runs through July 9, hails the brilliant civilization of Qi by showing a selection of objects from important archaeological finds in Shandong.

The highlights include bronze ware used for ceremonial purposes and with inscriptions which reflect the early development of Qi in the late Western Zhou Dynasty (c.11th century-771 BC) and its rise to a regional power during the Warring States Period (475-221 BC).

[Photo by Jiang Dong/China Daily]

[Photo by Jiang Dong/China Daily]"

"An art image exhibition depicting Shandong province's unique cultural charm and picturesque scenery opened on April 19 at the Weihai Pavilion in Inchon, South Korea.

It accompanies a series of cooperative exchanges and will be held until May 17.

Themed on ""Confucius' Hometown, Beautiful Shandong"", the exhibition offers insight into the natural landscape and cultural atmosphere of the Mount Tai, the Yimeng Mountain, the Yellow River, the Grand Canal, three Confucius sites, the Great Wall of Qi, Qingdao city, Weihai city, and other locations.

The highly-acclaimed images display a high level of photographic techniques including skillful composition and wonderful color effects.

Wang Yanjun, director of the China Cultural Center in Seoul and counselor of the Cultural Office of the Chinese Embassy in South Korea, made a speech at the opening ceremony.

He noted that Shandong is the nearest Chinese province to South Korea and is one of the most popular tourist destinations for Koreans. And Shandong is home to a majority of Korean expatriates.

Wang hoped the China Cultural Center in Seoul will cooperate with Shandong in various sectors to facilitate exchanges between the two sides.

A sinologist from South Korea said that Shandong is one of the important birthplaces of Chinese civilization and its world-class cultural heritages of Mount Tai and three Confucius sites are evidence of its past glory. Shandong's long splendid history has nurtured numerous ancient thinkers such as Mencius, Sun-Tzu and Mo-tse, creating a distinctive Qilu culture. What's more, Confucian culture is an integral part of Chinese traditional culture.

A signing ceremony was held for memorandums of understanding between a Shandong enterprise and two Korean organizations. The purpose was to promote cooperation in work, exhibitions, personnel training and high-level information and academic exchanges.

The exhibition, endorsed by the China National Arts Fund, will tour South Korea as a prelude to the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation scheduled from April 25 to 17 in Beijing.

As part of the event, an array of promotional performances, lectures, and interactions have already started in South Korea and will last until mid-May.

Officials attend the opening ceremony for the art image exhibition depicting Shandong province's unique cultural charm and picturesque scenery on April 19 at the Weihai Pavilion in Inchon, South Korea. [Photo/WeChat account: weihaishangwu]

Visitors view the exhibits at the the Weihai Pavilion in Inchon, South Korea. [Photo/WeChat account: weihaishangwu]

Exhibits at the the Weihai Pavilion in Inchon, South Korea. [Photo/WeChat account: weihaishangwu]"

"A file photo of the 10th China (Shandong) Arts and Crafts Expo held in Weifang,  East China's Shandong province. [Photo/wfnews.com.cn]

The 11th China (Shandong) Arts and Crafts Expo is set to take place in Weifang, nicknamed the ""World Capital of Kites"", in Shandong province from April 27 to 30.

The four-day event will feature esteemed artists and craftsmen from all over the country who will demonstrate their unique skills in dough modeling, embroidery, paper cutting, nut carving, kite making, and many other art forms.

The expo will cover nearly 17,000 square meters and will feature 800 standard booths showcasing handiworks such as sculptures, lacquerware, jewelry, colored glaze, porcelain, metal works, rosewood furniture, carpets, and plant fiber-weaving.

Twelve exhibition areas featuring art exchanges, works by renowned artists, kite-themed creative cultural products, a kite-making competition, rosewood furniture, folk tourism products, and creative works designed by college teachers and students will be available to satisfy the diverse preferences of visitors.

Additionally, a Belt and Road-themed intangible cultural heritage exhibition, arts and crafts industrial summit, intelligent property protection lecture, patient application consulting event, and Weifang arts and crafts exhibition will be held during the expo to showcase how Shandong's arts and crafts have evolved over the past seven decades.

The expo, co-organized by the Shandong Arts and Crafts Association, Shandong Arts and Crafts Academy, and Weifang Arts and Crafts Association, started in 2009 and has now developed into an influential industry event.

The expo aims to increase the exposure of Shandong's traditional culture and offer a platform for domestic artists and craftsmen to exchange techniques."

"Zoucheng in Shandong province is set to host the 2019 Zoucheng Mother's Cultural Festival from May 4 to 7. [Photo/whshandong.com]

The 2019 Zoucheng Mother's Cultural Festival is set to take place in the namesake city of Shandong province from May 4 to 7, according to a news conference held on April 18 in Jinan.

The festival features seven thematic activities, including an opening ceremony and a commemorative ceremony for Mencius and his mother, as well as other related activities, such as a Mencius' mother-themed cultural creative products competition and an exhibition of intangible cultural heritages.

The festival this year will launch a brand new activity ""Touring Zoucheng with Moms"". All the scenic spots in the city that normally charge are expected to be free to female tourists from May 7 to 13 as a gift to mothers on Chinese Mother's Day.

Mencius, besides his renown as a thinker, is noted for his mother, a model of motherhood in China endorsed by time-honored and favored tales.

Chinese Mother's Day, celebrated on Mencius' birthday (the second day of the fourth lunar month), was first advocated by Chinese and foreign experts gathered in Zoucheng on December 13th, 2006.

The festival is meant to symbolize an important instrument for the inheritance of traditional virtues and values and express gratitude for maternal love in a Chinese way."

"Shandong in East China saw the added value of the province's cultural industry jump from 183 billion yuan ($27 billion) in 2013 to 312 billion yuan in 2017 at an average annual growth rate of 15 percent -- higher than the provincial GDP growth rate. It was attributed in part to Shandong's successful integration of cultural activities into the tourism calendar.

The portion the added value of cultural industry contributes to Shandong's GDP rose by 3.32 percent to 4.29 percent over the five years from 2013 to 2017.

These data were cited by Wang Lei, head of the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, who mentioned that in recent years the cultural industry in Shandong has been transitioning from high-speed growth to high-quality growth.

The province is pursuing high-quality development driven by cultural and tourism engines. Scientific planning has been made to guide the industries slated for integrated development. There was also strong policy and funding support.

According to Wang, Shandong has developed cultural and tourism industry clusters that are considered important for rural revitalization and educational practice and that also help accelerate the shift in the driving forces of development. Related projects are prioritized in key work layouts of the provincial Party committee and the provincial government.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Finance has allocated 350 million yuan of special funds to support tourism development annually since last year.

In early 2018, the State Council approved the Overall Plan for the Construction of a Comprehensive Experimental Zone for New and Old Kinetic Energy Conversion in Shandong Province and both the provincial Party committee and the government regard it as a major program guiding socioeconomic development. It was proposed that efforts should be made to develop “top 10 industries” including cultural and creative industry and boutique tourism.

The Shandong Province Cultural and Creative Industry Development Plan (2018-2022) and Shandong Province Boutique Tourism Development Special Plan were released last year to set general goals and a strategic layout for the two major industries. Specific measures were also outlined to promote key projects.

Meanwhile, traditional handicrafts unique to Shandong have been widely promoted through online and offline channels. There are more than 1.1 million traditional craft enterprises and self-employed households in Shandong, employing about 3.5 million workers. The businesses, especially those in rural areas were encouraged to “go online”, and currently involve 5,661 e-commerce operators throughout Shandong.

The province is also developing and tapping into rich Qilu cultural resources (Qilu is a common nickname for Shandong), excellent traditional culture and the Yimeng “red” cultural heritage (“red” culture embodies China’s revolutionary spirit). The abundance of cultural resources will lead to advantages in the industry’s development, according to a local official.

With a total input of 343 million yuan in the field in the past few years, 171 outstanding traditional cultural heritage development projects have been funded and accelerated. Chief among them is the Confucius Museum that has started soft operation in Qufu. A number of public welfare projects such as the China Teacher Museum were also launched.

Shandong is also proving attractive to cultural investors. The province clinched six projects worth a total of 56.6 billion yuan at the 14th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair held last May. The 2018 Conference for Confucianism and Entrepreneurship held in Jinan in September last year brought to Shandong 13 boutique tourism projects valued at 120 billion yuan and 11 cultural and creative projects with a total investment of 28 billion yuan.

Data show that Shandong has built 33 national and 168 provincial-level cultural (including publishing, film and television) industry demonstration parks (bases). Leading them are the Confucius Institute Headquarters experience base, Nishan Holy Land, and Oriental Movie Metropolis. They all cost more than 10 billion yuan and are now operational.

A series of events including the Qufu International Confucius Culture Festival, the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations, and the Fifth China Intangible Cultural Heritage Expo have enhanced Shandong’s image and greatly promoted its cultural and tourism products.

Shandong also has robust cultural consumption encouraged by generous subsidies. The Second Shandong Cultural Consumption Season further enhanced public awareness of cultural consumption and promoted the upgrading of the structure of cultural consumption. The events were participated in by 240 million people.

Wang said that during the two Seasons, the provincial and municipal financial authorities put 200 million yuan into guiding cultural consumption which drove direct consumption of 790 million yuan and resulted in further consumption of 28.85 billion. It has become the largest event of its kind in the country with the widest enterprise participation and most widely distributed consumers. It also features the newest platform model, Wang explained.

Local characteristics are cherished as shining treasures in the cultural industry. Full unitization of unique cultural resources and industry advantages in an exploratory spirit is therefore encouraged. Taierzhuang, Qingzhou and Qufu have set good examples for excellent cultural and tourism integration.

Wang called for a combination of various cultural activities and tourism in order to extend the industry chain and value chain. Specifically, famous events such as the Taishan Mountain International Climbing Festival, the Weifang Chinese Painting Festival and the International Kite Festival should continue on a larger scale while public cultural venues such as art galleries, cultural centers, museums, and historical and cultural exhibition halls at all levels should be incorporated into local tourism routes, Wang added."

"View of the headquarters of Inspur Group Co., Ltd. in Ji'nan city, east China's Shandong province, Dec 23, 2016.

JINAN -- Chinese manufacturing giant Nanshan Group aims to make its production and management smarter via partnership with domestic digitalization solutions provider Inspur Group.

The two companies have inked a project cooperation agreement on intelligent manufacturing and big data application to speed up Nanshan's industrial upgrading, according to a statement from Nanshan.

The intelligent manufacturing platform will enable the Shandong-based company to digitally monitor and control the production process, optimizing production and improving efficiency, and helping improve decision-making and product quality with big data.

Nanshan is in the mist of the shift from a traditional manufacturer to an intelligent company, Nanshan Group executive director Cheng Rence said, adding that it was necessary to promote the industrial Internet and smart manufacturing in the group's operations.

Located in Longkou, a coastal city in east China's Yantai, Nanshan Group is a private conglomerate known for its high-end aluminum and textile businesses and has expanded into finance, health, tourism, aviation and property in recent years.

The Chinese government has been encouraging traditional manufacturers to upgrade their products and services by integrating with digital technologies in its bid to promote economic transition."

"JINAN-- An international peony conference began Friday in East China's Shandong province.

The World Peony's Conference 2019 is being held in the city of Heze, with hundreds of varieties of peony flowers on display. Thousands of tourists, business people and flower experts have arrived in Heze to enjoy the event.

A major forum and four sub-forums will be held during the event, scheduled to last until Sunday. A peony industry expo will also be held.

It is the first international peony conference on such a big scale, and 17 famous experts from a variety of countries are in attendance, said Liu Hong, with the China Flower Association.

""The experts and authorities of related companies will discuss about peony growth and peony-related products at the conference,"" Liu said.

Heze was named by the China Flower Association as ""capital of peony in China"" in 2012. Currently, the city has 32,400 hectares of peony plantation, and churns out 25,000 tonnes of peony seed oil annually. Last year, output value of the peony industry exceeded 8 billon yuan ($1.2 billion) in the city."

"[Photo/iqilu.com]The Ministry of Education has approved the establishment of SDU-ANU Joint Science College, Shandong University.

The college, with a capacity of 1,200 students, is located at No 180 Wenhua West Road in Weihai city. It will be jointly organized by Shandong University and the Australian National University.

Affiliated to SDU, the college will carry out undergraduate education and offer four undergraduate majors, namely mathematics and applied mathematics, applied physics, applied chemistry and biological science.

Undergraduate students will be issued corresponding undergraduate degree certificates of the SDU and the ANU after being assessed by both sides."

"Shandong Iron and Steel Co Ltd produced 9.11 million tons of crude iron, 10.31 million tons of steel and 10.01 million tons of steel products in 2018. [Photo/IC]

JINAN - Shandong Iron and Steel Co Ltd, a subsidiary of major Chinese steel producer Shandong Iron and Steel Group, said Friday that its net profit saw a 9.47-percent rise in 2018.

The company's net profit attributable to shareholders reached 2.11 billion yuan (about $314.3 million) last year, according to its annual financial report filed to the Shanghai Stock Exchange.

Over the same period, the company in East China's Shandong province saw its revenue reach 55.91 billion yuan, up 16.72 percent year on year.

It produced 9.11 million tons of crude iron, 10.31 million tons of steel and 10.01 million tons of steel products in 2018.

Its shares closed 2.13 percent higher at 1.92 yuan Friday."

"Night scene of ancient Taierzhuang town. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Many scenic spots in Shandong province have ventured into the night-time economy in recent years, local media reported on March 25.

The tourism products in local attractions at night are mainly lantern shows in winter and performances, sightseeing boats, beer and music festivals in summer.

Increasingly more Shandong scenic spots are hosting lantern shows. The Spouting Spring in Jinan, capital of Shandong, has run the event for 40 years, entertaining 800,000 visitors this year and the creative cultural products derived from lanterns were especially popular among children.

Two scenic spots now offer a sightseeing boat service, namely, the Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center and ancient Taierzhuang town.

Some attractions create beautiful night scenes to draw visitors. The Spouting Spring, Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center and ancient Taierzhuang town are the best places to admire the fine night views.

The ancient town uses colorful lights to create a gorgeous night scene, organizes various activities to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival and stages lantern shows and intangible cultural heritage performances in winter.

According to Huang Xiaoli, deputy general manager of Taierzhuang Ancient Town Tourism Group, in addition to more ticket proceeds, these activities also increase the revenue of restaurants and hotels within the scenic spot.

However, industry insiders warn that although scenic spots want to take advantage of the booming night-time economy, they need to consider if they can offer complete supporting services, such as catering and accommodation, as well as a variety of activities throughout the year. Otherwise, it could be hard to retain tourists.

""Night tour organizers need to launch different tourism products in different seasons to maintain the flow of tourists,"" noted Huang.

Lantern show of the Spouting Spring. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"The 12th China (Weifang) Culture and Art Fair will be held from April 19 to 23 in the Shandong-Taiwan Convention and Exhibition Center, Weifang city, East China's Shandong province.

The fair will feature a variety of cultural activities including the 9th Chinese New Year Pictures Festival, a folk art exposition and a creative design exhibition.

Visitors will be able to enjoy a display of diversified artworks from both at home and abroad, including among more than 30 exhibition areas with distinctive characteristics during the fair."

"East China's Shandong province will implement updated measures to promote the development of cultural tourism, with the aim of building a more attractive image of the province in 2019.

Authorities of culture and tourism in the province's 16 cities plan to improve service capacity, upgrade promotional activities and enhance markets regulation, according to plans announced at the conference.

Binzhou city will establish and reconstruct a batch of comprehensive service facilities to better show cultural connotations and improve public services.

Fan Haibo, an official from the Binzhou municipal department of culture and tourism, said the city will enrich current tourism routes by adding more scenic spots such as cultural relic protection units, museums and cultural centers.

At the same time, the local government will encourage the development of interactive methods such as digital cultural services and volunteers services to meet visitors' demands.

Tai'an city has also pledged to put an emphasis on enhancing the tourism experience for visitors. The city will employ mobile applications and big data technology to set up intelligent tourism platforms.

In addition, Tai'an plans to construct a consulting services system for tourists and promote local cultural tourism activities by utilizing modern digital media platforms, according to Wang Xinmin, an official from the Tai'an municipal department of culture and tourism.

To promote the image of the city, Yantai will launch a series of cultural tourism activities with local characteristics. The city plans to run advertisements on national-level platforms and take full advantage of the possibilities of the new media.

Weihai city will roll out a series of cultural tourism activities such as large-scale exhibitions, reading events and an international choral singing festival.

Sui Jianbo, director of the Weihai municipal department of culture and tourism, said they will assign promotional staff to introduce air charter services to more cities in Russia and launch high-end tourism products to important overseas markets such as South Korea and Japan.

Tourists come to Heze city, Shandong province to admire peony in full bloom. [Photo from Wechat account sdswltwx]

The library of Binzhou city, Shandong province. [Photo from Wechat account sdswltwx]"

"By Zhao Junchao, Research Team on “The Institutional Framework and Policy System of Urban-Rural Integration and Development”, Research Department of Rural Economy, DRC

Research Report, No.6, 2019 (Total 5506) 2019-1-14

Abstract: The integration of urban-rural development is an important leverage to realize rural revitalization. Linyi city in Shandong province has carried out pilot practice on urban-rural integration development and achieved initial results. Its principal experience can be summed up in five aspects such as making the city play its role in driving the development of its surrounding areas, taking characteristic resources as the carrier, relying on township construction, taking infrastructure as the leverage, and taking human factors as the core driver. It needs to be pointed out that there are also some outstanding issues in the development of urban-rural integration relating to inadequate industrial integration, population mobility, public services and rural governance. Some of them are due to the difficulties caused by urban-rural differences themselves, and some are owing to the difficulties spawned by institutional barriers. The level of Linyi city's economic and social development is slightly lower than that of the national average. Its experience and difficulties are both typical. In view of these difficulties, corresponding policies need to be formulated to provide references for the establishment and improvement of the national institutional mechanism in terms of urban-rural integration and development.

Key words: urban-rural integration, institutional mechanism, Linyi city in Shandong province"

"Overseas students enjoy their stay at Shandong University. [Photo provided to China Daily]

As a key university with a long history, variety of disciplines and academic strengths, Shandong University will lead in scientific innovation and academic research to become a world-class university with distinctive Chinese characteristics, said its president Fan Liming, who is also a deputy to the 13th National People's Congress.

""We will provide research staff with encouragement and support as they are devoted to scientific achievement and bear hardship over decades,"" Fan said.

In 2018, Shandong University invested 2.3 billion yuan ($343 million) in scientific research and development, up 32 percent year-on-year.

The university's funds for the transformation of scientific and technological achievements reached nearly 100 million yuan. Around 30 contracts were signed.

In 2017, Shandong University joined the list of world-class universities. Sixteen of its research fields have entered the top 1 percent globally.

The rankings were set by the Essential Science Indicators, an authoritative evaluation tool for measuring scientific research performance.

Fan said that Shandong University has used its advantages in academic fields and focused on technological innovation in areas such as advanced materials, intelligent manufacturing and healthcare. The university will continue to build its brand and improve innovation and achievement conversion capabilities.

Over the past decades, Shandong University cultivated many renowned experts in China's scientific history.

They include embryologist Tong Dizhou who initiated China's first research in cloning fish; Shu Xingbei, renowned as ""the father of Chinese radar""; and the famous marine biologist Zeng Chengkui.

The number of the university's papers included in databases for Science Citation Index Expanded almost ranks in the top 10 among all universities in China.

""We will aim at strengthening research on basic theories and center on the latest technological frontiers to carry out key scientific projects and help the nation become stronger in fields such as aviation, internet, transport, digital technology and smart society,"" said Fan.

Fan Liming, president of Shandong University and deputy to the 13th National People's Congress [Photo provided to China Daily]

She added that Shandong University has created research teams with both domestic and international influences in sectors including angiocardiopathy, geotechnical engineering, reproductive medicine, finance and mathematics.

Shandong University gained four national awards at the National Science and Technology Award Conference on Jan 8.

Zhang Cheng, professor of the Qilu Hospital of Shandong University, won second prize of the State Natural Science Awards.

Zhang's research team on angiocardiopathy has more than 350 national and provincial subjects under the national 973 Plan, the 863 Program and the National Natural Science Foundation of China, with a total fund of some 270 million yuan.

It has referred the pathogenesis, testing method and intervention target for worldwide cardiovascular care to be restructured for the first time. The team has also won eight national science and technology awards and more than 70 provincial awards.

Also, the university's geotechnical engineering team has worked hard in preventing and researching water and mud disasters of underground projects.

They developed advanced detection technology and instruments and built a warning system for the drilling and blasting sector, which has been installed in more than 200 tunnels.

It has won second prize of the National Scientific and Technological Progress Awards four times.

To further improve the university's scientific and innovative abilities, it founded a research institute on advanced technologies in November last year.

Fan said that the institute is aiming to cultivate a batch of top scientific elites who will help Shandong become a new hub for international cooperation in academic fields.

The institute will conduct basic and applied research on frontier physics and cutting-edge technologies.

Shandong University has also set up 12 high-level innovative teams and strives to be a base for leading experts."

"Shandong has formulated a number of progressive plans to carry forward excellent traditional Chinese culture and the inheritance of red culture such as the Yimeng spirit.

In September 2017, Shandong issued the ""work plan for the development of excellent traditional Chinese culture in Shandong province"", which clearly states that Shandong should be a good leader in the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture.

By 2025, Shandong should basically have formed a system of inheriting and developing the excellent traditional Chinese culture, and developed a research and elucidation system, universal education, a practical cultural cultivation system, and systems for inheritance protection and exchange.

In August 2017, the province issued ""opinions on vigorously promoting the spirit of Yimeng"", which proposed deepening research and elucidation, innovating ways to develop public awareness and promoting education inheritance. Literary and artistic creations with a Yimeng theme have since flourished, and red-themed tourist routes have become popular.

Qufu is the core area for the inheritance and promotion of traditional culture. In January 2018, Shandong issued the ""construction plan for Qufu traditional cultural heritage development demonstration zone"".

The plan anticipates building a cultural highland that will lead in fashion, serve society, and promote cultural development and exchange by 2020.

By 2030, Qufu is expected to become a leading region with international influence and the world's oriental spiritual home.

To realize creative development of excellent traditional culture and carry out the red gene inheritance project, Shandong should dig deep into the ideological and moral essence contained in Qifu culture, and let the cultural genes integrate with economic production and life through innovative practice.

In a variety of ways the province has introduced excellent traditional culture into teaching materials, classrooms and communities, promoted the ""four virtues"" of good deeds and made good use of historical culture and revolutionary cultural resources, including an education base, to cultivate political and moral integrity.

In 2018, Shandong held the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations and the World Confucian Conference, vigorously implemented inheritance of the Yimeng spirit in a demonstration project, held seminars on the theory of the Yimeng spirit and the relationship between the Party and the public in the new era, and promoted the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional Chinese culture.

Building a strong cultural province must have strong support from the cultural industry. Shandong province has included the cultural and creative industries and boutique tourism industry in its top ten industries eligible for new and old kinetic energy conversion.

In 2018, the ""Shandong province cultural and creative industry development plan (2018-2022)"" was issued.

According to the plan, by 2022, the added value of the province's cultural and creative industries is expected to exceed 600 billion yuan ($89.5 billion), accounting for six percent of GDP.

The province will focus on major fields such as cultural tourism, film and television performing arts, publishing media, creative design, cultural exhibitions and trade and cultural manufacturing.

For the film and television industry, the province issued the ""Shandong Province Film and Television Industry Development Plan (2018-2022)"", and proposed to make the Qingdao Lingshan Bay Film and Television Cultural Industry Area the leader in building a national world-class film and television industry base, radiating and driving a group of distinctive film and television industry parks, and forming a “1+N” film and television base (park) layout in the province.

Quality tourism is required for high-quality development. The ""special plan (2018-2022) for the development of quality tourism in Shandong province"" proposes that by 2022, Shandong will have achieved more than 40 billion yuan from the cultural quality tourism industry, and created more than 300 cultural tourism scenic spots featuring distinct cultural themes and complete facilities."

"Shandong's expenditure on education accounted for about 20 percent of its general public budget expenditure in 2018, ranking first not only in the province's various expenditures, but also in China's total education spending.

The expenditure is expected to rise, according to attendees at a reviewing conference on budget, with more investment in education and technology to cultivate talents for future development expected this year.

""Growth in education spending is a must to turn Shandong, a province with large population, to a modern strong province,"" said Shi Min, a government official at the conference.

""However, Shandong still needs to improve education security as its per capita education funds remains low in the country,"" said Gao Jianfeng, deputy director of the provincial department of finance."

"Shandong will put forth efforts to promote its cultural industry in 2019 and make full use of Qilu culture resources, according to the provincial government work report.

Du Zexun, director of the School of Literature of Shandong University, said, “We shall collate materials and enhance research to fully develop and make effective use of Qilu culture resources.”

Shandong has taken the lead in the protection and rescue of ancient Chinese documents. It has launched a project of global ancient book integration, which is a national key cultural project targeting Chinese classic books collected by overseas countries and regions. The project was included in the Chinese Ancient Books Protection Plan by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Ministry of Education last year.

Du also pointed out the fact that Shandong lacks high-end talents in the traditional culture sector.

“Especially in the studies of Chinese ancient civilization, it is difficult to find a top expert, which makes talent training an urgent task,” Du said.

He suggested that Shandong’s universities should open small-scale training classes for studies of Chinese ancient civilization to develop students with expertise.

According to the government work report, Shandong will continue its efforts to inherit and transmit traditional culture and construct two model areas for the innovation of Qilu culture preservation.

Party secretary of Jining city Fu Mingxian said that Jining should strive to transform itself into a capital city for promotion of great Chinese traditional culture. Jining is also expected to upgrade the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations, start construction of a World Confucian Center, develop a new campus of Jining Cadres Political and Moral Education College and a college of Chinese Confucian entrepreneurs, speed up the construction of Confucius University, boost integrated development of culture and tourism, and improve Jining’s cultural competitiveness.

Tie Liu, vice chairman of the Shandong Writers Association, praised the government’s arrangement to popularize the hard-working Yimeng Spirit and encourage self-improvement and selfless dedication as well as preservation of revolutionary memories. Tie said the historic memories may fade away along with the death of revolutionists. He called for arrangement of special personnel and allocation of funds to record the revolutionary stories with lenses or pens.

In 2019, the province will take more measures to further introduce traditional Chinese culture to the world stage, expanding the influence of the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations, holding the ninth World Confucian Conference and building the world Confucian center.

Li Jingxue, head of Jining Cadres Political and Moral Education College, encouraged Jining, especially Confucius' hometown Qufu, to tell Confucius stories in the ways which foreigners can understand, including art performances, exhibitions and seminars.

The efforts also include enhancement of cultural exchange via platforms such as the Confucius culture festival and world Confucian conference, and promotion of Confucianism culture in Belt and Road countries, to attract more visitors to Qufu and extend the “friend circle” of traditional culture."

"A chef concentrates on engraving a white bird at an exchange activity featuring Shandong cuisine arts held in Fushan district of Yantai, East China's Shandong province on March 3. [Photo/VCG]

The 2019 Shandong Cuisine Masters Exchange Summit was held in Fushan district of Yantai, East China's Shandong province on March 3.

More than 300 Shandong cuisine masters and renowned chiefs from Beijing, Shanghai, Anhui province, Fujian province and Shandong province gathered at Liyuan Hotel to showcase their talents in making dishes and pastries and exchange their cooking expertise with each other.

Shandong cuisine, also known as Lu cuisine, is one of the Eight Culinary Traditions of Chinese cuisine and one of the Four Great Traditions.

The event also held a famous cuisine exhibition and an excellent food materials exhibition where a full set of Ejiao banquet, along with a donkey banquet and a melon carving themed exhibition were displayed.

A visitor captures the eye-pleasing dish featuring a character of Chinese myth at Liyuan Hotel on March 3. [Photo/VCG]

An authentic Shandong cuisine dish featuring a monk is on display in Yantai. [Photo/VCG]

An exquisite cake is on display at the exchange summit. [Photo/VCG]

A pastry chef shows her completed pastry art work for visitors at Liyuan Hotel in Yantai. [Photo/VCG]

A female pastry chef shows her pastry art work for visitors at Liyuan Hotel in Yantai. [Photo/VCG]

Visitors take a photo to capture the splendid Shandong cuisines at Liyuan Hotel in Yantai. [Photo/VCG]"

"The plum blossom forest of the Cheeloo College of Medicine of Shandong University in Jinan, East China's Shandong province has recently become a popular attraction for local people, as shutterbugs and visitors eager to admire the bloomy plum blossoms.

Bloomy plum flowers attract hordes of shutterbugs and visitors at the Cheeloo College of Medicine of Shandong University in Jinan, East China's Shandong province. [Photo by VCG/dzwww.com]

Delicate plum flowers look captivating in the early spring at the Cheeloo College of Medicine of Shandong University in Jinan, East China's Shandong province. [Photo by VCG/dzwww.com]

A visitor takes photos of the bloomy plum blossoms at the Cheeloo College of Medicine of Shandong University in Jinan, East China's Shandong province on March 3. Late February and March is the ideal time to admire plum blossoms. [Photo by VCG/dzwww.com]

Clusters of plum blossoms bloom at the Cheeloo College of Medicine of Shandong University in Jinan. The pink flowers add color to university in early spring. [Photo by VCG/dzwww.com]

Full-blown plum blossoms add a poetic touch to the Cheeloo College of Medicine of Shandong University in Jinan, East China's Shandong province. [Photo by VCG/dzwww.com]

An insect collects nectar from the bloomy plum flowers at the Cheeloo College of Medicine of Shandong University in Jinan, East China's Shandong province. [Photo by VCG/dzwww.com]"

"JINAN -- A UNESCO geopark in East China's Shandong province has been approved to expand, management authorities of the park have said.

The Taishan UNESCO Global Geopark, about 90 km south of Shandong's capital city of Jinan, will be extended from 159 square km to about 418 square km, according to the park authorities.

After the expansion, the park will include 76 villages of three townships with more than 100,000 residents in the area. The plan, believed to benefit the park's management and geological resource preservation, has been approved at a meeting at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

Taishan, or Mount Tai, became a UNESCO global geopark in 2006. Its landscape makes it a popular tourist site in China."

"Visitors examine flowers at a national-level agricultural exhibition hall in Daicun village in Lanling, Shandong province. [Photo/China Daily]

With neat rows of apartment buildings, wide and clean roads, classified trash cans and sanitary toilets, Daicun village in Shandong province might not fit the stereotype of a rural area.

But it has provided an example of how rural areas can be revitalized economically and socially. Some 200,000 farmers and government officials from across the country have come to conduct field research and exchange their experiences over the past few years.

The number of visitors to this small town, which has a population of 3,600, has seen a significant increase since last year, when President Xi Jinping recognized the achievements of the village and its Party secretary, Wang Chuanhai.

Joining a group discussion in March last year with deputies from Shandong during the annual session of the National People's Congress, Xi said Daicun village proves the Chinese proverb that the locomotive decides how fast a train runs.

Xi called for more rural Party secretaries like Wang to provide a sound base of governance for rural vitalization.

A poverty-stricken village that was deeply in debt in the late 1990s, Daicun had risen by 2018 to have an average net income for residents of 68,000 yuan ($10,200), more than four times the national average for farmers.

Last year, the village built several new facilities in response to Xi's call for revitalizing rural areas. Those include a new agricultural exhibition hall and a tourism base showcasing collectibles and the history of ""educated youth""－urban youth who went to rural areas during the 1960s and 70s in response to a call from Chairman Mao Zedong for ""making achievements in the countryside"".

Businesses run by the village generated output value of 2.8 billion yuan last year, and agricultural and service industries are now major growth engines of its economy.

A 1,300-hectare national-level agricultural exhibition area, for example, attracted more than 20,000 visitors during Spring Festival, contributing a significant share of revenue to the village, according to Liu Yanbin, deputy general manager of the area.

A larger training center to teach farmers how to develop rural areas is now under construction in the village. With four buildings, the center is scheduled to be in service in October.

The rural vitalization strategy was proposed by Xi at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2017, with the overall goal of building rural areas with thriving businesses, pleasant living environments, social etiquette, effective governance and prosperity.

Shandong released a five-year plan on its rural vitalization in May, the first of its kind, mapping out a number of major projects, programs and actions for the five-year period 2018-22.

Some of the projects aim to integrate talent recruitment, land use, finance and industrial structure by 2022 in rural areas. Thirty percent of villages in the province are expected to see their agricultural industry upgraded and modernized, creating 120 billion yuan worth of added value."

"Shandong University (SDU) has joined hands with Shandong Commerce Group to build the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Shandong University.

The academy will promote technological research and development of the pharmaceutical industry in Shandong province.

The inaugurated ceremony for the new academy was held on Jan 29.

Ling Peixue said at the ceremony that the cooperation will help pharmaceutical research and technology innovation. The academy will provided a platform for sharing equipment and key technologies and for luring more high-tech talents to carry out in-depth academic exchanges.

Shandong Commerce Group is a state-owned company in Jinan, engaging in diversified fields ranging from smart retailing to the modern financial industry and health care.

Chen Zijiang, the deputy president of Shandong University, said Shandong University also has close cooperative ties with the Shandong Pharmaceutical Sciences Academy and has had great results in platform construction, technology breakthroughs, product research and talent training.

Pharmaceutical science is one of the key disciplines in Shandong University. The cooperation will build a platform for talent training and exchange, information sharing service and joint project application. It will also enhance scientific research and innovation in the medical and health industry in Shandong province.

The Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Shandong University is expected to be a world-class institute of pharmaceutical sciences supported jointly by government, hospitals and companies.

The inauguration ceremony for the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Shandong University is held on Jan 29 in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo/view.sdu.edu.cn]"

"East China's Shandong province organized flash mob events across its 16 cities on Feb 16 and 17, gathering together thousands of residents from all walks of life to sing ""I love you, China"" in honor of the country's 70th anniversary.

Participants gathered at iconic landmarks in different cities, such as the Chaoran Pavilion in Jinan's Daming Lake scenic area, the Qingdao Wusi Square, the Weifang Kite Square and the Weihai Xinfumen Park to surprise the public and sang the praises of the motherland, which also added festive atmosphere to the Spring Festival holiday.

""The event is very meaningful as people from all walks of life gather together to express their patriotism. I am very happy and touched to be part of it,"" said a traffic policeman in Weihai city.

""This year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of New China. I am very proud of my country,"" said Zhao Xiaoning, an elementary school student from Dezhou city.

A resident records the flash mob with her mobile phone in Zaozhuang, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

People from all walks of life gather in the Tianwaicun village to sing the praises of the motherland in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

People sing a repertoire of odes to the homeland, ""I love you, China"" to show their love for China on Feb 17 in front of the Chaoran Pavilion in Jinan's Daming Lake scenic area. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"East China's Shandong province is to build marine ranches for the development of marine economy. [Photo/Xinhua]

Shandong, a strong maritime province in East China, will spare no efforts to build 32 national-level marine ranching demonstration areas for the development of a modern marine industrial system, according to the 2018 work report of the provincial government.

A marine ranch is a certain sea area in which fishermen adapt large-scale fishery facilities and systematic management systems to utilize raise marine resources such as fish, shrimp, shellfish and algae in the natural marine environment.

""The plan for marine ranches serve as an effective solution to protect marine living resources, improve the ecological environment of the sea, and provide more quality and safe aquatic products,"" said Mo Zhaolan, a researcher of the Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences.

With outstanding advantages in marine resources, industry and technology, Shandong has undertaken unique explorations in marine ranching development in recent years.

Those explorations are at the forefront in the country as Shandong seeks to promote the transformation and upgrading of fisheries.

""However, compared with the international advanced level, the development of China's marine ranches is still in its infancy. As for Shandong province, outstanding problems still exit in its current development of marine ranches, such as relatively lower construction standards, unclear management systems and insufficient management investment,"" Mo said.

In Mo's view, Shandong should give priority to ecological protection.

""It is not an easy task for Shandong to make breakthroughs and set a good example in the country. More efforts should be made to achieve the goal in the coming three years.""

""The 32 demonstration areas are all located in the Jiaodong peninsula, abundant in fishery resources but backward in marine ranching development,"" said Zhang Shandong, director of the Municipal Bureau of Marine Development and Fisheries of Dongying city in Shandong province, adding that it is urgent to transform and upgrade local industry and improve quality and efficiency.

Mo suggested that joint efforts of the government, enterprises and fishermen are required to facilitate the development of the marine ranches. Also, social capital, private capital and foreign capital are welcome to expand their financing channels for marine ranches research.

""Possessing many marine research institutes, Shandong should take full advantage of science resources to commercialize the achievements in relevant research by promoting cooperation between institutes and enterprises,"" Zhang said.

Zhang Guofang, the director of Qingdao bright moon seaweed group, a high-tech company engaged in marine biomedicine, one of the categories of marine industry, gave his views on the collaboration of various industries.

""The marine industry involves many categories. In the long run, it is important to integrate Shandong's competitive industries into a complete marine industrial system with overall planning and key breakthroughs,"" he said."

"More than 6,500 students take part in an art school entrance exam in Jinan, Shandong province, on Feb 13, 2019. The number of candidates applying to Shandong University of Art & Design hit a record high with more than 76,000 this year. [Photo by Zheng Tao/Asianewsphoto]

Candidates wait to enter the entrance hall outside Shungeng Exhibition Center, where the exam is held, in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, on Feb 13, 2019. [Photo by Zheng Tao/Asianewsphoto]

Candidates draw sketches in an art school entrance exam at Shandong Shungeng Exhibition Center, on Feb 13, 2019. [Photo by Zheng Tao/Asianewsphoto]

Candidates take an art school entrance exam at Shungeng Exhibition Center in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, on Feb 13, 2019. [Photo by Zheng Tao/Asianewsphoto]"

"A total of 40 Shandong-based time honored brands as well as five intangible cultural heritage items took part in a Chinese New Year celebration held at the Palace Museum in Beijing from Jan 28 to Feb 10.

Jointly hosted by the Shandong provincial department of commerce and the Palace Museum, the event gathered more than 150 time-honored brands and various intangible cultural items from across the country, offering a golden opportunity for visitors to get a glimpse of the country's century-old traditional brands and unique New Year customs.

The so-called time-honored brands, or ""laozihao"" in Chinese, refer to companies that sell products with famous names and long histories. More than 60 percent of them are engaged in pharmaceuticals, food and catering.

Tsingtao Brewery, a leading Chinese beer producer from Shandong's prosperous coastal city Qingdao, attracted hordes of visitors to buy its renowned products despite the freezing weather.

""Our special treats for the Spring Festival are extremely enticingly designed and quite popular among consumers, especially the young people who post many photos or selfies with the festive and exquisite beer products on social media platforms,"" said Pang Ning, a member of staff from the brewery's marketing department.

Pang said that the company will launch more products with retro designs next year as the event was designed to promote time-honored brands rather than sell products.

Ancient imperial tributes consecrated from Shandong such as ejiao (donkey-hide gelatin, a traditional Chinese health improvement product), millet and Yutang pickle were also displayed at the event.

Yutang pickle is a famous side dish produced in Shandong's Jining city with more than 300 years of history.

""It has been 130 years since Yutang pickle first entered the imperial palace in 1889,"" said Yang Jun, a sales staff member.

""It is a perfect opportunity to promote our products and raise its profile as thousands of visitors from across the world visit the Palace Museum every day.""

Li Junqiang, deputy secretary general of the Shandong provincial time-honored enterprises association, said that the event will help to revitalize the time-tested brands and preserve culture and memories for future generations.

Yutang pickle, a famous side dish produced in Shandong's Jining city, is exhibited at a Chinese New Year celebration at the Palace Museum in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Bottles of Tsingtao Beer in special festive package are seen at a Chinese New Year celebration at the Palace Museum in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The Tsingtao Beer booth attracts many visitors at a Chinese New Year celebration at the Palace Museum in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The Chinese New Year celebration at the Palace Museum in Beijing attracts thousands of visitors every day. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Shandong province's iconic cultural legacy of Weifang kites are exhibited at a Chinese New Year celebration at the Palace Museum in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Bazirou pork, a popular dish in Shandong province is exhibited at a Chinese New Year celebration at the Palace Museum in Beijing. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Millet produced from Jining's Jinxiang county, once an imperial tribute, is exhibited at the Palace Museum. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"A chef engraves words on watermelons at an exchange activity featuring Shandong cuisine arts held recently in Yantai, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

An exchange activity featuring Shandong cuisine arts was held recently in Yantai, a coastal city of East China's Shandong province. Chefs from 58 hotels across the city showcased a total of 66 dishes and pastries.

Shandong cuisine, also known as Lu cuisine, is one of the Eight Culinary Traditions of Chinese cuisine and one of the Four Great Traditions.

The activity, themed around innovation and inheritance, aims to provide a platform for local residents to get to know more about traditional Shandong cuisine culture and further promote the innovation of Shandong cuisine.

An eye-pleasing dish on display at an exchange activity featuring Shandong cuisine arts held recently in Yantai, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

An exquisite dish featuring Peking Opera, a traditional drama in China on display in Yantai. [Photo/dzwww.com]

An authentic Shandong cuisine dish on display in Yantai. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Braised prawns. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Stir-fried shrimp balls with broccoli. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Shandong will spare no efforts to promote the development of modern marine ranching in a bid to build a stronger marine economy with cutting-edge technology and outstanding marine ecosystems, according to a news briefing convened by the Shandong Development and Reform Commission on Jan 22.

A marine ranch is a certain sea area in which fishermen adapt large-scale fishery facilities and systematic management systems to utilize the natural marine environment to raise marine resources including fish, shrimp, shellfish and algae.

The process has often been compared to grazing flocks and herds on a farm.

""By leveraging the province's first-rate marine technology and equipment, Shandong will make a special effort to promote the advancement, intellectualization and diversification of its marine ranching from coastal areas to deep seas, so as to build a comprehensive pilot demonstration area in this sector,"" said Liang Wenyue, vice director of Shandong Development and Reform Commission.

An investment of about 5.3 billion yuan ($780 million) will be needed to build the comprehensive pilot marine ranching demonstration area involving offshore and abyssal areas.

Combined measures such as building artificial reefs and cultivating and releasing various fish fry will be adopted in the province's offshore area to rejuvenate the underwater environment and replenish the fish population.

By providing hard surfaces to which algae and invertebrates such as barnacles and coral can attach, artificial reefs attract large numbers of marine creatures and provide homes and food for fish, which allows fishermen to reduce the scale of sea farming and the pollution it causes and reduce the scale of long-range fishing to protect marine life in the deep oceans.

Various types of marine ranches will be built in waters of the Changdao Islands, the south area of Yantai-Weihai region, the offshore area of east Qingdao and the east coast of Rongcheng.

Modern marine technology and facilities will be fully utilized to expand space for fishery development in the abyssal areas, where pilot projects for large-scale intelligent aquaculture will be carried out.

The comprehensive pilot marine ranching demonstration area will be constructed in three stages and the first-stage project will start before this February.

Shandong province, endowed with vast marine resources, is home to China's biggest peninsula and has a coastline which equates to one sixth of the country's total and adjacent sea areas of about 159,500 square kilometers.

Shandong's marine ranches at provincial level and above numbered 55 in 2017, including 21 at the national level that were one third of the country's total.

The income of Shandong's marine ranches topped 210 billion yuan in 2017, ranking first in the country.

Shandong's sea ranches are focused on fishing, artificial-reef building, bottom-dwelling shellfish planting, seafood planting and fish-farming with modern technologies and equipment.

The Shandong Development and Reform Commission convenes a news briefing to introduce its plan to build a comprehensive pilot marine ranching demonstration area in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province, Jan 22, 2019. [Photo/zhonghongwang.com]

A marine ranch platform developed by CIMC Raffles is delivered in Laishan district of Yantai on March 10, 2018. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A production base of CIMC Raffles, a maritime engineering equipment supplier in Shandong's high-end maritime manufacturing industry. [Photo/China Daily]"

"Shandong will organize about 21 cultural exchange groups with 258 participating members to attend the 2019 Happy Chinese New Year celebration series during the Spring Festival season, to spread delightful New Year greetings and wishes as well as the unique Qilu culture to different parts of the world.

The ""Happy Chinese New Year"" cultural program is a worldwide activity for celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year hosted by China's Ministry of Culture and other Chinese authorities since 2009. It features a wide variety of cultural activities ranging from performances and exhibitions to temple fairs and salons.

According to the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, artists and performers from Shandong will take part in celebrations in 14 countries and regions, including the United States, the UK, France, South Korea, Thailand and New Zealand.

At the invitation of the China Cultural Center in Seoul, Shandong has sent several art troupes to attend Chinese New Year celebrations in South Korea.

From Jan 9 to Jan 13, the 2019 Korea-China Friendship Concert was staged at the Sejong Grand Theater in South Korea’s capital city of Seoul under the joint efforts of the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, the China Cultural Center in Seoul and South Korea’s Ajunews Corporation.

From Jan 14 to 18, artists from the Weihai Mass Art Center staged two special performances at the Weihai Pavilion in Inchon and the China Cultural Center in Seoul.

From Jan 21 to 25, an exhibition featuring Shandong’s intangible cultural heritages is being held in South Korea, along with lectures on China’s Spring Festival customs.

At the invitation of the China Cultural Center in New Zealand, a group of 28 members from the Jinan Acrobatic Troupe will attend Chinese New Year celebrations in Wellington and Auckland from Feb 1 to 11.

Organized by the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism, eight acrobats from the Shandong Acrobatic Troupe will attend related cultural activities in New Zealand and Samoa from Feb 15 to 25.

From Jan 24 to 28, the Shandong art troupe will send 14 performers to attend a Spring Festival gala held in Atlanta.

At the invitation of the Confucius Institute of Colorado State University, a group of 20 members from Shandong Management University will attend a cultural exchange activity at the university.

At the invitation of the national tourism administration of Thailand, a group of 44 artists from Shandong will attend the Chinese New Year celebration series in the country during Spring Festival season.

According to the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism, more than 1,500 cultural programs will take place in 396 cities in 133 countries and regions during the Spring Festival season during this year’s Happy Chinese New Year global celebration.

The cultural program seeks to provide a global platform that is joyful, harmonious and accessible to all, to encourage people across the world to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year, experience the profound and interesting Chinese culture and understand the huge achievements China has made."

"The Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism convened a meeting on Jan 23 in the province's capital city Jinan to review the department's work and achievements in 2018 as well as devise a working plan for 2019.

Wang Lei, Party secretary and director of the Shandong provincial culture and tourism department delivered a keynote speech at the meeting.

Last year, the department made innovations in its routine work and achieved breakthroughs in its key tasks such as ecological-civilization construction, rural cultural revitalization and promoting Shandong culture worldwide. It also contributed greatly to the brand building and promotion of Shandong's featured cultural and tourism activities.

Wang said that generally the department’s work was improved in 2018 and Shandong’s image as a province with abundant recourses in culture, tourism and historic relics was further exemplified and enhanced.

The meeting highlighted several tasks to guarantee the smooth proceeding of the department’s culture and tourism work in 2019.

As this year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the department will bring out a number of quality literary and artistic works, promote the development of red tourism, as well as host related activities to celebrate the significant anniversary.

Focusing on the conversion of old and new growth drivers, the department will strive to promote the integration and high-quality development of its culture and tourism sectors through expanding the province’s cultural and creative industry, high-quality tourism services and all-for-one tourism.

The Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism convenes a meeting on Jan 23 to review the department’s work and achievement in 2018 as well as devise a working plan in 2019. [Photo/sdwht.gov.cn]

Wang Lei, Party secretary and director of the Shandong provincial culture and tourism department delivers a keynote speech at the meeting. [Photo/sdwht.gov.cn]

All-for-one tourism focuses on the upgrading and integration of tourism resources, public services, regulations and policies to boost economic development with tourism being the new engine for growth. It is the government's most recent endeavor to upgrade the province’s tourism sector as well as a move to alleviate poverty by spreading tourism and tourism investment to rural areas. The department will make a special effort to explore marine culture and promote the marine economy as the province is endowed with vast marine resources and has a coastline which equates to one sixth of the country's total and adjacent sea areas of about 159,500 square kilometers.

The department will continue to deepen reform and expand opening-up in 2019. It will push forward the reform of comprehensive administrative law enforcement in the cultural market, deepen the reform of state-owned tourist attractions, as well as promote foreign exchanges and opening to the outside world.

Centering on inheriting and carrying forward traditional culture, the department will strengthen the protection and utilization of cultural relics, enhance the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritages, and advance the development of demonstration zones of traditional culture and key projects.

The meeting also stressed that combined measures should be carried out to better coordinate the development of the culture and tourism sectors and increase the influence of Shandong culture as a whole."

"Celebrated Chinese painter Qi Baishi's (1864-1957) works will be on display at the Shandong Art Museum from Jan 19 to April 14, offering a golden opportunity for local residents to admire paintings of the renowned artist.

Jointly organized by the China Arts and Entertainment Group and the Shandong Art Museum, the exhibition will display 35 representative paintings by the watercolor master.

A combo photo of Qi Baishi's paintings. An exhibition of his works will be on display at the Shandong Art Museum from Jan 19 to April 14. [Photo provided to China Daily]

A piece of work by Qi Baishi (1864-1957), a master of Chinese painting, will be displayed at the Shandong Art Museum from Jan 19 to April 14. [Photo/sdam.org.cn]

A painting by Qi Baishi (1864-1957), a master of Chinese painting, will be displayed at the Shandong Art Museum from Jan 19 to April 14. [Photo/sdam.org.cn]"

"Containers carrying goods for export are seen in Qingdao Port, East China's Shandong province, on Oct 19, 2018. [Photo/VCG]

JINAN - Total revenue from foreign trade rose 7.7 percent year-on-year to 1.93 trillion yuan ($285.4 billion) in eastern China's Shandong province in 2018, a record high, authorities said.

According to figures jointly released by Qingdao Customs and Jinan Customs, Shandong's exports totaled 1.06 trillion yuan last year, the first time for the province to cross the 1 trillion yuan mark. Imports stood at 873 billion yuan. Both exports and imports hit record highs.

Exports and imports by private enterprises reached 1.19 trillion yuan, accounting for 61.7 percent of Shandong's total.

The United States, the European Union, ASEAN, the Republic of Korea and Japan were the top five trade partners, and the combined value of exports and imports with them accounted for 52 percent of the province's total.

Foreign trade with countries and regions along the Belt and Road reached 519.6 billion yuan, with trade rising significantly with Russia and India."

"Elders have lunch at a restaurant that only charges 1 yuan (15 cents) at Huangdong village of Guangrao county, East China's Shandong province, Jan 15, 2019. The restaurant opened to the public on the Chongyang Festival, a traditional Chinese festival to pay respects to the elders, in 2017 and serves good lunch on workdays only for 1 yuan for the customers who are over age of 70. [Photo/Xinhua]

Elders have lunch at a restaurant that only charges 1 yuan (15 cents) at Huangdong village of Guangrao county, East China's Shandong province, Jan 15, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

Elders have lunch at the restaurant, Jan 15, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

A volunteer serves the elders at the charity restaurant, Jan 15, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]

Photo taken on Jan 15, 2019 shows the menu on the wall at the restaurant that features dishes of 1 yuan. [Photo/Xinhua]

A volunteer serves the elders at the charity restaurant, Jan 15, 2019. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"In recent years, Shandong province has increasingly strengthened its protection of traditional folk crafts.

The ""three-step development pattern"", including protection, poverty-alleviation and sales expansion, has been adopted by the cultural departments at all levels of Shandong to implement the rural vitalization strategy.

As a result, traditional crafts have changed from unknowns to everyone's favorites.

""The first thing for farmers to do to cultivate lands is to tell if the soil is fertile or not. In an analogy to cultural work, it is indispensable to create a sound cultural ecology if we want to better inherit and develop the traditional rural crafts,"" said Wang Lei, director of the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism.

To give play to the potential value of the traditional crafts, Shandong province has actively supported cultural departments, universities, enterprises and institutes from different places to deeply excavate traditional craft culture, carry out classification research and enrich current products.

After investigation, traditional craft projects with profound cultures, excellent manufacturing processes and sound market prospects in Shandong province have been found.

For example, wickerwork technique has been regarded as the focus of poverty alleviation in Linshu county of Linyi city. The county has deeply developed the unique cultural characteristics of the wickerwork craft, expanded the planting area of bitter willow and trained impoverished villagers in the wickerwork craft techniques.

Juye county of Heze city has prioritized developing farmers' paintings and guiding local farmers to participate in suitable training courses. Meanwhile, the cultural publicity department of Juye county has worked on developing its creation themes.

A farmer learns painting at Juye county's Luxi Painting and Calligraphy Institute. [Photo by Ding Yuanyuan/chinadaily.com.cn]

A villager weaves Langya straw, the technique of which has been certified as an intangible cultural heritage by Shandong's Linyi city. [Photo/chinanews.com]

Cao county wooden sculpture is one of the intangible cultural heritages certified by Shandong province. [Photo by Ding Yuanyuan/chinadaily.com.cn]

A craftsman works at the workshop of Yunlong Wooden Sculpture Company Limited in Cao county, Heze city, Shandong province. The company is established by Cai Xiufang. [Photo by Ding Yuanyuan/chinadaily.com.cn]

In the process of advancing rural vitalization with the help of traditional crafts, Shandong province has focused on the traditional crafts conducive to employment and increasing income, developing targeted training towards impoverished regions. It has also focused on training the inheritors of the intangible cultural heritages in impoverished areas.

The labor-intensive wood-carving industry has contributed to an increase in employment and farmers' income.

Cai Xiufang, inheritor of Cao county's wood carving, a Shandong provincial-level intangible cultural heritage project, has frequently participated in the training organized by Shandong province in recent years.

""I have become aware of some professional opinions and improved my wood carving techniques by taking the training courses,"" said Cai.

She has hired over 800 people in Cao county in her wood-carving company. Many workers have become ""voluntary inheritors"" of the wood carving craft of Cao county, achieving an average monthly income of over 5,000 yuan ($740).

Since 2015, Shandong province has carried out over 40 training courses about the intangible cultural heritages, with 1,700 participants.

The returning visits research, which was commissioned by the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, has indicated that about 240 trainees have started up businesses back in their hometowns, helping 39,700 impoverished people to be employed.

The step of 'sales expansion' is the last step in revitalizing the traditional crafts in impoverished regions.

Wang said that it is necessary for traditional crafts to bring real benefit to the workers. Trainers are supposed to introduce projects for talented people; at the same time, they also need to help them improve the product designs and expand markets.

In recent years, the cultural department at all levels in Shandong province has regularly organized a team of designers, experts, university teachers and inheritors of intangible cultural heritages to help the poverty-stricken areas to design and improve their traditional craft products by setting up workstations.

Meanwhile, it has also helped those areas to introduce well-known e-businesses with channels and platforms and enterprises with relevant cultures, encouraging product aggregation.

Now, the patterns of ""made-to-order production"" and ""sales-oriented production"" have become the mainstream in expansion of sales of traditional craft products in poverty-stricken regions of Shandong province.

The wooden-comb-making craft has nearly 300 years of history in Donggaoyu village, Junan county of Linyi city. Each household in the village masters the manufacturing techniques of the wooden-comb.

In recent years, the cultural department of Linyi city has proactively encouraged the village to develop its wooden-comb industry and organized the enterprises in the village to take part in some significant exhibitions, such as the China Intangible Cultural Heritage Expo and the Shandong Cultural Industries Fair.

Now, Donggaoyu village, with the help of large orders inside and outside the province, has 240 wooden-comb factories, with an annual output of 40 million wooden combs.

""In the revitalization of traditional crafts, Shandong province aims to make the pattern of 'intangible cultural heritage enterprises + bases + farmers' basically mature and constantly expand in the future,"" said Wang.

As of November 2018, more than 1.1 million enterprises and businesses of different traditional crafts had settled down in Shandong province, achieving 12.6 billion yuan of business revenues in 2017."

"The Chinese New Year of the Pig was celebrated in grand style in South Korea, with the 2019 Korea-China Friendship Concert staged on Jan 12 at the Sejong Grand Theater in the country's capital city of Seoul.

The Spring Festival atmosphere was elevated via traditional music, folk dances and classic songs by artists and performers from South Korea and China's Shandong province, attracting more than 3,000 audiences from all walks of life.

Qiu Guohong, Chinese ambassador to South Korea, delivered a speech at the opening ceremony. He said that being close neighbors, China and South Korea started massive cultural exchange and communication a long time ago.

Qiu said that the two countries complement and benefit each other through win-win cooperation and the two sides are becoming one community with common interests and responsibilities leading to a shared future.

The Chinese embassy in South Korea and the Seoul Chinese Cultural Center invited talented singers and performers from Shandong province to present the charm and beauty of Chinese and Korean culture with their counterparts in South Korea in the first large-scale cultural exchange event of 2019 jointly held by the two countries, said Qiu.

Qiu also expressed his hope for the concert to serve as an opportunity for China and South Korea to deepen the bilateral exchanges and cooperation and raise the bilateral strategic partnership to a new level.

Officials from China and South Korea pose for a group photo before the 2019 Korea-China Friendship Concert on Jan 12 at the Sejong Grand Theater in Seoul. [Photo/WeChat account: Seoul Chinese Cultural Center]

Musicians from Shandong province perform folk music during the 2019 Korea-China Friendship Concert on Jan 12 in Seoul, capital of South Korea. [Photo/WeChat account: Seoul Chinese Cultural Center]

Wang Binlin (middle), a musician from Shandong Song and Dance Theatre, plays traditional suona (double-reeded horn) during the 2019 Korea-China Friendship Concert on Jan 12 in Seoul, capital of South Korea. [Photo/WeChat account: Seoul Chinese Cultural Center]

Musicians from Shandong province stage traditional music during the 2019 Korea-China Friendship Concert on Jan 12 in Seoul, capital of South Korea. [Photo/WeChat account: Seoul Chinese Cultural Center]"

"THE STATE COUNCIL, China's Cabinet, approved Shandong provincial government's application to merge its smallest administrative area, the city of Laiwu, with the neighboring provincial capital Jinan last week. China Daily reporter Li Yang comments:

The move will increase Jinan's area from 8,177 square kilometers to 10,244 sq km, its population from 7.4 million to 8.7 million, and its annual gross domestic product from about 809 billion yuan ($120 billion) to 913 billion yuan, according to last year's data.

The merging of the two cities is not a surprise to many, as the Shandong provincial government started carrying out a regional integration development plan customized for the two cities in 2013, and a 117-km high-speed railway connecting the two cities has been under construction since late 2017.

Both cities will benefit from becoming one administrative area. Jinan will further consolidate its position as the second largest city economy in the province, second only to the coastal port city of Qingdao whose GDP is about 1.2 trillion yuan. And if Jinan's current annual GDP growth rate of about 12 percent is maintained, its GDP will increase to more than 1 trillion yuan－which is the threshold for first echelon of cities in China of which there are about 13 at present.

For Laiwu's part, although many people lament its disappearance as a city in name, the local people and economy will benefit from the move. The city－which was upgraded from a county of its western neighbor of Taian to a city in 1992 thanks to the booming of its steel industry that contributes to more than half of its economy today－is expected to receive more support from Jinan. And Laiwu will have more resources and room to diversify its economic structure.

Despite this, Jinan will have to help upgrade Laiwu's industrial technology, and improve its urban management and public services, which Jinan has been doing for itself, so as to shorten the development gap between the two places. If this work is not done appropriately, one plus one will be less than two."

"A newborn baby. [Photo/IC]

Births in Shandong province－a barometer of the national birth trend－are believed to have slumped last year, following a baby boom, lending credence to projections of a substantial drop in China's total births.

""The number of births in Shandong in 2018 is expected to have fallen by 15 to 20 percent. The proportion of second children is also likely to have shrunk,"" said Cui Shuyi, head of the population research institute at the Shandong Academy of Social Sciences.

Shandong has established a reputation for fertility in recent years, with new births－following the change of family planning policy in late 2015－accounting for more than 10 percent of China's total births in 2016 and 2017.

More than 63 percent of the babies born in Shandong in 2016 were second children, with the percentage rising to almost 67 percent in 2017, according to the provincial health authority. The national ratio was around 50 percent.

Cui said the trend of second children outnumbering first children in Shandong will fade soon, given that most women who planned to have a second child did so soon after the policy's implementation.

His prediction aligns with data released by local authorities in Shandong. From January to November, the city of Qingdao recorded a year-on-year drop of about 20 percent in newborns, and the number of second children born fell by 29 percent, the municipal government said in mid-December.

It's estimated the city had 90,000 births in 2018, significantly down from 118,400 in 2016 and 115,700 in 2017.

Liaocheng, in the western part of the province, logged a 26 percent year-on-year decrease in newborns from January to November－23,179 fewer babies－and the number of children born to families who already had a child dropped by nearly 36 percent, the city's health commission said last month.

Other major cities with populations of more than 5 million, including Yantai, Dezhou and Weifang, also reported declines in births－ranging from 16 to 22 percent－in the first half of 2018.

The widespread decrease in births across Shandong has renewed concerns about a substantial drop in births nationwide last year.

In November, Zhai Zhenwu, president of the China Population Association, said the number of births in China was expected to decrease in 2018, as part of an inevitable trend following rapid economic and societal development.

On Jan 3, Huang Kuangshi, a researcher at the China Population and Development Research Center, said the number of newborns for 2018 would be between 15 million and 16 million－a drop of more than 1 million from the previous year.

Their forecasts seem to be supported by the figures from Shandong, Cui said.

""The province has always thoroughly implemented the country's family planning agenda, from the one-child limit to the second-child rule that came into force in recent years,"" he said. ""Thus, its shift in fertility is representative of the country's situation.""

In response to a question from a reporter at a news conference on Friday referring to a demographer's estimate that the number of births may have fallen by as much as 2 million last year, the National Health Commission said it is closely monitoring population fluctuations and will intensify research on birthrates.

It added that the authorities will release official data from last year soon.

Tao Tao, a population researcher at Renmin University of China, said a shrinking pool of women of childbearing age has contributed to the declining birthrate.

""The number of women between 15 and 49 in China has been falling since 2011, the year when it peaked,"" she said.

Tao said the average ages of women bearing their first and second child have both risen by one year over the past three years, which also affected fertility.

""Since 2000, the newborn population has been fluctuating between 15 and 18 million,"" she said. ""We should take an objective view of last year's figure in the long run.""

Wang Xiaodong contributed to this story."

"A Shandong delegation from the cultural and creative sectors is taking part in the 17th edition of the Hong Kong International Licensing Show and the eighth Asian Licensing Conference from Jan 7 to 9.

Organized by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the licensing show is hailed as Asia's largest and the world's second-largest event of its kind. Held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center, the event features more than 400 exhibitors from around the globe, gathering over 1,000 brands and licensed items.

Organized by the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism and the Shandong Cultural Creative Design Industry Association, this is the second time that the Shandong delegation have attended the event.

The delegation is composed of eight Shandong-based companies from numerous fields such as book publishing, the cultural creative industry, arts, animation and comics, aiming to promote the province's unique culture to the whole world, increase exchanges with international counterparts in the licensing and cultural and creative industries, as well as expand cultural trade.

A series of cultural creative products, books and designs featuring Shandong culture elements are being exhibited at the event.

In recent years, Shandong has been striving to turn its cultural and creative industry into an economic pillar, encouraging more animation, comics, arts and cultural enterprises to commercialize their creativity and IPs into licensed products and services.

Government officials visit the Shandong pavilion at the Hong Kong International Licensing Show on Jan 7, 2019. [Photo/Cultural Shandong]

The Shandong delegation takes part in the opening ceremony of the Chinese mainland pavilion at the Hong Kong International Licensing Show on Jan 7, 2019. [Photo/Cultural Shandong]"

"A photo exhibition featuring the Second Shandong Cultural Consumption Season event was launched on Jan 7 in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province.

A total of 100 photographic works are on exhibition, displaying the splendid moments and vibrant activities captured during the Second Shandong Cultural Consumption Season.

Lasting from July to November, 2018, the Second Shandong Cultural Consumption Season, which included thousands of activities, was hosted by the Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism to boost the local cultural industry's development, foster cultural consumption amongst local residents and drive growth in the local economy.

Selected through a contest, the exhibits stood out from more than 1,400 entries, all created during the nearly-four-month-long arts and cultural extravaganza across Shandong’s 17 cities.

An award ceremony was also held to honor prize-winning shutterbugs and photojournalists.

Hu Shangshan, vice director of Shandong provincial department of culture and tourism, said that the photography contest was a major part of the Second Shandong Cultural Consumption Season.

He said that the competition offers a platform for shutterbugs and photojournalists to showcase photographs, which helps to record the memorable moments and splendid activities as well as expand the influence of the cultural consumption season.

A photo exhibition featuring the Second Shandong Cultural Consumption Season event opens on Jan 7 at the Shandong Provincial Cultural Center in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Visitors pose for a photo with the exhibits at the Shandong Provincial Cultural Center in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province on Jan 7. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A prize winning work by Ye Changlai, capturing the touching moment of a Lyu Opera performance. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A prize winning work by Chen Jianping, capturing the uplifting moment of a Haiyang Yangko performance. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A prize winning work by Zhou Li, capturing an amateur concert in a local neighborhood. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A prize winning work by Shi Wenjia, capturing the beautiful autumnal scenery of Daming Lake. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"QINGDAO -- Chinese archaeologists have discovered more than 40 painted pottery items at a tomb dating back around 2,000 years in East China's Shandong province.

The items, including figurines of people and horses as well as different kinds of pots, were found in Pingdu in the city of Qingdao after an excavation that started in June 2018.

""The figurines of attendants, chariots and horses indicate that the tomb owner may have been an official in the ancient state in Shandong during the Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD),"" said Lin Yuhai, head of the Qingdao institute of cultural relics preservation and archaeology.

All the heads of the horses were positioned towards the southeast, which was the direction of the ancient capital of Jimo in Shandong Peninsula around 2,000 years ago, according to archaeologists.

Excavation is ongoing on another site nearby, and archaeologists have found a total of 15 tombs that are estimated to date back to the mid-West Han Dynasty (206 BC- 8 AD) and belonging to two big families."

"By Jin Sanlin & Zhao Xinrui, Research Team on “The Study on the Target and Strategic Focus of High-Quality Development”

Research Report, No.186, 2018 (Total 5461) 2018-11-5

Abstract: Counties are the main battlefields for the quality and safety improvement of agricultural products. Shenxian County of Liaocheng City in Shandong Province has made proactive efforts in establishing the quality and safety assurance system for agricultural products in line with its own conditions under the overall planning of the municipal and provincial government. Their work can be summed up as follows: improve the county supervision system of “3-3-1-1” and earnestly delegate supervision power to grass-level departments; create and innovate prescriptions for agricultural chemicals to ease the regulatory fault in the process from the circulation to production; implement centralized management for the quality trace labels on the county’s agricultural products so as to give play to the quality signaling role of the labels. These innovations mentioned above not only enhanced the overall quality and safety of Shenxian’s agricultural products but also provided useful experience for other districts. However, Shenxian County is also faced with some problems in improving the quality and safety of agricultural products. For example, the regulation on small and scattered agricultural households is hard to conduct, grass-level regulatory force is relatively weak and there are also difficulties and problems in the segmentation of supervision institution. These problems are common in many districts, which calls for further policy improvement for solution.

Key words: the quality and safety of agricultural products, county assurance mechanism, Shenxian County in Shandong Province"

"A technician operates machinery at Weichai Power, a leading Chinese powertrain producer in Shandong. CHINA DAILY

The province of Shandong has been working to improve its business environment with targeted new measures and enhance the implementation of reform policies, said local officials.

In recent years, Shandong has continued to streamline its administration and delegate power. This year alone, 720 items of provincial-level administrative procedures were delegated to cities and some functional areas.

Shandong has further promoted the ""all-in-one online service"", allowing over 90 percent of government affairs to be handled online.

Since its launch in May, the provincial platform for enterprise demands has received more than 43,000 appeals from local companies, with the satisfaction rate of handling results kept above 90 percent.

The approval process of construction projects has also been optimized. At present, the number of approval items for construction projects has been reduced from 112 to 73. Only one online form is required to be filled out for each of the four stages involved.

""The approval time for engineering construction projects shall not exceed 100 working days at most, and the approval time of simple and low-risk projects shall not exceed 20 working days,"" said an official from the Shandong Department of Housing and Urban-rural Development.

In the first three quarters of this year, Shandong achieved more than 132.9 billion yuan ($20.36 billion) in tax and fee reductions. Total tax and fee reductions for the year are expected to hit 185 billion yuan."

"Fengmao town in Zaozhuang, East China's Shandong province, stages the 500-year-old art form of Dashuhua to entertain tourists on Dec 19, 2020. [Photo/IC]

""Fireworks"" created by sparks from molten iron dazzle tourists in Zaozhuang's Fengmao town, East China's Shandong province. The art form is called Dashuhua, or traditional iron spraying, and is a local art form in Zaozhuang.

Fengmao town in Zaozhuang, East China's Shandong province, stages the 500-year-old art form of Dashuhua to entertain tourists on Dec 19, 2020. [Photo/IC]"

"A seabed gold deposit was discovered in 2015 near Sanshan Island in Shandong province. [Photo by Wang Ziyong/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Jiaodong Peninsula in East China's Shandong province has become the world's third-largest gold mining area as gold deposits in deep areas and seabed have been discovered in the past decade, according to Shandong Provincial Department of Natural Resources.

A total of 133 gold deposits including four containing at least 100 metric tons of gold each, have been discovered in the peninsula since 2011, Yu Xiangdong, head of the department said at a news press on Thursday.

These gold deposits discovered since 2011 have a total of 2957.62 metric tons of proven and probable reserve."

"The China-Japan New Era Health Forum is held simultaneously on Tuesday in Qingdao, Shandong province, and in Toyko, with a live video feed connecting attendees. [Provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Officials and experts from China and Japan vowed to further enhance cooperation on global health issues, as well as adopt a green and low-carbon development path, during a high-level forum on Tuesday.

Under the framework of the Boao Forum for Asia and themed ""Health for Humankind and the Earth"", the China-Japan New Era Health Forum was held in Qingdao, Shandong province, and Toyko, Japan, with a live video feed connecting attendees.

The forum aimed to stimulate discussion on green development, energy conservation, environmental protection, medical care and the joint development of smart and healthy city projects.

Chen Zhu, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, said that China is an active advocate and practitioner of international health cooperation and that China and Japan have promising prospects and great potential for cooperation in the healthcare sector.

Both countries should strengthen multilevel and wide-ranging health cooperation, expand personnel exchanges and join hands to overcome common problems facing human health, Chen said.

Japan will host the Tokyo Olympic Games next year and China will host the Beijing Winter Olympics in 2022, a year that will mark the 50th anniversary of the normalization of the China-Japan diplomatic ties, cooperation between the two countries in the field of health is also bound to be raised to a new level, he said.

The China-Japan New Era Health Forum is held simultaneously on Tuesday in Qingdao, Shandong province, and in Toyko, with a live video feed connecting attendees. [Provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Toshihiro Nikai, secretary-general of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, said that during the special period of the novel coronavirus pandemic it is of great significance for Chinese and Japanese citizens to discuss a range of topics, including how to deal with the pandemic.

Because becoming carbon-neutral is of global importance, China and Japan should undertake joint initiatives and actions to move toward fulfilling the forum's theme.

He suggested that China and Japan should work together to build smart and healthy cities oriented toward carbon neutrality.

Zhou Xiaochuan, vice-chairman of the Boao Forum for Asia, noted that China and Japan are important close neighbors, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP) signed recently by 15 countries, including China and Japan, will further promote bilateral economic and trade relations between the two countries.

He said China and Japan will further strengthen cooperation in key areas, including technological innovation, digital economy, smart cities, energy conservation, environmental protection, medical care, e-commerce and third-party markets.

In July 2018, the Boao Forum for Asia declared the inception of the Global Health Forum in Beijing to promote the development of global health causes and industry. The first session was held in June last year in Qingdao.

Qingdao will host the second session of the health forum in June next year."

"A photo of Chinese PLA navy fleet taken in April, 2018. [Photo/VCG]

The battle group of the CNS Shandong aircraft carrier transited the Taiwan Straits on Sunday to the South China Sea for training operations, a People's Liberation Army Navy spokesman said on Monday.

Senior Captain Liu Wensheng said in a statement that the long-distance training operations are a regular arrangement in the Navy's annual plan.

He did not provide details such as how many ships were with the Shandong, when the training session would start in the South China Sea or how long would it last.

Since the Shandong was commissioned last December, it has conducted fighter jet training, live-fire exercises and combat systems tests, continuing to improve its battle group's operational capability, Liu said.

It was the third time the carrier has sailed through the Taiwan Straits. The last time it passed through the waters was in December last year when it returned to a shipyard in Dalian, Liaoning province, where it was built, after its commissioning ceremony in Sanya, Hainan province.

The Shandong－China's second aircraft carrier and the first wholly designed and built in the country－displaces at least 50,000 metric tons of water. It has a conventional propulsion system and uses a ramp to launch J-15 fighter jets, the spearhead of a Chinese carrier battle group.

It is the largest and most sophisticated naval ship ever developed and built in China.

Before its commissioning, the Navy had a sole carrier－CNS Liaoning－which was originally built for the former Soviet Union and was extensively refitted at the Dalian shipyard. It entered service in September 2012.

Senior Captain Lai Yijun, commander of the Shandong, said in October that the carrier force has continued to improve its combat capability, with its crew honing skills in logistic support for aircraft, damage control and emergency response.

He said sailors are striving to get familiar with their equipment as soon as possible.

Fighter jet pilots based on the carrier have also undergone intensive training.

Footage broadcast by China Central Television showed multiple J-15s on Shandong's deck during a recent training drill, with pilots making frequent takeoffs and landings each day to verify the ship's maximum aircraft operations capacity."

"[Photo/IC]

JINAN－While resting at home, lawyer Wang Yabin was called back to his office to settle a fight that had broken out in the village.

It transpired after a financial dispute between two villagers had escalated. One threatened to block the entrance to the other's house if his loan was not immediately repaid.

""That move would be in violation of the law,"" Wang warned the desperate creditor. He then started to explain the relevant laws and regulations, asking both parties to calm down and find a rational way to settle their dispute.

After an hour of mediation with Wang, the two reached a deal, shook hands and left, and the exhausted but relieved lawyer could finally call it a day.

This has been common practice for 43-year-old Wang ever since he began serving as part-time legal counsel in several villages in Jinxiang county, Shandong province, four years ago.

A licensed lawyer at a firm in Jinxiang, Wang joined a program to enhance the presence of law professionals in rural villages that was launched by the provincial government four years ago. Due to a lack of legal awareness and professional assistance, residents there often resort to violent means to resolve civil disputes.

As many farmers are not yet accustomed to seeking advice from lawyers, placing law practitioners nearby is quite effective in preventing impulsive crimes and facilitating dispute settlements, Wang said.

Currently serving nine villages across the county, Wang spends at least 10 days a month in his various village offices. He also regularly communicates with locals through the WeChat social messaging app and responds to emergency calls for help.

""The villagers now call me 'Mr Knowledge' and consult me before getting married, buying a house or borrowing money,"" Wang said. ""I'm always happy to be of service.""

One of the country's pioneers in establishing rural legal counsel programs, Shandong has enrolled more than 13,000 lawyers to serve part-time in some 62,000 villages.

This program has always been free for every villager. In 2018, following a proposal from the provincial government, the lawyers started to receive small allowances ranging from 1,500 yuan to 3,000 yuan ($230 to $460) per village per year.

But Wang said the sense of accomplishment he gets from guiding villagers through the world of law cannot be measured by money.

""Being called Mr Knowledge makes me feel as good as winning a case in court,"" he said. ""The occurrence of civil and criminal cases has dropped significantly in the villages I serve, while the villagers' legal awareness is on the rise.""

Lawyers like Wang are even involved in the formulation or revision of village regulations and nongovernmental agreements, the most important documents for village self-governance practiced in rural China.

In its efforts to advance law-based governance, the Communist Party of China has attached great importance to enhancing the public's legal awareness and improving legal services for the people.

Liang Zhanguang, deputy head of the political and legal affairs commission of the CPC Shandong provincial committee, said rural governance based on the rule of law can contribute greatly to rural stability and prosperity.

Shandong will continue to build a strong and effective public legal service system in its rural areas and will improve its supporting system by 2022, he said.

Xinhua"

"Rongcheng, Shandong province, at the easternmost tip of the Shandong Peninsula, is where you want to spend the winter if you're a whooper swan.

Swans cluster in the bay near Rongcheng's Yandunjiao village on Wednesday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

From November to April each year, the swans fly in from Siberia and other regions for their winter holiday.

Swans cluster in the bay near Rongcheng's Yandunjiao village on Wednesday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

Because of the improved natural surroundings, swans can be seen not only in bays along the city's coastline, but also in lakes in urban areas."

"The wetlands of Pingdu, a county-level city in Qingdao, Shandong province, began seeing a major influx of migratory birds in early December. [Photo by Tian Dafang/For chinadaily.com.cn]

A large number of migratory birds flew into the wetlands of Pingdu, a county-level city in Qingdao, Shandong province, in early December. It is now peak season for the birds."

"A signing ceremony for key projects is held during the Jiaodong Economic Circle Integration Promotion Meeting on Tuesday in Beijing. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Jiaodong Economic Circle in Shandong province — including the cities of Qingdao, Yantai, Weifang, Weihai and Rizhao — plans to accelerate economic integration and become a new engine for China's economic growth, especially in the Northeast.

A promotional meeting for the integration of Jiaodong Economic Circle was held on Tuesday in Beijing. A 100 billion yuan ($15.27 billion) investment fund for infrastructure fund was unveiled during the event. The money will be spent to connect the cities' infrastructure, enhance urban functions, upgrade industry and cultivate new economic growth.

Yang Weimin, deputy director of the Economic Affairs Committee of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference , said that as one of key urbanized areas in China, the Jiaodong Economic Circle will enhance Qingdao's role as a central city, accelerate shifts in the agricultural population, promote the healthy development of real estate and create a market-oriented international business environment. The economic circle will build the area into an important modern economic zone for China, Yang said.

Wang Qingxian, Party secretary of Qingdao, said the Jiaodong Economic Circle is not only a key strategic hub serving north, south, east and west but also an important pivot point for the New Eurasian Land Bridge economic corridor eastward to Japan and South Korea and westward to countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative.

""The area plays dual role in the country's new dual circulation development paradigm, which focuses on the domestic market as a mainstay, with the domestic and foreign markets expected to complement each other,"" Wang said at the event on Tuesday.

The Jiaodong Economic Circle has a total area of 52,300 square kilometers, a population of more than 32 million and a 2019 GDP of 3 trillion yuan ($433.74 billion).

The area's GDP and fiscal revenue accounted for more then 40 percent of Shandong's total, while its foreign trade and utilization of foreign capital accounted for more than 60 percent of the province's total."

Jiaozhou, a county-level city in Qingdao, Shandong province, reported an asymptomatic coronavirus infection on Monday night involving a 30-year-old man who handled imported cold chain products, the local health authority said.The man, surnamed Li, is currently living in Jiaozhou and working at a local aquatics product company. He was responsible for handling goods and for disinfection. He is among those who will be given a routine nucleic acid test. Previous test results had been negative, but a test on Nov 30 was positive. The tracing effort found coronavirus on the outer packaging of goods Li handled. Now the goods have been sealed, the Qingdao Municipal Health Commission said.Li, who has no symptoms of COVID-19, is being observed at a designated hospital. A total of 486 contacts have been found and all were tested. Of those, 478 results so far were negative. The remaining test results will be released soon.Facing a series of COVID-19 cases linked to imported cold chain products, Jinan, Shandong province, began using special warehouses to collect imported cold food on Tuesday.Cold chain imported food needs three sets of documents —an inspection and quarantine certificate for entry into the country, a list of goods with a certificate of disinfection at a port of entry and a registration on a website for cold chain food management — before it is allowed to enter Jinan for sale and further production, according to a notice released on Monday by the Jinan leading office that coordinates economic development with epidemic prevention and control.Shipments that lack the documentation are sent to a special warehouse, where they undergo tests and disinfection.Fees incurred in the testing and disinfection process are paid by the purchasers of the cold chain food.The notice also makes clear the responsibilities of drivers and porters who had contact with the cold chain food, as well as parties that plan to used the cold food, such as restaurants.

"The 2020 World Industrial Design Conference is held in Yantai, Shandong province on Nov 25-29. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong province is currently home to 24 national-level industrial design centers, more than any other province in China, according to Kong Qingcheng, deputy director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Industry and Information Technology.

Kong discussed the development of the province's industrial design sector at the Shandong Industrial Design Investment & Talent Introduction Promotional Meeting on Nov 25 during the ongoing 2020 World Industrial Design Conference.

The Shandong provincial government attaches great importance to industrial design and sees it as an important means of deepening supply-side structural reforms and upgrading the manufacturing industry, he added.

Shandong is home to 247 provincial industrial design centers and a large number of municipal industrial design centers.

The event, hosted by the Shandong Provincial Department of Industry and Information Technology, aims to provide a platform for mutual communication and cooperation in the industrial design sector and to promote the high-quality development of the province’s industrial economy.

Representatives of industrial design research institutes in Yantai, Jinan, Zibo, Binzhou, and Qingdao, as well as the Shandong Industrial Design Institute, also gave promotional speeches at the event.

Yantai, as the host city of the World Industrial Design Conference, is seeing signs of a promising future in the design industry.

The city plans to carry out 10 major industrial design construction projects, including the China-German Industrial Design Center, the Shandong Industrial Design Institute, and the Yantai International Design Town, in an effort to develop into a hub for industrial design."

"A high-speed train G9228 heading to Jinan East Railway Station in East China's Shandong province left Pingdu Railway Station on Nov 26. [Photo/Xinhua]

A new high-speed railway line which went into operation on the Jiaodong Peninsula, Shandong province, on Thursday, is expected to boost regional connectivity in the eastern coastal area, according to China Railway Jinan Group.

It will also help improve the region's links to China's central and western areas, the group said.

The 126-kilometer line, designed for train speeds of up to 350 km per hour, directly connects Weifang and Laixi cities in Shandong. The initial operating speed of the line will be 300 km/h.

The new line will also cut 30 minutes from the traveling time between Shandong's capital, Jinan, and the major cities of Yantai and Weihai.

About 83 percent of the line, 104 km, consists of tunnels and bridges, according to the China Railway Design Corporation. One bridge, which runs above the Qingdao-Rongcheng intercity railway line, has some major breakthroughs in railway design and construction.

It is the first bridge on a high-speed railway to use uncoated steel in its construction. The steel does not have to be painted, which saves maintenance costs, said Lin Hongguang, an engineer from China Railway Design Corporation in charge of the bridge design.

""It is an innovative design in high-speed railway,"" he said, adding that the material has been used in other engineering projects in the past, but it is the first time it has been applied in railway construction.

The structure of the bridge is another engineering design breakthrough, Lin said.

""Traditional design uses about eight bridge supports, but our design only uses three,"" Lin said, adding that fewer support structures minimized the impact of the bridge on the railway line below.

""It also looks better and more organized,"" he said.

Tian Chengjun, chief engineer of the line from China Railway Design Corporation, said designers avoided environmentally sensitive areas when they mapped out the line.

When the line crosses over water, designers built bridges to try and protect the aquatic environment. Pipes have also been installed on the bridges to drain rain away and avoid polluting bodies of water, he said."

"The vast stretch of the ancient golden ginkgo tree and fallen leaves at Shengshui Taoist Temple offers up a stunning early winter view. [Photo by Li Xinjun/for chinadaily.com.cn]

The millennium ginkgo tree at Shengshui Taoist Temple has gone viral on social media and become a popular early winter destination in Rongcheng, a county-level city in Weihai, Shandong province.

The reds and golds of early winter add endless charm to the ancient Shengshui Taoist Temple. [Photo by Li Xinjun/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Now is the best time to appreciate the ancient ginkgo tree, as the leaves turn gold in early winter. [Photo by Li Xinjun/for chinadaily.com.cn]

The ancient gingko tree, with a history of more than 1,000 years, showers the ground with golden leaves at the Shengshui Taoist Temple in Rongcheng, Shandong province. [Photo by Li Xinjun/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Shengshui Taoist Temple offers a perfect destination for visitors to appreciate ancient Chinese architecture and the golden ginkgo leaves in early winter in Rongcheng, Shandong province. [Photo by Li Xinjun/for chinadaily.com.cn]

The splendid scenery at Shengshui Taoist Temple in early winter. [Photo by Li Xinjun/for chinadaily.com.cn]"

A craftsman makes a bamboo basket in Liujiaguanzhuang village of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Nov 15. Bamboo weaving is a specialty local industry. In recent years, local craftsmen have been encouraged to innovate their crafts and expand product diversity to improve incomes while protecting and inheriting the tradition. The bamboo products are now sold online nationwide. [Photo/Xinhua]

"The online purchasing power of Shandong residents ranked fourth in the country as of 00:17 on Nov 11, or Double 11, the world's largest shopping festival.

Real-time data show the online purchasing power of Shandong cities during the Double 11 shopping festival. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Real-time data showed that as of 0:44:19 on Nov 11, Qingdao ranked first in Shandong in terms of buying power, followed by Jinan, Linyi, Yantai, and Weifang. Laoshan district in Qingdao was first among districts and counties, followed by Shibei district and Chengyang district in Qingdao, Lanshan district in Linyi, and Tianqiao district in Jinan.

Real-time data showed that mobile phones were the most commonly purchased items in Shandong, followed by skincare sets, down jackets, sofas, and hoodies.

A screen shows sales on Alibaba's e-commerce platform Tmall exceeding 372.3 billion yuan ($56.3 billion) at 00:30 on Nov 11. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

According to Alibaba, the total gross merchandise volume of the 11-day shopping bonanza on platforms operated by the e-commerce giant was 372.3 billion yuan ($56.3 billion) by 00:30 on Nov 11.

Consulting firm PwC said the shopping festival is expected to become ""a barometer for China's continued economic recovery"", and over 800 million consumers and 5 million businesses are expected to take part."

"East China's Shandong province will host a high-level event on Nov 10 to boost economic ties and facilitate cooperation with Japan.

The Japan Session of the ""Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500"" serial event, jointly hosted by the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and Shandong Provincial People's Government, will discuss new trends of the international economy and investment in the new global context. It will also explore opportunities for further opening up in Shandong province and further cooperation between Shandong and Japanese multinationals.

The event has received strong support from several Japanese commercial organizations and industrial magnates, including the Association for the Promotion of International Trade, Japan, Japan-China Economic Association, the Japan External Trade Organization, the Japan-China Investment Promotion Organization, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group and Mizuho Bank.

The event will be held online and offline, with the main venues located in Jinan, the capital of Shandong province, and in Japan's Tokyo, as well as at sub venues in Shandong's 16 cities.

Representatives of Fortune Global 500 companies, government officials from both countries, chambers of commerce, industry associations and research organizations from Japan will attend the event.

A project-matchmaking activity will also be held via online channels. About 100 Japanese enterprises and business associations will participate in negotiating partnerships with their counterparts in Shandong province. Industries that will be highlighted include healthcare, intelligent manufacturing, information technology and modern, efficient agriculture.

According to the Shandong Department of Commerce, 51 Fortune Global 500 companies from Japan have invested in 157 projects in Shandong, with a total investment valued at $5.72 billion."

"Japan session of the ""Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500"" serial event was held on Nov 10 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province, and Tokyo, Japan, via online and offline channels.

Jointly hosted by the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and Shandong Provincial People's Government, the event has received strong support from the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China.

The Japan session of the ""Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500"" serial event is held on Nov 10. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Several Japanese commercial organizations and industrial magnates, including the Association for the Promotion of International Trade, Japan, Japan-China Economic Association, the Japan External Trade Organization, the Japan-China Investment Promotion Organization, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group and Mizuho Bank, as well as Fortune China, also assisted with the event.

The event was attended by representatives of Fortune Global 500 companies, government officials from both countries, chambers of commerce, industry associations and research organizations from Japan.

""In the past two years, Shandong has introduced 45 policies and measures to strengthen reform and opening-up and build an open economic system, which has also provided unprecedented convenience for Fortune 500 companies to invest in Shandong,"" said Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong, in his online dialogue with Kuniharu Nakamura, CEO of Sumitomo Corporation.

Liu said that Sumitomo is a well-known multinational company in Japan. The enterprise boasts very close ties with Shandong, having invested in several projects in the province covering sewage treatment, construction machinery, biotechnology and environmental protection, among other fields.

Liu Jiayi (left), Party secretary of Shandong, has a dialogue with Fumiya Kokubu, CEO of Marubeni, via video link. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""We welcome more valuable suggestions on the development of Shandong from Sumitomo, to further deepen cooperation and achieve mutual benefit and win-win results.""

Liu also held an online discussion with Fumiya Kokubu, CEO of Marubeni, and expressed hope to deepen ties in drug development, medical device manufacturing, international logistics and other fields.

Kong Xuanyou, China's ambassador to Japan, delivers a speech at the event via video link. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

During his online speech, Kong Xuanyou, China's ambassador to Japan, said Shandong took the initiative to explore new paths for cooperation and held many online activities with government departments and economic organizations in Japan amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

""These activities have boosted people-to-people contact and cultural exchanges and injected fresh energy into economic and trade cooperation between Shandong and Japan,"" said Kong.

Shandong Governor Li Ganjie said that the service trade between the two sides is growing rapidly and has excellent potential.

""Shandong is willing to further tap the potential of cooperation and expand bilateral trade relations in the fields of healthcare, scientific and technological services, financial services and industrial design,"" said Li.

Shandong Governor Li Ganjie (left) has an in-depth talk via video link with Nobuyuki Hirano, chairman of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Li also had an in-depth talk via video link with Nobuyuki Hirano, chairman of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group and economic consultant to Shandong government, to facilitate investment and cooperation.

Yohei Kono, president of the Japanese Association for the Promotion of International Trade, spoke highly of the event.

""This event is of great importance to enhance dialogue and build up our confidence to further ties with Shandong, as the COVID-19 pandemic has posed an unprecedented challenge to the global economy,"" said Kono.

""Many Japanese enterprises and people share the same wish as their counterparts in Shandong to welcome the continuous improvement of Japan-China relations, and stand ready to make contributions to bilateral friendship and advance win-win cooperation,"" he said.

Agreements for 14 projects were signed at the event, which will receive $910 million in total investment, with contractual foreign investment valued at $230 million.

The projects cover a wide range of industries such as high-end equipment manufacturing, new materials, high-end chemical industry, transportation and education.

Shandong and Japan have close connections because of their geographical proximity and historical closeness. Official data show that 51 Fortune Global 500 companies from Japan have invested in 157 projects in Shandong, with a total investment valued at $5.72 billion."

"Art exchanges between Shandong and Seoul were launched in Seoul on Nov 6, 2020. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

A series of art exchanges between Shandong and Seoul were launched in Seoul on Nov 6.

The events were a contemporary art exhibition, a symposium and a concert. The exhibition featured 38 artists from East China's Shandong province and 40 South Korean painters. The art pieces included Chinese ink work, oil painting and traditional South Korean works. Some works were from five South Korean artists who were invited to visit Shandong in 2019.

Wang Yanjun, cultural counselor of the Chinese embassy to South Korea and director of the China Cultural Center, attended the opening ceremony.

In his speech, Wang extended congratulations to the launch of the event. He said 2020 marks the 28th year of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and South Korea. The cultural exchanges between the two nations have had fruitful achievements in the past years.

Both delegates and representatives from the two countries presented the ceremony.

A series of art exchanges between Shandong and Seoul were launched in Seoul on Nov 6， 2020. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Wang Yanjun, cultural counselor of the Chinese embassy to South Korea and director of the China Cultural Center, gives a speech at the opening ceremony. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]"

"Three former prison officials in Shandong province stood trial and pleaded guilty of malpractice on Wednesday after their behaviors were identified as causing dozens of inmates and staff to get infected with the novel coronavirus early this year.

The three defendants are Wang Wenjie, ex-deputy director of the Prison Administration of Shandong; Liu Baoshan, ex-head of the provincial Rencheng Prison; and Deng Tihe, ex-deputy head of the prison.

Wang's case was heard in Jinan, capital of Shandong, while the two others' were opened in Jining, another city of the province.

Prosecutors from Jinan said Wang, who had been responsible for handling, coordinating and preventing the COVID-19 in the provincial prison system since Jan 23, should be criminally liable, because he did not realize the sensitivity and complexity of the epidemic control in prisons, dropping his guard and lacking supervision in the fight against the outbreak.

""He did not report fever cases in the Rencheng Prison to superior departments, causing a spread and dissemination of the disease in the prison, which should be charged with the crime of malpractice,"" the prosecutors added.

Prosecutors from Jining also charged Liu and Deng with the crime of malpractice, noting they neither strictly checked health condition of staff members in the Rencheng Prison nor gave strong control when finding inmates gathering or crossing floors.

On Wednesday, two other Rencheng correctional officers -- Chen Minhua and Dai Guanghui -- also pleaded guilty of disturbing prevention of infectious diseases in a court in Jining.

Chen, as the prison's first batch of officers working for a closed area due to the outbreak on Jan 27, had a close connection with several colleagues and inmates, but he did not report his suspected symptoms of COVID-19 until the prison found this on Feb 12, according to prosecutors from Rencheng district of Jining.

Chen was identified having been infected after being hospitalized and his behavior had disturbed the outbreak prevention, the prosecutors said.

They also pointed out Dai's family member had close contact with a neighbor back from Wuhan, a city hard hit by the virus in Hubei province, on Jan 22, but Dai hid the experience several times in the local government's inspection.

Dai did not report the contact until many prisoners were found to be infected, and he was also a confirmed case after a test, the prosecutors added.

A ruling for all five defendants will be announced at a later date.

On Feb 21, more than 200 confirmed cases of the virus were reported in the Rencheng Prison. Later that day, a team led by the Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the Communist Party of China Central Committee visited the prison to look into the cluster infection.

The Ministry of Justice, the top authority for regulating prisons in the nation, also noted at that time that the Rencheng case reflected a neglect of duty, calling on all prisons across the country to improve management and governance capability."

"Shandong province, an economic powerhouse in East China, is enjoying closer trade and investment ties with South Korea in recent years, according to local authorities.

South Korea is Shandong's third largest trading partner. Official statistics show that in 2019, imports and exports between the two sides were valued at $28.32 billion, down 3.5 percent year-on-year.

A bird's-eye view of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, at night. [Photo/VCG]

From January to August this year, trade between the two sides was valued at $18.11 billion, down 3.1 percent year-on-year, among which Shandong's exports to South Korea accounted for $11.23 billion, up 3.5 percent, while imports from South Korea dropped 12.3 percent to $6.88 billion.

The differing industries between the two sides led to structural differences in their exports, though most of their bilateral trade involves electronics. Shandong's main exports to South Korea include electronics, garments and accessories, base metals, and machinery.

Meanwhile, South Korea's main exports to Shandong are electronics, optical devices, cosmetics, and machinery.

According to the latest statistics, there are 4,483 Korean-invested enterprises in Shandong investing a total of $22.25 billion and employing more than 160,000 people.

In the first eight months of this year, Shandong approved 344 Korean-funded projects, down 14.2 percent, with $180 million in actual foreign capital received, down 54.9 percent.

By August of this year, Shandong had approved 374 overseas investment enterprises in South Korea involving $2.26 billion in Chinese investment."

"A US cargo ship docks at the Qingdao Port, Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Shaoyue/For China Daily]

GDP in Shandong province registered year-on-year growth of 1.9 percent in the first three quarters, exceeding 5.2 trillion yuan ($782 billion), the provincial Information Office said at a news conference on Tuesday.

All sectors have shown encouraging growth, illustrating the economy's recovery.

Agriculture increased by 1.6 percent in the first three quarters over the same period last year, said Yu Chenghe, spokesman for the province. The industrial sector grew by 1.8 percent in the same period, and the service sector was up by 2 percent, he said.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic and other global uncertainties, imports and exports registered a year-on-year increase of 4.2 percent in the first three quarters, said Zhang Weike, deputy head of Shandong Department of Commerce.

With growth slowed by the pandemic in the year's first half, the province has encouraged companies involved with foreign trade to expand overseas markets via online platforms.

During the first three quarters, more than 50 online exhibitions have been organized by Chinese companies and their counterparts in countries including the United States, Pakistan, Thailand and European countries, Zhang said.

Shandong's seven cross-border e-commerce pilot zones are providing momentum in foreign trade. Exports and imports have seen retail transaction via cross-border e-commerce platforms increase by 149 percent in the first three quarters.

Foreign companies are also boosting their investments in Shandong to explore the Chinese market. During the first three quarters, a total of 2,003 foreign-invested facilities have been set up in the province, a year-on-year increase of 17.5 percent, Zhang said."

"Wang Yidi records a video in the orchard. [Photo/Xinhua]

Wang Yidi, who is hearing-impaired, has become an ambassador for her hometown's apples through dance.

Wang, 19, hails from Xuejiayu village in Zibo city of Shandong province. When she was three years old, an accident took her hearing. After receiving donations from society, in June 2011 Wang successfully installed electrical cochlear implants, returning her hearing. Since then, she has been grateful and had a desire to give back.

In 2019, Wang's father returned to his hometown to develop the apple planting industry. In order to extend sales channels, Wang decided to use her knowledge about new media at university and her dance training to give a helping hand to apple farmers.

So far, local apple farmers have received orders of nearly 50,000 kg of apples. She cannot use words to praise and publicize her hometown's apples, Wang said, but dancing could express her feelings.

Wang Yidi, left, and her father, center, on their way to the apple orchard. [Photo/Xinhua]

Wang Yidi and her father prepare for video recording. [Photo/Xinhua]

Wang Yidi dances at sunset. [Photo/Xinhua]

Wang Yidi attends a rehearsal. [Photo/Xinhua]

Wang Yidi records a video in the orchard. [Photo/Xinhua]

Wang Yidi picks apples in the orchard. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"Garments of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) are on display at the Shandong Museum in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo provided to China Daily]

An exhibition at the Shandong Museum in Jinan, Shandong province, is displaying well-preserved garments of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The exhibition features clothes worn on the occasions of royal activities, meeting guests and ordinary daily life.

The garments were handed down from generation to generation. They didn’t go through procedures of being buried underground and then unearthed, so they have maintained their original colors, said Yu Qin of the museum.

The collection also comes from the Confucius Museum in the province's Qufu, the birthplace of Confucius.

The exhibition will last until Nov 29."

"Giant kites in the shape of nurses, rockets and boats were flying high in the sky carrying people's wishes of health, happiness and peace at the International Kite Festival in Weifang, East China's Shandong province.

Since 1984, the festival has been held annually in Weifang in April. Delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the festival kicked off on Saturday and will run till Oct 8 this year.

""Medical workers worked hard at the frontline in the war against COVID-19, so we made kites in modeled on medical workers to pay our respect to them,"" said Zhang Huagang, who was flying kites at the festival.

The event has developed into a world-famous kite festival. Last year, more than 100 teams from 65 countries and regions participated. Due to the pandemic, the city didn't invite overseas teams this year. Instead, overseas teams showed their kites via video channels.

Weifang now has more than 300 kite-making enterprises, generating 2 billion yuan ($293.1 million) worth of kites every year. Kites produced in the city are sold to over 40 countries and regions.

Video by Zhao Ruixue"

"A pedestrian walks past a 5G promotion board. [Photo by Su Yang/For China Daily]

JINAN -- East China's Shandong province has built 50,000 5G base stations, covering the urban areas of all its 16 prefecture-level cities, local authorities said Saturday.

Shandong has invested 6.95 billion yuan (about $1.02 billion) this year to construct 5G infrastructure and its application, said Zhang Hongyi, director of Shandong Communications Administration.

The number of 5G users in Shandong has reached about 9.24 million, Zhang added.

The province has beefed up the use of 5G tech in industries including new media, industrial internet, transport, education, healthcare and tourism over the years."

"The Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500 ASEAN Special event opens in Jinan, Shandong province on Sept 22 to boost cooperation with the world's top 500 companies in ASEAN countries. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

An international business promotion conference centered on cooperation with transnational corporations in Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries opened in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, on Sept 22.

Agreements for 10 key projects were signed online between transnational corporations from ASEAN countries and Shandong province.

The projects, which covered the healthcare, equipment manufacturing, and modern service industries, received a total of $1.01 billion in investment and $115 million in contractual foreign investment.

The event, which is a part of the ""Connecting Shandong with the Fortune Global 500"" series, featured both online and offline channels and attracted 11 officials and entrepreneurs from seven countries in search of cooperation opportunities.

Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong province, talked online with Chee Hong Tat, Senior Minister of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Transport of Singapore.

Accordingly to Liu, Singapore became Shandong's second largest source of foreign investment in 2019.

From January to August this year, Singapore's investment in Shandong increased by 151 percent, and imports and exports between the two places increased by 104 percent.

Liu expressed hope that more cooperation between Shandong and Singapore would be carried out to deepen finance markets and expand foreign trade.

Kuok Khoon Hong, chairman and CEO of Wilmar International Limited, said that Shandong boasts a vast production area for grain and oil raw materials.

The province's flourishing grain and oil industry attracted investment from Wilmar, a leading ASEAN corporation that plans to continue increasing investment and deepening cooperation with the province.

Wilmar has invested a significant amount in grain and oil projects in the cities of Jining, Qingdao, Yantai, Dezhou, and Tai'an.

China is Cambodia's largest trading partner and tourism investor, said H.E. SEANG Thay, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Commerce of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

He said that Cambodia welcomes investment from around the world, particularly from Shandong province.

Shandong and ASEAN countries enjoy strong ties and have great potential for further cooperation, said Li Ganjie, governor of Shandong.

ASEAN has become Shandong's largest trading partner, and the value of trade between the two places from January to August reached $24.62 billion, a year-on-year increase of 15.1 percent."

"File photo of the ASEAN segment of the Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500 series of events. [Photo/sdchina.com]

Ten projects with a total $1 billion in foreign and domestic investment were signed via online channels during the ASEAN segment of the Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500 series of events in Jinan, Shandong province, on Tuesday.

Covering the sectors of healthcare, equipment manufacturing, modern services and new materials, the projects are funded by companies in ASEAN countries and will be built in nine Shandong cities.

Despite the global downturn, Shandong-ASEAN economic and trade cooperation has maintained its growth trend. During the first eight months of this year, Shandong's foreign trade with ASEAN countries reached $24.62 billion, a year-on-year increase of 15.1 percent, according to the provincial government."

"Nine satellites, belonging to the Jilin 1 Gaofen 03-1 group, are launched by a Long March 11 carrier rocket at the Yellow Sea, on Sept 15, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

Complex to build 20 solid-propellant Long March 11 carrier craft every year

The State-owned space conglomerate China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp is working with local authorities in Shandong province to set up a manufacturing complex for solid-propellant carrier rockets, according to a project insider.

Jin Xin, deputy project manager of the Long March 11 solid-propellant rocket at the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, said on Wednesday in Shandong's Yantai that his academy and the city government of Haiyang, a city administered by Yantai, are cooperating to construct the 800-hectare complex that will be capable of producing 20 solid-propellant rockets each year.

The Beijing-based academy is China's dominant maker of carrier rockets and a subsidiary of China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp.

""It will be tasked with manufacturing our Long March 11 and Smart Dragon series solid-fuel rockets,"" he said. ""Construction work is underway and is expected to be done before May 2021.""

The complex will be able to make and test all types of major parts on a solid-propellant rocket, including its engines. Furthermore, it will also hold satellite production and testing facilities, according to Jin.

The project is intended to facilitate sea-based launch missions and nurture local space-related industries in Shandong.

It was initiated by the provincial and Yantai governments in June 2019 after a Long March 11 carried out China's first seaborne launch from a submersible in the Yellow Sea that month, Jin said.

On Tuesday morning, China conducted its second sea-based launch, firing a Long March 11 rocket from a ship in the Yellow Sea to deploy nine small satellites.

An industrial hub in Shandong, Yantai is aspiring to develop a space industry to tap the rapidly expanding market of commercial space. The city government said its goal is to build Haiyang into a ""home port for space activity"".

Liu Wei, a rocket researcher at the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, explained that Yantai has several advantages for seaborne launch operations to be conducted from there.

""First, launching rockets from the sea off Yantai features more safety for people living under the trajectory. Second, there are many ground-based monitoring and tracking facilities along China's eastern coasts. Third, the city has an ice-free port, a good transport network that is well connected with other regions, as well as strong shipbuilding and marine engineering industries,"" he said.

""All of these elements make it an ideal option for seaborne missions.""

The next seaborne launches of the Long March 11 will continue to be based in Yantai, Liu said.

Designed and built by the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, the Long March 11 is the only solid-fuel rocket in the Long March family, the pillar of China's space programs."

"A flock of egrets is seen at Jiahe River, Fushan district, Yantai, Shandong province. The wide stretches of green grass are a heaven for the birds that come to the area to frolic about and search for food. [Photo by Wu Jinyang/dzwww.com]

Egrets are seen frolicking about along the Jiahe River in Fushan district, Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo by Wu Jinyang/dzwww.com]

Egrets take to the air, presenting a charming view at Jiahe River in Fushan district, Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo by Wu Jinyang/dzwww.com]

A flock of egrets adds a sense of liveliness to the tranquil scene. A healthy ecosystem makes the Jiahe River an ideal habitat for various species of bird. [Photo by Wu Jinyang/dzwww.com]"

"People in Shandong province replenished its AB-type blood bank in two days after learning that a 7-year-old boy was in urgent need of AB blood for medical treatment, the Shandong Provincial Blood Center said on Monday.

The center called on Sunday for people with AB-type blood to donate to help the boy, who needs 3,000 milliliters of blood every day for medical treatment in an intensive-care unit at Shandong Provincial Hospital in Jinan, the provincial capital.

The boy had been in the ICU for nine days after eating poisonous mushrooms and was still in critical condition on Monday, it said.

Acting on the call, 989 people across Shandong rushed to Jinan to donate 322,200 ml of blood by 2 pm on Monday. They included 425 donors who contributed 152,200 ml of AB blood.

Because the red blood cells can last for no more than 35 days, the center called on Monday for AB blood donors to pause donations for two weeks.

""We didn't call it a day until 11 pm on Sunday because there were volunteers in line waiting to donate for the boy,"" said Li Peng, deputy director of the center.

Members of the Zibo Sunshine Rescue Team were among the respondents.

""At first, we requested our team members who have AB-type blood to head to Jinan on Monday morning, but considering the boy's critical condition, 17 of us arrived in Jinan on Sunday night,"" said team leader Zheng Chuanheng.

A huge number of netizens sent their blessings to the boy and his family, expressing hopes he will recover soon.

His brother shared pictures of the mushrooms the boy ate to warn people of the risks.

""Although Shandong is not a place where mushroom poisoning cases are frequently seen, there are several cases every year,"" said Zhao Jinshan from the Food and Nutrition Institute at the Shandong Provincial Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Zhao said that measures such as freezing, drying, frying and steaming cannot remove poisons from mushrooms, so the best way to avoid poisoning is not to eat wild mushrooms."

"The ""Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500"" event opens online in Jinan, Shandong province on Aug 27. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

An international business promotion conference opened online in Jinan, capital of Shandong province on Aug 27, aiming to boost cooperation between Shandong and Fortune Global 500 companies.

The ""Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500"" serial event is hosted by the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and the Shandong Provincial People's Government and organized by the Shandong Provincial Department of Commerce.

The event features five special sessions for Fortune Global 500 companies from Europe, ASEAN, the United States, South Korea, and Japan.

The Europe session, which took place on Aug 27, welcomed business tycoons such as Ivan Glasenberg, CEO of Glencore Group, Jan Rinnert, CEO of Heraeus Group, Fabrice Fourcade, vice president of EDF Group, and Sanjiv Lamba, CEO of Asia Pacific Linde Plc.

In addition, 10 major foreign projects receiving a total of $797 million in investment were signed at the conference.

The projects, primarily funded by Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Poland, and Sweden, involve high-end equipment manufacturing, new materials, modern finance, biotechnology, and food manufacturing.

They are being carried out in the Shandong cities of Jinan, Qingdao, Zibo, Zaozhuang, Yantai, Weifang, Tai'an, and Rizhao.

Shandong Governor Li Ganjie (second from left) talks online with Ivan Glasenberg (first from left), CEO of Glencore Group, at the conference, together with Li Xiyong (second from right), chairman of Shandong Energy Group and Huo Gaoyuan (first from right), chairman of Shandong Port Group. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong Governor Li Ganjie talked online with representatives of some European enterprises at the conference.

When talking with Ivan Glasenberg from Baar, Switzerland, Li said that Glencore has a close trade relationship with many enterprises in Shandong in the fields of crude oil, natural gas, minerals, and agricultural products.

He expressed hope that Glencore Group would expand commodity trade with Shandong Energy Group, Shandong Weiqiao Pioneering Group, Xinfa Group, and Shandong Iron and Steel Group in the future.

Glencore is one of the world's largest global natural resource companies and a major producer and marketer of more than 60 commodities, including mining, energy and agricultural products. The group's operations comprise around 150 mining and metallurgical sites and oil production assets.

A total of 10 major foreign projects with a total investment of $797 million are signed at the online conference on Aug 27. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Fabrice Fourcade from France said at the conference that Shandong is one of the main provinces that EDF Group is seeking cooperation with.

""As a leader in the field of renewable energy, EDF Group hopes to have more opportunities to use its expertise and rich experiences to support sustainable development and reduce air pollution in Shandong province.""

Alan Murray, CEO of Fortune, was also invited to the event via online video.

In his speech, Murray said that this series of activities across Europe, ASEAN, the United States, South Korea, and Japan will play a critical role in deepening communication and cooperation between Shandong and leaders of Fortune Global 500 companies.

More than 200 Fortune 500 companies have invested in Shandong thus far.

By the first half of 2020, a total of 219 Fortune 500 companies have invested in 785 companies in Shandong, demonstrating that the province is an attractive destination for companies due to its strong business environment and economic prospects.

The ASEAN session of the series will be held on Sept 22, the US session on Sept 29, the South Korea session on Oct 22, and the Japan session on Oct 27."

"An online serial event, Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500 Europe Special, was held on Thursday in Jinan, the provincial capital. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

Transnational Fortune Global 500 companies are demonstrating their confidence in the Chinese market. Ten key projects were signed between transnational corporations from Europe and Shandong province on Thursday in Jinan, the provincial capital.

Covering sectors including high-end equipment manufacturing, new materials, modern finance, biotechnology and food manufacturing, the deals were signed at the Europe Special of the online serial event Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500.

Special sessions for ASEAN, the United States, South Korea and Japan are scheduled over the next two months.

""The serial event has demonstrated the commitment of Shandong province to remain open and cooperative with the world in this difficult time,"" said Zhan Xiaoning, director of Investment and Enterprise at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

""By connecting to the world and continuously optimizing the business environment in recent years, Shandong has created favorable conditions for the development of enterprises and promoted investment in high value-added industries,"" he said.

Ten key deals were signed between transnational corporations from Europe and East China's Shandong province during the online event on Thursday in Jinan. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

In recent years, Shandong has ramped up efforts on creating a more open and attractive investment environment to attract high-quality projects, said Li Ganjie, the governor.

The province recently formulated and introduced 20 innovative foreign investment optimization measures, in a bid to build a first-class business and investment environment with a high degree of internationalization, convenience and innovation.

""Shandong's economy showed strong resilience to COVID-19,"" said Thierry Delmarcelle, chief strategy and innovation officer at Deloitte Asia Pacific.

Statistics from Shandong's Department of Commerce show that as of the first half of this year, 219 Fortune Global 500 companies had invested in 785 companies in the province."

"A cafe in Zhujialin Countryside Complex in East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Tourism development in Yinan county in Linyi, East China's Shandong province, has helped transform its once dilapidated mountain villages into idyllic resorts for family road trips.

The county has invested approximately 600 million yuan ($87 million) in tourism infrastructure construction and environmental remediation, including building and upgrading over 40 highways, establishing bus routes to tourist destinations across the county and restoring 18 rivers.

An iconic example is the Zhujialin Countryside Complex, an area covering 2,870 hectares, incorporating 23 villages and 16,000 residents. Though in the form of a holiday resort, the complex is open to the public and free of charge.

The old buildings have been renovated into bed-and-breakfasts, cafes and small cinemas, yet retain their historic, rustic ambiance. The museums and galleries display regional handicrafts, including paper-cutting, embroidery and rattan works, and fresh farm produce and related creative products are available for purchase.

A glimpse of the Zhisheng Hot Spring Resort in Yinan county, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The local government has launched policies favorable to companies and talents, so far attracting 18 entrepreneurial teams and landing 26 industrial projects.

Xu Congjiang, chairman of the Zhujialin Rural Construction and Development Co Ltd, said the company has developed 42 family-friendly projects, such as specimen making, plant-based fabric dyeing and sachet bag making.

Five villages in the complex area were listed as provincial-level impoverished villages, incorporating 2,043 impoverished households, all of which have now shaken off poverty.

Another mountainous village in Yinan county, Changshanzhuang village, has been transformed into a national 4A scenic spot, with its film production site producing more than 300 films and TV series.

The village also established several museums and memorial halls centered on the history of the Communist Party of China, as well as a landscape sketch site able to accommodate 900 university students.

The Zhisheng Hot Spring Resort in East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

More than 2,000 people from surrounding villages have been working in the village and its tourist sites, and in 2019 the village's average per capita disposable income has exceeded 15,000 yuan ($2176).

Other tourist sites in the county include Zhuquan village, which lies in a vast bamboo forest, the Zhisheng Hot Spring Resort, also a national 4A scenic spot, and the Songshan Hot Spring Health Care Resort that is under construction, as the combination of tourism and health care has become a key strategy for the county.

The Zhujialin area in East China's Shandong province has been transformed into a countryside tourist complex. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A re-creation of the traditional wedding scene in Zhuquan village, Yinan county in East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Shandong has always maintained strong cooperation with the European Union, according to local authorities.

According to statistics from the Department of Commerce of Shandong, since 1987 when Germany-based consumer chemicals company Henkel AG opened a branch in Yantai, Shandong has attracted a total of 219 Fortune Global 500 companies, which have invested in a total of 785 enterprises in all 16 of the province's cities.

The Shandong Peninsula is surrounded by the Bohai Sea to the north and the Yellow Sea to the south. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

In addition, 65 Fortune Global 500 companies from the EU have invested in 163 projects in Shandong.

In the first half of this year, though the COVID-19 pandemic inflicted major pain on the world economy, trade between Shandong and the EU saw 2.2 percent growth year-on-year, reaching a value of 99.68 billion yuan ($14.4 billion).

In this period, Shandong also signed project agreements with several European Fortune Global 500 companies, including French electric utility company EDF Group and French food group Danone.

The EU has already become Shandong's second largest export market and sixth largest import market, according to Shandong officials.

French companies look to invest in Shandong

Fortune Global 500 companies from France are showing interest in investing in Shandong province, with 45 projects currently being developed, according to statistics from the Department of Commerce of Shandong province.

The coastal city of Qingdao led the way with 24 projects funded by French Fortune Global 500 companies, followed by Jinan, the provincial capital, with 15.

French Fortune Global 500 companies also invested in the Shandong cities of Heze, Rizhao, Liaocheng, Zaozhuang, and more.

Robots assemble a car at the SAIC Motor factory in Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The companies are mainly involved in manufacturing and the wholesale, and retail.

As Shandong looks to shift from old growth drivers to new ones, it hopes to increase cooperation with the EU in financial services, business services, and real estate.

Official data shows that Shandong is home to 163 enterprises funded by Fortune Global 500 companies from the EU. Qingdao has the most with 63, followed by Jinan and Yantai with 32 and 10, respectively. Weihai, Weifang, and Jining each have five."

"Sanjianxi Village Rural Vitalization Museum, located in Zhangqiu district of Jinan, capital city of East China's Shandong province is seen in this photo. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

East China's Shandong province is planning to integrate its tourism resources and boost rural revitalization. Zhangqiu district of the provincial capital, Jinan, has invested over 700 million yuan ($101 million) in tourism infrastructure construction across the region.

The district's Sanjianxi village has been listed as one of the fine examples of rural revitalization, and has now built its own food street, attracting tourists with restaurants, street vendors and light displays.

""We sometimes have over 17,000 people visiting the food street everyday during peak days, 7,000 people at least even in the low season,"" village Party secretary Gao Shuzhen said.

Visitors take pictures at wildlife at the Jinan Wild World in Jinan, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""The village is still also building a bed-and-breakfast business, and future plans include offering pet boarding services. Industry development is fundamental for rural revitalization. By developing tourism, our aim is to increase the villagers' income and the village's collective income.""

Shizikou village also has been developing tourism as a means of poverty alleviation. Led by Party secretary Wang Huawei, the village has been building bed-and-breakfast establishments that have become popular sites for a weekend retreat. The village now has a collective annual income of more than 400,000 yuan and all households have shaken off poverty.

Across the district, natural scenery resources and historical sites have been protected and restored. According to Huang Hongzhan, deputy head of Zhangqiu district, the district now has a green area ratio of 39.3 percent and a per capita green area of 21.59 square meters.

In the downtown area, the district government also has upgraded the streetscape along 12 roads, adding greenery and recreation areas for residents.

The Zhangqiu Museum, located in Zhangqiu district of Jinan, capital city of East China's Shandong province is seen in this photo. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Zhangqiu Museum has been renovated to incorporate the functions of historical museum, library, art gallery, urban planning museum and science museum, introducing its regional culture from the Longshan Culture, a late Neolithic civilization, to contemporary art and science.

Zhujiayu ancient village in Jinan, capital city of East China's Shandong province is seen this photo. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Other tourist attractions include the Zhujiayu scenic area, a 600-year-old mountain village with well-preserved ancient architecture, the Mingshui Ancient City that is due to open to public in 2022, and the Jinan Wild World with its sustainable approaches in providing a wildlife habitat and preserving biodiversity."

"Ren Qingyong, a 70-year-old Taobao online store owner in Dinglou village, Daji township, Caoxian county, Shandong province, checks his online store on a computer. [Photo provided to China Daily]

When he was a child, Hu Chunqing thought being admitted into a college was the only way he could leave his village in Shandong province and live a better life in a city. So he studied hard until he obtained a doctorate.

The 34-year-old from Daiji town, Caoxian county, Heze city, now lives a well-off life, but he hasn't had to leave Hulou village, where he was born.

""Our village is not poor any more,"" said Hu, who runs a Taobao store online that sells stage costumes as well as a costume factory in Daiji. ""Many families get rich by doing business on e-commerce platforms.""

Last year, Hu reaped 9 million yuan ($1.3 million) in sales, and his costumes have been sold to overseas markets.

E-commerce platforms have become a main way to help farmers achieve a prosperous life in Caoxian, where they once made a difficult living mainly planting corn and wheat.

The county saw sales generated on such platforms reach 19.8 billion yuan last year, a year-on-year increase of 25 percent.

Over the past few years, the county government has carried out a series of measures including allocating special funds for building roads, developing logistics and offering preferential tax policies to encourage farmers to do business online.

The number of Caoxian county's ""Taobao villages""－communities with annual transactions of more than 10 million yuan－had risen to 124 last year, making the county the second-largest Taobao village cluster in China.

In Daiji alone, more than 26,000 farmers－over 55 percent of the town's population－are involved in the e-commerce industry, running 16,000 Taobao stores.

""E-commerce has proved to be an efficient way to enrich both villagers' material and spiritual lives,"" said Sun Xueping, the Party secretary of Sunzhuang village in Daiji.

Sunzhuang's main road is lined with shops providing materials for making clothes and shoes. Zhao Ying's stage costume-making workshop is a five-minute drive from the road, making it convenient for her to buy materials.

""Business was impacted by the epidemic, but it is recovering,"" Zhao said. ""We usually need to make hundreds of stage costumes every day.""

Zhao had a hard life when she married her husband from Sunzhuang and moved there 10 years ago.

Her husband went to the city to work temporary jobs, and she had to stay at home to take care of her son and parents-in-law.

While at home, she learned how to make costumes and tried to run a Taobao shop online in 2011.

With orders increasing, her husband returned to help in the business two years later.

Now her workshop employs several women who need to take care of their children at home.

""We have bought a car and a new house,"" she said. ""The most important thing is family members can stay together, and I have a good relationship with my parents-in-law.""

The e-commerce boom has driven many young people working in cities to return to rural areas and launch startups, which also provide jobs for older villagers.

Like Hu, Sun Zhiguo returned to the town in 2015 after working in Brazil for seven years. With his overseas experience, the 33-yearold is planning to open an online shop to explore overseas markets.

""Not far away from us, there is a cross-border e-commerce base that provides convenient services on cross-border trade,"" Sun said.

To strengthen the e-commerce sector by integrating resources, the local governments are building an industrial park that has convenient logistics, e-commerce platforms, markets and apartments in Daiji. The park is expected to provide jobs for 15,000 people when complete."

"At the beginning of the year, Zhang Jiguo did not expect the foreign trade ""winter"" to last so long.

As the chairman of Polygrace Group, a leather furniture manufacturing enterprise in Zibo, Zhang has experienced many challenges in the past six months, such as the difficulty of workers returning to work due to the COVID-19 pandemic, raw materials shortages, delayed deliveries of foreign orders, and a sharp drop in overseas market demand.

""At the height of the global pandemic, our orders fell by 40 percent, a level not seen in more than 20 years,"" said Zhang.

Although the company is now back on track, Zhang has no shortage of long-term worries. He noted that while the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy will be relatively brief, the more far-reaching impact will come from the profound changes in the post-pandemic global landscape.

""We have been dependent on foreign markets and we need to sell our products to domestic customers,"" he said.

""We need to build self-owned brands to maximize profits rather than be an OEM-based factory.""

Zhang has found that the digitalization of the domestic consumer market has greatly reduced the threshold for factories to build their own brands and open up sales channels. The end-to-end link formed in e-commerce has also removed the need for subcontractors, which provides lower prices for consumers and creates a higher premium for factories.

Since this April, Zhang's company has teamed with domestic e-commerce giants like JD and Alibaba to launch online promotions.

""Our online sales exceeded 400,000 yuan ($57,640) in the first month. Although the number of transactions is not currently large, we have explored a new way of sales to open the domestic market,"" said Zhang."

"Wang Huaqin shows her painting skills to fellow villagers in her studio in Qingzhou, Shandong province, last month. XIAO DA/CHINA DAILY

Shandong province is synchronizing poverty alleviation with rural revitalization by introducing high-end talent and developing projects to enrich residents while maintaining a friendly ecological system.

A typical example is Shengshuiyu town in Jining's Sishui county, which is known as the home of Confucius.

After driving along a mountain road nestled in greenery, visitors arrived at the town's Dongzhongdu village, where they came upon some youth exercising, drawing landscapes, doing woodwork and working with clay.

""This is really a fantastic place for my students to learn from nature. They learn fast when they get themselves involved,"" said Hu Jicheng, who led a group of students from Chengzi primary school for field studies.

Last year, by contrast, the village was seldom visited by outsiders. Many houses were dilapidated, and roads were narrow and muddy. Things began changing last year when Shengshuiyu was designated as a demonstration area for the province's rural revitalization campaign.

Since then, local governments have invested in roads, water supplies and a drainage system, as well as computer network systems in the demonstration area that are home to 3,576 families in 18 villages.

After completing the infrastructure, local governments initiated a campaign to woo talent to develop projects in the communities. To date, local governments have signed 30 projects with 37 partners.

""We have changed 48 old, shabby houses that were not being used into places where students and tourists can read, have coffee and tea, work with clay and do woodwork,"" said Tian Bin, 46, one of the partners.

""The local government has built the platform for us. What we need to do is to develop a rural environment in which people and nature can coexist in harmonious ways.""

""Our village is changing every day. The environment is getting better and better, and so are our lives,"" said Li Baoyu, the Party branch secretary of Dongzhongdu, adding that the projects developed by the partners are bringing more income to the village.

Wang Huaqin shows her painting skills to fellow villagers in her studio in Qingzhou, Shandong province, last month. XIAO DA/CHINA DAILY

With more tourists coming to the village, restaurants and shops are getting busier, providing jobs for residents.

Kong Deyun, 44, found a satisfactory job at a restaurant.

""It takes me five minutes to walk to the restaurant. I can earn around 2,000 yuan ($287) every month,"" Kong said, adding that she also sells the fruits and vegetables she grows to the restaurant.

""The price the restaurant offers is usually higher than the market,"" she said.

Li is especially glad to see so many young people.

""Seeing young people in our village makes me feel confident in our future,"" he said.

Shandong has been putting efforts into building environmentally friendly rural areas over the years. It has developed 1,500 villages that feature beautiful landscapes and sound living environments by improving infrastructure such as toilets and sewage treatment facilities, according to the provincial Department of Ecology and Environment.

Based on a sustainable ecology, local governments are helping enrich the lives of local farmers.

For example, farmers in Qingzhou, a county-level city of Weifang, Shandong, have a profitable sideline. When free from farm work, they pick up brushes to portray their real lives in rural areas through art.

Wang Huaqin had never thought a farmer like her could earn 400 to 500 yuan a day by painting. The 49-year-old has become a skilled painter, though she started learning just four years ago.

Several of her paintings have won prizes in provincial and national competitions, and one of her works is the first of the farmers' paintings in Qingzhou to have been displayed in the National Art Museum of China.

In 2017, she established a painting studio and has helped more than 70 farmers learn painting. Each of them can earn as much as 70,000 to 80,000 yuan every year. Wang and her team also dabbled in commercial wall paintings.

""We have been invited to draw on the walls in Qingdao and cities in Hebei province,"" Wang said.

One of the works made by the farmer-painters in Wang Huaqin's studio in Qingzhou, Shandong province. CHINA DAILY

""Each of our farmers can earn more than 10,000 yuan per month when business is good,"" she told a media tour on July 21.

There are more than 30,000 farmer-painters like Wang in Qingzhou. Every year, they create 500,000 paintings with total revenues reaching 300 million yuan, thanks to the local government efforts to extend the industrial chain of farmer paintings and combine it with tourism.

A farmer-painter with a medium skill level or above can earn an additional 20,000 yuan annually, the local government said.

""What we are portraying are the most common activities in our everyday lives－stories happening nearby, harvest scenes and places where we live and work,"" said 74-year-old Ma Jiqing, a locally prominent painter who has been involved in the arts for more than 60 years.

Ma is a heritage successor of the Qingzhou farmer-artists. His work has become an essential part of his family life, persuading fellow villagers to learn.

The local government has been making great efforts to encourage the development of farmer-painters in a bid to boost tourism sectors and rural revitalization, said Chen Tongzhou, head of the Qingzhou publicity department.

By 2023, Qingzhou is expected to have more than 100 painting studios, 100 rural cooperatives and 100 online companies selling farmers' paintings, Chen added."

"JINAN -- An explosion on Saturday at an agricultural storage facility in East China's Shandong province caused multiple casualties, local authorities said.

The accident occurred at 9:50 am in Mamiao village, in the city of Jining. Two people were found dead on the spot. All the injured have sustained non-lethal wounds, and they have been sent to the hospital for treatment.

A preliminary investigation revealed that a power line fire, triggered by a villager while felling trees, led to the accident.

Local officials and rescue forces are working at the site."

"A villager checks the parts of buggies at a processing workshop in Longzhuang village of Hongxu town in Shandong province, on Aug 11, 2020. [Photo/Sipa]

In Longzhuang village of Hongxu town in Shandong province, more than 50 small and medium-sized companies -- drawing on local strengths in industries including machinery manufacturing, plastic steel processing, and glass products -- have been established, with the encouragement of local authorities and support from investment.

These firms provide employment for more than 1,500 villagers, with an average monthly salary of about 4,800 yuan ($690).

Villagers work at a processing workshop in Longzhuang village of Hongxu town in Shandong province, on Aug 11, 2020. [Photo/Sipa]

A villager works at a woven bag processing workshop in Longzhuang village of Hongxu town in Shandong province, on Aug 11, 2020. [Photo/Sipa]

Villagers work at a vacuum bottle processing workshop in Longzhuang village of Hongxu town in Shandong province, on Aug 11, 2020. [Photo/Sipa]

Villagers work at a vacuum bottle processing workshop in Longzhuang village of Hongxu town in Shandong province, on Aug 11, 2020. [Photo/Sipa]"

"Beixin, a Neolithic culture, dates back between 7,300 years to 6,100 years ago in the lower reaches of Yellow River.[Photo/Chinanews.com]

Archaeologists have unearthed a Neolithic relics site dating back to more than 6,000 years ago, in the city of Linyi, East China's Shandong province.

The site mainly comprises a ring trench of the Beixin culture with an area of some 4,000 square meters, as well as three housing sites and several pits, said the cultural relics and archaeology research institute of Shandong.

Pottery remains from kettles, bowls, jars and pots were found in the trench.

Beixin, a Neolithic culture, dates back between 7,300 years to 6,100 years ago in the lower reaches of Yellow River. It was the precursor of the Dawenkou culture.

The settlements of the Beixin culture were all half beneath the ground, and the people used artifacts made from stones, bones, horns, teeth, and clams as production tools."

"Forty-four companies from Shandong province have been listed among China's 500 most valuable brands in 2020, ranking third in the country, behind Guangdong province (44) and Beijing (93).

The list of China's 500 Most Valuable Brands of 2020 and an analysis report were released by the World Brand Lab at the World Brand Summit in Beijing on Aug 5.

According to the report, State Grid tops the list with a brand value of 503.69 billion yuan ($72.28 billion), while ICBC is in second spot with 450.58 billion yuan in brand value. Haier, China's leading home appliance giant based in Shandong's Qingdao city, takes third place with a brand value of 428.65 billion yuan.

The total value of brands on the list reached 24,692.06 billion yuan, up 12.9 percent from the previous year."

"The 22nd Annual Meeting of the China Association of Science and Technology will be held from Aug 10 to 15 in Shandong province.

The meeting, focusing on reform and opening-up and innovation-driven development, will have 30 activities centering on challenges faced by the world's economic and social development, including forums featuring innovation and entrepreneurship, world ocean technology, technology and economic integration and a China science and technology think tank.

The meeting will also address major scientific and engineering technical problems faced in 2020. It will also organize seminars focused on public health and biotechnology. Academicians and experts will be invited to talk about top issues of global concern, such as the development of COVID-19 vaccines, antibody engineering and biosafety.

Other events will also be held to discuss the establishment of an open and shared international science and technology governance mechanism, as well as building a scientific and technological cooperation trust network to facilitate Chinese and foreign scientists working together to promote innovation and social progress.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many events will be open to the public at home and abroad via the internet. Events will also take place in several cities in Shandong province, including Qingdao, Weihao, Tai'an and Weifang, from Aug 10. The opening ceremony will be held on Aug 14.

The Annual Meeting of the China Association of Science and Technology is a comprehensive, high-end and international science and technology event which serves as an important communication and exchange platform for scientific and technology communities."

"The Shandong Institute of Apple and Fruit Industrial Technology was inaugurated in Yantai, a coastal city in East China's Shandong province, on July 29.

The institute will focus on the research and development of new varieties of fruit, seedling breeding, and orchard management in the apple-growing industry.

Zhang Shuping, Party secretary of Yantai, attended the inauguration ceremony and visited the central laboratory of the institute, where he learned about the development history of Yantai apples and related technological innovation.

He said that Yantai is the birthplace and main production area of the modern apple industry in China and has been playing a leading role in promoting the development of the apple industry.

Yantai currently has 2.8 million mu (1,866.66 square kilometers) of apple planting area, with a total annual output of 5.7 million tons. The industry is currently undergoing a period of upgrading and transformation.

The establishment of the institution will help accelerate the upgrading of the traditional fruit industry, cultivate new planting technologies and attract more talent, which will promote the development of the fruit industry in Yantai and all of Shandong province.

Zhang Shuping (first from right), Party secretary of Yantai, visits Shandong Institute of Apple and Fruit Industrial Technology on July 29. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The Shandong Institute of Apple and Fruit Industrial Technology is inaugurated in Yantai, a coastal city in East China's Shandong province, on July 29. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"The ""Dialogue with Shandong -- Japan · Shandong Industrial Cooperation and Exchange"" event began online in Jinan (capital of Shandong province), Tokyo and Osaka on July 30.

The event, which will last for two months, is designed to deepen exchange and cooperation between Shandong and Japan, enhance multi-level, long-term cooperation dialogue among local governments, business associations, scientific research institutions and enterprises, and expand new areas of cooperation.

The ""Dialogue with Shandong -- Japan · Shandong Industrial Cooperation and Exchange"" event begins on July 30. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong province, talked with Nobuhiko Sasaki, chairman of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) via video link.

Liu said that Shandong and Japan face each other across the sea and are friendly neighbors which enjoy close ties in many areas.

He expressed hope that through the event, enterprises from both sides can find more opportunities for cooperation.

Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong province [Photo/dzwww.com]

He said that the two sides should seize the opportunity to deepen cooperation in such areas as fighting COVID-19, economy, trade, investment, entrepreneurship, science, technology, education, medical and health care, culture, and tourism.

Sasaki thanked Shandong for its assistance to Japan in the fight against the pandemic and expressed hope that Japan and Shandong can deepen cooperation in various fields, namely trade.

In his speech, Li Ganjie, governor of Shandong province, said that exchange between Shandong and Japan has a long history and has yielded fruitful results, and the two sides have built a solid foundation for deepening cooperation.

Li Ganjie, governor of Shandong province, delivers a speech at the event. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Li said that Shandong's advantages in strategic platforms, complete industrial systems, conversion of old and new economic drivers, dividend policies, market potential and other areas have been further strengthened. Both sides share broad prospects for cooperation.

He expressed hope that more Japanese people from all walks of life will visit Shandong, share in Shandong's opportunities, and help to create a better future for both sides.

The event has received significant attention and warm support from Japanese business groups and organizations as well as politicians. Many of them have sent congratulatory videos, including Yukio Hatoyama, former Japanese prime minister, Hideki Makihara, Japan's Deputy Minister for the Economy, Trade, and Industry, Yutaka Yokoi, Japanese Ambassador to China and Naomichi Suzuki, governor of Hokkaido.

Many prominent figures send congratulatory videos to the event. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The event will provide more opportunities for cooperation with Japan. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"[Video/iqilu.com]

Yutaka Yokoi, Japanese Ambassador to China, sent a congratulatory video to the Japan-Shandong Industrial Cooperation and Exchange event, which opened on July 30 in Jinan, provincial capital of Shandong province.

In the video, Yokoi expressed his delight that the event has managed to resume exchanges between China and Japan that were previously postponed or cancelled due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

He also noted that many famous Chinese historical figures who are well-known in Japan, such as Confucius and Mencius, hail from Shandong.

""As Confucius said: 'If you want to do a good job, you must first use your tools.' The event held here today brings people from all walks of life from Shandong and Japan together to build a platform for industrial cooperation between China and Japan in various fields, laying a solid foundation for practical cooperation between the two countries in the future,"" he said.

Yokoi pointed out that Shandong province, which lies just across the sea from Japan, has been the gateway for exchanges between the two countries since ancient times.

He added that Shandong province is today a huge and vibrant market with a population of more than 100 million, making it an attractive destination for Japanese investors. To date, about 1,800 Japanese companies have invested in Shandong.

During the Shandong delegation's visit to Japan last year, Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong, expressed hope that the two sides will enhance exchanges in areas such as science, technology, culture and medicine.

""Shandong province regards Japan as an important partner in opening up to the outside world. While fighting the epidemic, Shandong is ramping up efforts to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with Japan,"" he said.

""Shandong province is a partner with unlimited potential for Japan."""

"A total of 81 state scenic areas in Shandong province will reduce ticket prices from August 1 to the end of the year in an effort to boost tourism consumption and promote tourism recovery.

According to the notice released by the Shandong Development and Reform Commission and the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, the scenic areas include nine 5A-level, 35 4A-level and 16 3A-level ones.

The Mount Tai Scenic Area in Tai'an, Shandong province [Photo by Sun Jian/provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The nine 5A scenic spots will have their ticket prices reduced by at least 50 percent, except for on statutory holidays.

The remaining 72 scenic spots will offer eighty percent off on weekends and half off during statutory holidays.

The original free ticket policy for children, seniors, active duty soldiers, the disabled and other groups will remain unchanged.

An aerial photo of Daming Lake in Jinan, capital of Shandong province [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The province's scenic spots are encouraged to launch flexible ticket exemption policies for specific groups such as teachers, students and medical workers.

The province also requires that all scenic spots implement strict epidemic prevention and control measures to guarantee the health and safety of the public."

"See how Hanting district in Weifang, Shandong province, is developing its modern agricultural sector.

More than 53,000 residents have benefited from a national-level modern agricultural industrial park, which covers 90.7 square kilometers. It features the entire industrial chain, ranging from production, processing, scientific research, branding and sales. The two star products, watermelon and turnips, have become market darlings.

Video by Xiao Da"

"Li Ganjie, then minister of Ministry of Ecology and Environment, answers questions from a journalist at a press conference held during the annual ""two sessions"", March 11, 2019. [Photo/people.cn]

JINAN -- Li Ganjie was elected governor of east China's Shandong Province by the provincial legislature on Tuesday.

The 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress elected the governor at its fourth session.

Li, born in 1964, is a native of Changsha, capital of central China's Hunan Province. He was appointed deputy governor and acting governor of Shandong in April."

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism will launch a summer promotion event on July 24 to boost cultural and tourism consumption. The event will last till September.

The cultural and tourism authorities of the province's 16 cities will also launch a series of activities with popular Chinese travel-service providers such as Ctrip and Lvmama and on-demand services platforms such as Meituan.

Shandong will launch six themed tourism products during this promotional period -- a parent-child summer tour, a seaside tour, a self-drive tour, a cool summer night tour, a fitness tour and a rural tour.

Scenic spots, travel agencies, hotels, homestays, museums and other cultural tourism enterprises in the province will offer promotions via online platforms.

According to local officials, about 50,000 cultural tourism enterprises have signed up for the event, offering more than one million products such as tickets for scenic spots, hotel rooms and related vacation products.

Livestreaming shows, discount coupons, product subsidies, short video shows, offline store advertising and other forms of promotion will be launched to attract customers.

The opening ceremony of the event will take place on July 27 in Rizhao with a dazzling display of the province's summer tourism products and online promotions.

The night-time economy bounces back in Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Tourists enjoy water sports in Penglai, Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The pleasant scenery of Zaozhuang, Shandong province [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"A college graduate attends an online job interview. [Photo/Xinhua]

To offset the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the job market, Shandong province has scaled up efforts to take advantage of the internet to ensure employment and promote the resumption of work, the provincial department of human resources and social security said.

Local authorities in Shandong have launched a large-scale online vocational training program free of charge as part of its efforts to improve workers' professional skills and facilitate poverty alleviation in the face of the outbreak.

The province selected some 60 high-quality online professional skills training platforms that provided training to more than 730,000 people by the end of last month, with the digital training resources covering over 100 occupations.

Subsidies have been given to enterprises participating in the program and trainees, especially those having financial difficulties. Poor people participating in online skills training, including migrants, financially strapped workers and unemployed college graduates, have also been given subsidies for living expenses.

After finishing the required hours and credits through online training, local authorities, in cooperation with companies, will provide on-site practice sessions for participants, guaranteeing they will have both the theoretical and hands-on experience needed for future jobs.

An online job fair has also been organized to revive the job market after the pandemic forced migrants to stay at home, depriving them of salaries to support their families.

Zhao Zhigang, a 39-year-old migrant from an impoverished village in Taian, Shandong, was hired by a clothing factory near his home-where he needs to attend his parents-through the online job fair.

""The pandemic barred me from returning to the factory in Guangdong province. The loss of income is no small thing to me and my family,"" he said. ""I never thought I'd be able to get a job through just two phone calls. I'm satisfied with the post and the salary they offered.""

More than 2.13 million jobs have been offered to applicants at the online fair, and more than 444,800 people have secured jobs.

By the end of June, about 99.7 percent of the province's major industrial enterprises had resumed production, and over 99 percent of employees had returned to their posts, the provincial department of human resources and social security said."

"An exhibition displaying more than 3,000 rare shellfish specimens and cultural relics related to shellfish opened on July 16 at Shandong Museum in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

The event boasts the largest number of natural exhibits at the museum.

The exhibition features themes, showing shellfish in literature, their uses in medicine and in diet, and stamps with the subject of shellfish.

As summer holiday approaches, the event organizers have also prepared interaction activities for children.

These include making soap in shape of shellfish, drawing pictures themed around the sea and courses to learn about shellfish.

An exhibition displaying more than 3,000 rare shellfish specimens and cultural relics related to shellfish culture opens at Shandong Museum on July 16. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Children follow a talk on the history of shellfish at Shandong Museum. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Shellfish specimens on display at Shandong Museum [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

East China's Shandong province is blessed with time-honored history, splendid culture, numerous celebrities and bountiful natural scenery, beckoning travelers from all lands."

"East China's Shandong province has launched a campaign to promote the province's self-driving tourism to stimulate consumption and boost economic growth.

Self-driving trips have become an increasingly popular choice among domestic Chinese travelers after travel restrictions were relaxed amid the waning COVID-19 epidemic, according to a report released by short video platform Kuaishou and Chinese mapping service provider AutoNavi Software Co, also known as Gaode Map.

Shandong launches a campaign to promote self-driving tourism in Dezhou, Shandong province on July 11. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

In order to boost self-driving tourism, many industries in Shandong such as petroleum, finance, automobile and transportation have launched preferential policies as well as hotels, restaurants and scenic spots, according to the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

A mobile service platform integrating gas stations, scenic spots, accommodation, dining and shopping for self-driving tours will also be launched in Shandong.

Wang Lei, director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, delivers a speech at the launch ceremony. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Scenic spots, hotels, homestays and the catering industry have been encouraged to offer discounts and sales promotion to attract more self-driving tourists.

A series of activities and livestreaming shows will take place in Shandong to lure more self-driving tourists from surrounding areas and promote the province's diverse and pleasant self-driving routes.

More travelers have been going on self-driving trips after travel restrictions were relaxed amid the waning COVID-19 epidemic. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism held a news conference on July 9 to announce the province's top five archaeological discoveries in 2019, as well as the top five field archaeological sites for 2018-2019.

A news conference is held on July 9 to introduce Shandong province's archaeological work. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Top five archaeological discoveries of 2019 in Shandong

1. Sujia village ruins in Rizhao city, which house cultural artifacts from the late Dawenkou culture (4100-2600 BC) and early Longshan culture (about 3000-2000 BC)

2. Xichen site in Qufu, which is home to a trove of cultural relics from the Shang (1600 BC-1046 BC) and Western Zhou (1046 BC-771 BC) dynasties

3. The rammed earth site on the west side of the Qi ancient city in Zibo. Zibo is the capital of the ancient Qi state, one of the most powerful states in China for more than 800 years during the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC) and the Warring States Period (475-221 BC).

4. Dahan tomb in Tengzhou, which dates from the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770-256 BC)

5. Sanguanmiao tomb in Jiyang district, Jinan, which dates from the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220)

Top five field archaeological sites of Shandong for 2018-2019

1. Ximengzhuang site in Tengzhou, associated with Longshan culture from around 4,000 years ago

2. Niutuiguannan site in Zhangqiu district, Jinan, which dates from the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770-256 BC)

3. Dahan tomb in Tengzhou city, which dates from the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770-256 BC)

4. Wangjialou tomb complex in Huangdao district, Qingdao, which dates from the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220)

5. Haibei site in Kenli district, Dongying, which dates from the Song (960-1279) and Jin (1115-1234) dynasties"

"Shandong will adopt the strictest measures in relation to the college entrance exam, or gaokao, scheduled to take place from July 7 to 10, an official of the province's department of education said on Friday. The measures will ensure fairness in college admissions.

""In recent years, Shandong has been using information technologies to strengthen management on each link of gaokao including registration of the exams, taking exams at designated venues and admission to guard against illegal deeds such as ID replacement,"" said Wu Yanping, deputy head of the department, at a news conference held in Jinan, capital city of Shandong.

Shandong published investigation results of three ID theft cases related to the gaokao this week, in which a total of 61 people were held accountable.

The cases took place before 2006 when there was less information and ID verification technology, Wu said.

This year, to prevent someone sitting for the exams for another, face recognition has been widely adopted, he said.

Education authorities and colleges in the province will also conduct reviews of freshman admissions. Any freshman who was found guilty of cheating or ID theft will be deprived of the admission qualification, and the education authorities will cooperate with the public security and discipline inspection authorities to trace all people involved.

The department will also develop an information service platform to provide students with timely and reliable information related to their exams, such as scores and enrollment results.

This year, 530,381 students in Shandong will sit for the gaokao in 17,840 examination rooms, with more than 80,000 staff members, including proctors and those who provide support and services, such as antivirus medical staff."

"A total of 16 major projects costing 25.57 billion yuan ($3.62 billion) were inked at the Tai'an sub-venue of a mega investment promotional event.

The Second Conference of Great Business Partners and the International Summit on Innovation and Development for Youth Entrepreneurs opened on June 30 via online channels across Shandong's 16 cities.

The event involves thousands of participants and is an effort by Shandong to further open up and bolster its high-quality development.

Cui Honggang, Party secretary of Tai'an, and Zhang Tao, mayor of Tai'an, attended the conference. More than 300 guests from leading enterprises across China also took apart via online videos.

Cui delivered a keynote speech and introduced the city's business environment to attendees.

Tai'an government has rolled out a series of measures to support the development of local companies, boost the private sector, and optimize services to provide a better business environment for enterprises.

In addition, a fund of 600 million yuan was set up to attract high-end talent, and the construction of a national printing and dyeing technology innovation center has been approved in the city by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

Cui also said that Tai'an will increase efforts to create a better business environment for entrepreneurs looking to invest and work in the city. Cui Honggang, Party secretary of Tai'an, delivers a speech at the Tai'an sub-venue of the Second Conference of Great Business Partners. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Zhang Tao, mayor of Tai'an, delivers a speech at the Tai'an sub-venue. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Yantai, a coastal city of Shandong province, signs deals for projects costing 62.4 billion yuan ($ 8.82 billion) on June 30. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]A total of 12 major projects costing 62.4 billion yuan ($8.82 billion) were inked at the Yantai sub-venue of a mega investment promotional event.

The Second Conference of Great Business Partners and the International Summit on Innovation and Development for Youth Entrepreneurs opened on June 30 via online channels across Shandong's 16 cities.

The event involves thousands of participants and is an effort by Shandong to further open up and bolster its high-quality development.

Zhang Shuping, Party secretary of Yantai converses online with attendees at the conference on June 30. [Photo/jiaodong.net]

Yantai, a coastal city of Shandong province, signed deals for projects related to emerging fields such as equipment manufacturing, the next-generation information technology, healthcare, and new materials.

In Yantai, the conference was held at the Yantai Dongshan Guesthouse. Zhang Shuping, Party secretary of Yantai, Chen Fei, mayor of Yantai, and Zhang Dailing, deputy secretary of Yantai attended.

More than 900 people including executives from well-known enterprises and business associations also took part online.

Chen Fei, mayor of Yantai, delivers a keynote speech at the conference on June 30. [Photo/jiaodong.net]

Zhang Shuping conversed online with Xu Rongmao, the founder and chairman of Hong Kong Shimao Group, Mao Juncai, CEO of Greenland Holding Group, and Song Liding, chairman of China Great Wall Technology Group.

He said that Yantai boasts a flourishing real economy and has a bright future in developing its emerging industries.

The coastal city is a part of the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone, the Shandong International Investment Industrial Park, and the Shandong comprehensive pilot area for replacing old growth drivers with new ones.

""The city is working to optimize its business environment and offer comprehensive services to attract more industrial projects,"" Zhang Shuping added.

He expressed hope that more entrepreneurs would come to Yantai to start businesses and promote more extensive cooperation."

"A total of 46 people have been held accountable in two college impostor cases in Shandong province, according to a notice released on Monday from the official website of the Shandong Provincial Commission for Discipline Inspection and Supervision.

Chen Yanping, who managed to get into Shandong University of Technology (SDUT) 16 years ago by stealing the identity of Chen Chunxiu from a village in the same county, has been removed from her post at a community office. Her diploma has been nullified by the university. The public security office has also started an investigation.

The impostor's father and uncle, who requested and entrusted the county's admission office, senior middle school, public security station and the SDUT to forge ID materials, have been put under investigation by the public security organ and the discipline inspection organ respectively.

The other 29 people involved in Chen's case, including the former director of the county's admission office and the head of the related public security station, were handled with punishments including being expelled from the Communist Party of China, probation and warnings from the Party.

In the other case of forging ID materials to get into a college two decades ago, both the impostor Chen Wei and her father who masterminded the case have been expelled from the Party. Chen Wei was removed from her official post. The public security office has started investigations into Chen Wei and her father.

Eleven other people involved in Chen Wei's case have been punished.

The province is also investigating 242 cases of illegally attending colleges from 1999 to 2006, and another case in which a woman is suspected of being impersonated twice. Investigation results, per the notice, will be published in a timely manner."

"Province to host second Conference of Great Business Partners across cities

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, collaborations 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 are Shandong's first high-level activities 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 investor 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 for the whole province,"" Ren said.

To guarantee a successful conference, Shandong has made a great deal of preparation in 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 were 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 industry, healthcare, green chemicals, modern agriculture, cultural creativity, tourism and modern finance.

With an aim to forge new economic growth drivers, the province selected 312 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 upgrading, 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.

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 be given nucleic acid tests before the conference.

The urban area of Jinan, the capital city of Shandong province, which is rich in historical and modern architecture, embodies how the province has balanced its development with its storied past. CHINA DAILY

Robots assemble a car at the SAIC Motor factory in Yantai, Shandong province. CHINA DAILY

The CIMC Raffles shipyard in Yantai features the world's largest gantry crane. CHINA DAILY"

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

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.

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

Scores of containers at Shandong's Rizhao Port, which is playing an important role in boosting the province's opening-up. CHINA DAILY

Robots assemble a car at the SAIC Motor factory in Yantai, Shandong province. CHINA DAILY"

"A total of 312 high-quality projects will be promoted at the Second Conference of Great Business Partners and International Summit on Innovation and Development for Youth Entrepreneurs.

The event will open in Shandong on June 30 on online channels. The main venue is set in Jinan, capital of the province.

According to local authorities, the 312 projects cover major infrastructure, new infrastructure, the province's ""top 10"" industries, technological upgrading, and state-owned enterprises reform, which are vital to the province's efforts in replacing old growth drivers with new ones and promoting high-quality development.

Nearly 70 percent of the projects are related to emerging industries, which will promote innovation-driven development and foster new economic drivers in Shandong.

There are 56 major infrastructure and new infrastructure projects, including 5G networks, data centers, artificial intelligence and industrial internet platforms, that will inject new impetus into the digital economy and accelerate the province's push for industrial upgrading.

Shandong province is taking a significant role in supporting the nation's economic upgrade. The region became the first comprehensive pilot zone in China to replace old economic growth drivers with new ones.

As the first high-level event of the year aimed at attracting investment, the event is designed to facilitate business and investment, promote cooperation with Hong Kong and Macao, and expand opening-up efforts, local officials said.

The province's 16 cities will also host a series of business promotion activities during the event to attract business and talents."

"A total of 21 high-end projects from Yantai will be promoted at the Second Conference of Great Business Partners and International Summit on Innovation and Development for Youth Entrepreneurs which will be held on June 30.

Twelve key projects covering equipment manufacturing, next-generation information technology, healthcare and new energy fields will be signed at the event. These projects have a combined worth of 62.4 billion yuan ($8.81 billion) .

This year's conference, which will comprise online and offline segments, is focused on facilitating business and investment, promoting cooperation with Hong Kong and Macao, and expanding opening-up efforts.

The province's 16 cities will host a series of promotional activities during the event to attract business and talents.

Yantai, one of the sub-venues for the conference, will set up online meetings to help more than 60 enterprises seek cooperation opportunities and attract investment.

The city has invited 879 guests from around the world to the event."

"The Second Conference of Great Business Partners and the International Summit on Innovation and Development for Youth Entrepreneurs will be held in Jinan, Shandong province on June 30, according to the information office of the Shandong government.

The event is designed to provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to better understand the business environment of Shandong and help the province attract more investment.

This year’s event will focus on online conferences and have its main venue in Jinan, with 15 sub-venues located in other cities in Shandong, including the coastal city of Yantai.

Yantai will set up an offline meeting room in the city’s Dongshan Guesthouse and hosts online meetings for counties to seek cooperation and investment."

"Shandong province sits on the lower reaches of the Yellow River and the coast of eastern China, with Jinan as its capital.

Magnificent mountains and vast sea nurture her 7,000-year history. It is the place where Confucius was born, where Mount Tai rose skyward, where the Yellow River empties into the sea and where the Olympic Sailing Games took place.

Home to the ancient states of Qi and Lu, it was within the political and economic center of China from the pre-Qin period (c.2100-221 BC) to the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127).

It is a land of ceremony and propriety, with a perfect combination of ancient and modern civilization."

"Shandong provincial education department is gathering information about people who steal others' identity to attend college and will release related information soon, Southern Metropolis Daily reported on Friday.

A staff member of the department, who declined to give name, told the newspaper that the department had noticed recent news reports about some people stealing others' identity to attend college. The department is collecting information for future release.

A recent news report about a 34-year-old woman in Guanxian, Shandong province discovering that her identity was stolen by another woman 16 years ago and that the woman attend college in place of her attracted attention of people.

According to the newspaper, the education department of Shandong released a notice in September 2018, saying that it would comb the information of students who received higher education in Shandong. All the information was on the official website of the China Higher Education Student Information and Career Center.

Then 14 colleges and universities of the province released the results of the inspection: 242 people were suspected of stealing others' identity to attend college. All obtained their higher education certificates during 2002 and 2009, the newspaper said.

The 14 colleges and universities include Ocean University of China in Qingdao, Jinan University, Zaozhuang University and Weifang Medical University.

The newspaper said these higher education institutions have contacted people suspected of stealing others' identity, informing them that their higher education degrees and certificates would be revoked and people involved could contact the institutions if they have any question or disagree with the decision. But the institutions haven't received any calls so far.

The newspaper added that none of the people whose identities were stolen have been reached by the higher education institutions either, as the institutions had no access to these people's contact information."

"The Jinan-based construction company Shandong Hi-Speed Group started construction on its second expressway project in Serbia on June 17.

This is the second transportation infrastructure project that Shandong Hi-Speed has carried out in Serbia – the first being the E763 highway.

The 18.3-km Lajkovac-Iverak road starts near the town of Lajkovac and stretches to the city of Valjevo, some 90 km southwest of the capital city of Belgrade.

In the future, the expressway will connect the upcoming Belgrade-South Adriatic highway with parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the west and Corridor 10 to the east, making Valjevo a focal point of Serbia's development plans.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic attended the groundbreaking ceremony.

Vucic said that the road, costing 158 million euros ($177 million), will be completed in 2022.

During a speech, Vucic thanked Shandong Hi-Speed and stressed the importance of the highway.

He said that the highway has been a dream for people who live along the route for many years, as it will cut travel time between Belgrade and Valjevo to just one hour.

The president added that the road will also help attract investors to Valjevo, improve the local investment environment, increase employment, and improve people's lives.

Chen Bo, Chinese ambassador to Serbia, said Chinese companies are more willing to participate in the development of the Serbian infrastructure under the Belt and Road Initiative.

""I am sure that Chinese companies are prepared to contribute to infrastructure development in Serbia with their vast knowledge, advantaged technology, rich experience, and limitless capabilities. Hopefully we can see even stronger infrastructure cooperation in the future,"" said the ambassador.

Xinhua contributed to the story."

"Wang Lei, director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, spoke about the province's cultural construction in rural areas at a news conference on June 17.

Wang Lei, director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism [Photo/ql1d.com]

Wang said that the province has built thousands of practice stations and centers to promote civilization and modern life philosophies as well as improve the living environment in the countryside.

The province has also set up 22,000 Confucian lecture halls in rural areas to carry forward fine traditional culture.

People visit a civilization practice center in Licang district, Qingdao. [Photo/ql1d.com]

Guided by the idea that ""lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets"", Shandong has combined the promotion of rural culture with the development of rural tourism.

Wang said that the province has fully exploited rural characteristic resources to boost the construction of a beautiful countryside.

The province has cultivated a number of high-quality rural tourism scenic spots and launched tourism routes with themes such as rural sightseeing, study tours, flower admiring and fruit picking.

A rural tourism spot in Lanling county, Shandong province [Photo/ql1d.com]

According to Wang, Shandong has also focused on enriching the spiritual and cultural lives of rural residents. Thousands of cultural performances and activities have been staged in the rural areas of Shandong over the years.

In recent years, Shandong has been ramping up its efforts to protect and utilize fine traditional cultural resources. Ancient sites, rural dwellings and traditional villages have been designated as cultural relics and afforded protection. Since 2018, the provincial government has invested 270 million yuan ($38.16 million) in 215 protection projects.

The province has also taken measures to revitalize traditional handicrafts and boost related industry development. For example, it has built 71 national and provincial demonstration bases and workshops for intangible cultural heritage items such as wood carving, paper cutting and embroidery, in turn generating 230,000 jobs for villagers.

Xinhe town in Pingdu city has become the largest straw weaving handicraft processing and export base in northern China, employing more than 20,000 people and helping lift locals out of poverty.

Gaoyu village of Junan county boasts the country's largest comb production base, with 80 percent of local farmers engaged in the business.

Traditional wooden combs that are produced in Gaoyu village [Photo/ql1d.com]

Wang said that Shandong will continue to build a more civilized countryside as well as integrate rural development with cultural industries."

"Sinotruk is ranked 6th in the list of top 100 exporters in Shandong province in 2019. [Photo/WeChat account: cnhtc-sinotruk]

China National Heavy Duty Truck Group, also known as Sinotruk, has been ranked 6th in the list of top 100 exporters in Shandong province in 2019.

Based in Jinan, Shandong province, the heavy truck manufacturer has in recent years made great efforts to expand its presence in the overseas market, making a name for itself in vehicle sales, assembly and capacity cooperation.

The company has sold its products to more than 110 countries and regions, making it the top exporter in China's heavy truck industry for the past 15 years."

"East China's Shandong province will launch more than 550 promotional activities for intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, which falls on June 13 this year, draws near.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism held a news conference on June 10 to announce the schedule and arrangements for the celebrations.

Shandong authorities talk about the celebrations for the Cultural and Natural Heritage Day. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Under the theme ""healthy life"", this year's event will highlight ICH in the fields of traditional sports, medicine and cuisine, said Wang Tingqi, deputy director of the department.

Wang said that traditional Chinese medicine has played a big role in China's fight against the novel coronavirus while traditional health exercises such as tai chi, ""ba duan jin"" and ""wu qin xi"" can enhance the public's health.

According to Wang, the celebrations will mainly be staged online in youth-friendly formats due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, while ICH performances, exhibitions and experience activities will also take place.

A craftsman demonstrates how to make dough figurines at a night market. [File photo by Zhao Xiao/chinanews.com]

An ICH-themed shopping festival will be held for the first time to boost sales for cultural enterprises and ICH workshops, which have been hit hard by the pandemic.

Shandong will issue coupons worth 300,000 yuan ($42,494) to further stimulate consumption.

This year, Yantai will be the main host city for Shandong's celebrations, with the opening ceremony scheduled for June 13.

Haiyang yangko (a rural folk dance popular in Haiyang, Yantai) will be performed at the opening ceremony. [Photo/WeChat account: ytwlgw]"

"Wang Tingqi, deputy director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, will host a livestreaming on June 13 to boost consumption of local cultural creativity and Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) products.

The online sale is part of Shandong's celebrations for the Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, which falls on June 13 this year.

[Video/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

The livestreaming show will start at 9:50 am and last for 90 minutes on video apps such as Kuaishou and Douyin.

More than 30 ICH related products, such as Dong'e Ejiao (a gelatin used in traditional Chinese medicine to improve blood circulation and boost energy levels), Weifang kites, Zhoucun sesame seed cakes, ""Jiaodong bobo"" (steamed buns popular in the Jiaodong peninsula of Shandong province) and colored glaze products from Zibo will be promoted.

Also on sale will be cultural creative products from Confucius Museum, Qingzhou Museum and other museums and institutions.

Scan the QR code to watch the livestreaming show! [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"East China's Shandong province recently launched guidelines to facilitate the development of larger city clusters in the province in order to boost regional cooperation and coordinated development.

The province aims to build a global influential urban agglomeration on the Shandong Peninsula, foster Qingdao and Jinan into ""national center cities"" and cultivate three economic circles.

The provincial capital economic circle includes Jinan, the provincial capital, and six neighboring cities – Zibo, Tai'an, Liaocheng, Dezhou, Binzhou, and Dongying. The economic circle aims to build a demonstration area for ecological protection and high-quality development in the Yellow River Basin, a regional pilot area for the conversion of growth drivers, and an example in cultural cooperation and exchange.

The Jiaodong Economic Circle, including Qingdao, Yantai, Weihai, Weifang and Rizhao, is positioned as an important shipping and trade center, financial center, and a demonstration area for marine economy.

The southern Shandong economic circle includes Linyi, Zaozhuang, Jining and Heze. It is designed as a pilot area for rural revitalization and transformation development and an economic belt in the Huaihe River Basin.

Guan Zhaoquan, deputy director of the Shandong Development and Reform Commission, said that the construction of the three economic circles is a key task this year. It will promote regional infrastructure connectivity, joint governance of ecological and environmental protection, coordinated industrial innovation, integrated development of cultural and tourism and cooperation in opening up, all of which will boost the province's development."

"Yangko is a rural Chinese folk dance with a history dating back thousands of years. The folk dance is based on the sacrificial ceremony held when people prayed for a good harvest.

As time passed, the original dance evolved to include various artistic forms, including opera, acrobatics and martial arts, before coming what it is today.

Here are some popular forms of yangko in Shandong.

Guzi yangko dance

The Guzi yangko dance is one of the three main genres of yangko in Shandong. It is popular in Shanghe county in Jinan, the provincial capital and surrounding areas.

The dance, which is accompanied by the sounds of a small drum similar to a tambourine, is a large-scale affair that takes place during festival and holiday celebrations.

Villagers perform Guzi yangko in Shanghe county. [Photo/e23.cn]

The performing team usually comprises over 40 performers who take on different roles.

This dance was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2006.

Haiyang yangko dance

The Haiyang yangko dance is one of the three main genres of yangko in Shandong. It is popular in Haiyang, south of Shandong Peninsula.

Since its rise in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), local people have been performing it to celebrate festivals and important occasions.

The Haiyang yangko dance, a popular folk dance in Haiyang, Yantai [Photo/WeChat account: ytwlgw]

Its performance has a distinct local flavor and features grand rhythms to express the strength and resilience of working people.

It was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2006.

Jiaozhou yangko dance

The Jiaozhou yangko dance is one of the three main genres of yangko in Shandong. It is popular in Jiaozhou city, southwest of Shandong Peninsula.

Performers stage a Jiaozhou yangko dance. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The dance reflects the particular charm of the countryside and is valued for its aesthetics.

It was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2006.

Qixia bagua drum dance

The bagua drum dance (eight trigrams drum dance) is a Taoist dance that originated from Taoist ceremonies in Qixia, Shandong province.

It was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2008.

The Qixia bagua drum dance [Photo/Xinhua]

Chenguan flower drum dance

The flower drum dance is popular in Chenguan town in Dongying, Shanghe county in Jinan and its surrounding areas. It was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2008.

Dragon taige dance

Taige, a folk dance that originated in the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279), is performed with boys and girls in costumes standing high on plank platforms and other people carrying poles below parading on the streets.

Dragon taige combines dragon dance and taiga performance. It is popular in Sanguanmiao village in Linyi, Shandong province.

The performance is accompanied by gongs, drums and other percussion instruments.

It was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2011."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

As an important component of Chinese culinary art, Shandong Cuisine, also known as ""Lu Cai"" in Chinese, boasts a long history and influence.

Shandong Cuisine is representative of northern China's cooking and its technique has been widely absorbed in northeast China.

Shandong is a large peninsula surrounded by the sea, with the Yellow River meandering through the center. As a result, seafood is a major component of Shandong cuisine. In fact, Shandong's most famous dish is the sweet and sour carp. Locals say that this dish can only be considered authentic if the carp comes from the Yellow River.

Shandong cuisine is famous for its variety of ingredients and use of different cooking methods.

Click the video to learn about some representative dishes and snacks from Shandong Cuisine."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong, surrounded by the Bohai Sea and the Yellow Sea, has a 3,345-kilometer coastline. The province is home to many seaside resorts and offers several destinations for tourists to explore its coastal scenery.

Jointly produced by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government and the Shandong Radio and TV Station, This is Shandong is a series of short clips focusing on the traditional culture, natural landscapes and economic development of Shandong."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The eastern coastal province of Shandong is home to many islands. Watch this episode of This is Shandong to explore the picturesque landscapes and biological diversity of the Miaodao Archipelago in Yantai, the Hailu Island and the Liugong Island in Weihai. Jointly launched by the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government and the Shandong Radio and TV Station, This is Shandong is a series of short clips focusing on the traditional culture, natural landscape and economic development in Shandong."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong is home to many renowned mountains, such as the majestic Mount Tai, the picturesque Yi Mountain and Meng Mountain and the magnificent Laoshan Mountain.

Click this video to find more!

Jointly produced by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government and the Shandong Radio and TV Station, This is Shandong is a series of short clips focusing on the traditional culture, natural landscapes and economic development of Shandong."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Yellow River Estuary Ecotourism Area in Dongying, Shandong province is located in the delta where the Yellow River, China's mother river, joins the Bohai Sea.

Covering an area of 153,000 hectares, the area is now home to 1,626 types of wild animals, including 368 species of birds. It is also rich in flora and fauna, boasting 393 kinds of plants. Over 55 percent of the area is covered in vegetation."

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage signed a strategic cooperation framework agreement on June 3 via online channels to jointly promote cultural heritage protection.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage ink a strategic cooperation framework agreement on June 3 via video conference to jointly promote cultural heritage protection. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Shandong, with its long history and rich cultural heritage resources, is an important cradle of Chinese civilization and the birthplace of Confucius.

According to the agreement, the two sides will cooperate on matters including Shandong's cultural heritage protection and development strategy for the next ten years, regional cultural heritage protection planning, world cultural heritage declaration and management, and major cultural heritage protection projects."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

East China's Shandong province boasts a long history and rich culture, and is known as the hometown of Confucius.

Watch this episode of This is Shandong to catch a glimpse of the province's rich cultural legacy and historical sites.

Jointly produced by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government and the Shandong Radio and TV Station, This is Shandong is a series of short clips focusing on the traditional culture, natural landscapes, and economic development of Shandong."

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the Shandong branch of ICBC (Industrial and Commercial Bank of China) signed a strategic cooperation agreement on May 27 in Jinan, the provincial capital.

According to the agreement, the two sides will work together to support cultural and tourism enterprises in resuming production and operations, stimulate investment and consumption in the cultural and tourism sectors, and promote the high-quality development of related industries.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the ICBC Shandong branch sign a strategic cooperation agreement on May 27. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

The Shandong branch of ICBC will provide an additional 10 billion yuan ($1.4 billion) in credit to Shandong's cultural and tourism enterprises over the next three years.

The two sides will take a series of financial support measures to revive cultural and tourism industries hard-hit by the pandemic and help private businesses and small and micro companies overcome challenges posed by the epidemic.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism will improve the policy system for cultural, tourism and financial cooperation, help cultural and tourism enterprises alleviate difficulties, and help projects to set up in the area.

Participants attending the signing ceremony pose for a photo. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

The two sides will also strengthen cooperation in consumption, industrial innovation and upgrading, targeted poverty alleviation, demonstration areas and more. Major national planning projects such as the Yellow River cultural tourism belt and the Grand Canal national cultural park will be emphasized."

"Tourists walk along the city's old street at night. Nighttime consumption is booming in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Tourism and cultural sectors in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province, are booming, with a series of new and improved consumption venues popping up. The culture and tourism sectors, as well as related industries, have become an important part of the city's economic development, local officials said.

Mount Tai is not the only popular attraction in the city. Many visitors also enjoy the picturesque scenery of Xihu Lake, wander along the city's old streets at night, and experience fresh air in countryside.

A magnificent music fountain is seen at Mount Tai Xihu Lake Scenic Area, drawing much attraction of tourists. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Mount Tai Xihu Lake Scenic Area has drawn much attraction from tourists since it opened to the public on May 1 with its magnificent music fountain, light shows and pleasant summer views.

The lake covers a total area of 3.6 square kilometers, while the scenic area as a whole covers 10.5 square kilometers and is filled with charming ecological and natural landscapes. A total of 4.3 billion yuan ($604.45 million) has been invested to help upgrade the landscape and lakeside roads.

Mount Tai Xihu Lake Scenic Area is filled with charming ecological and natural landscapes. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Additionally, the Aegean Shopping Mall will soon open to the public to provide locals with a new place for recreation.

With a total area of 100,000 square meters, the shopping mall will become a commercial complex integrating shopping, catering, leisure, and entertainment. Several stores including a supermarket, cinema and gymnasium are currently being decorated.

In recent years, Tai'an has paid much more attention to the development of tourism and culture and ramped up efforts to promote its all-for-one-tourism integrating the tourism culture, sports and healthcare sectors.

In 2020, a total of 82 cultural and tourism projects are under construction or have been signed into effect in the city, with a total planned investment of 70.3 billion yuan, injecting new impetus into the development of the city's cultural and tourism industry.

The Aegean Shopping Mall will soon open to the public to provide locals a new place for recreation. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The Shandong delegation to the third session of the 13th National People's Congress held a plenary meeting in Beijing on May 21.

Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong, was selected as the head of the Shandong delegation to the third session of the 13th NPC, which will open at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on May 22.

Li Ganjie, deputy Party secretary and acting governor of Shandong, Chen Fukuan, member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee, and Yu Xiaoming, secretary of the leading Party member group of the Shandong Provincial People's Congress Standing Committee, were selected as deputy heads of the delegation.

At the meeting, the Shandong delegation subgroup list was approved and the names of the presidium and secretary-general of the third session of the 13th NPC (draft) and the agenda of the third session of the 13th NPC (draft) were deliberated on.

Motions to be submitted by the Shandong delegation to the third session of the 13th NPC were also discussed.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, delivers a speech at the meeting. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The Shandong delegation to the third session of the 13th National People's Congress holds a plenary meeting in Beijing on May 21. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Wang Lei, Secretary of the leading Party members group of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; Head of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; Director of Shandong Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration.

Li Guolin, first-grade inspector of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Zhou Xiaobo, first-grade inspector of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Hu Shangshan, member of the leading Party members group of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; Deputy Director of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Wang Tingqi, member of the leading Party members group of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; Deputy Director of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Zhang Kun, member of the leading Party members group of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; Deputy Director of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Zhang Mingchi, member of the leading Party members group of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; Deputy Director of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Guo Jinghua, member of the leading Party members group of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; leader of the discipline inspection and supervision group of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Sun Shu'e, member of the leading Party members group of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; Deputy Director of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Wang Chunsheng, second-grade inspector of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Fu Junhai, second-grade inspector of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism."

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism on May 19 launched the province's list of 600 quality cultural and tourism products after several selection rounds -- on the same day that also marked the annual China Tourism Day, according to local officials.

The list covers six sections: scenic spots, cultural performances, cultural venues, cuisine and food streets, featured hotels and homestays, as well as specialties and souvenirs.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism launches the province's list of 600 quality cultural and tourism products on May 19. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The province's 100 scenic spots made the list, including Mount Tai, Laoshan Mountain, Taierzhuang ancient town and Daming Lake, where tourists can explore Shandong's beautiful landscape.

Shandong's 100 operas, traditional opera, folk music and performances were recommended. They included Mount Tai puppetry, Lyu Opera, Shandong kuaishu -- a traditional Chinese story-telling art that originated in Shandong province more than 200 years ago -- and Shandong qinshu, a traditional narrative music which emphasizes a conversational style of singing.

The province's 100 specialties and cuisines such as Qixia apple, Zhoucun sesame seed cake, Dezhou braised chicken and Confucius family cuisine were also recommended.

Local officials said that Shandong will further strengthen marketing and the promotion of its rich cultural and tourism resources.

This year it will host the 2020 Shandong Tourism Development Conference and the First China International Cultural and Tourism Expo to promote Shandong to the world."

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism has launched a series of promotional campaigns to welcome the annual China Tourism Day, which falls on May 19, according to local officials.

The province's 16 cities launched a total 148 activities and 260 preferential policies to offer discounts and coupons at scenic spots, hotels, homestays and tourism enterprises to benefit tourists.

China Tourism Day was established in 2011 and falls on May 19 every year. 2020 marked the 10th time the day has been observed.

A total of 1,088 scenic spots and hotels in Shandong are offering free entrance or discounts to medical staff, to show respect and gratitude for their contribution and efforts in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

Binzhou city held an aerial photography invitational tournament from May 15 to 17 to celebrate the tourism day.

Taierzhuang ancient town, a popular scenic spot in Shandong's Zaozhuang city, organized a running activity to mark the day.

Laizhou, a county-level city in Yantai, held a rose carnival on May 19 to attract visitors, with flower appreciating and folk performance activities.

Qufu, the hometown of Confucius, launched study tours and cultural performances to celebrate the day.

The coastal city of Weihai organized a seven-day-long livestreaming event to promote its scenic spots, homestays, cultural legacies and more.

Yu Xiaoguang, director of the Shandong provincial tourism promotion center, gives a briefing on the activities to mark the annual China Tourism Day. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A running activity is held in Taierzhuang ancient town. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Laizhou, a county-level city in Yantai, hosts a rose carnival on May 19. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Qufu, the hometown of Confucius, launches study tours and cultural performances to mark the annual China Tourism Day. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Founded in 1999, Shandong Nanshan International Travel Agency provides services covering domestic tourism, entry-exit tourism and business travel. It is also engaged in arranging and organizing conferences and exhibitions, international and domestic conferences, and booking domestic and foreign hotels and railway tickets.

It was in the first batch of 5A travel agencies approved by Shandong provincial government.

The company has become a modern travel agency providing a combination of domestic and foreign tourism services.

Business: flight reservations, outbound tours, visas, train and ship ticket bookings, hotel bookings, and travel to Taiwan

License No: L-SD-CJ00046

Address: Nanshan Industrial Park, Longkou

Tel: +86-535-8616166"

"An online signing ceremony for foreign-funded projects was held in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province on May 11.

A total of 92 key projects to be built in the province were signed. The projects, which involve 18 countries and regions, including the United States, Japan, South Korea and Singapore, will receive a total investment of $9.97 billion.

An online ceremony for foreign-funded projects is held in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province on May 11. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The signed projects include high-end equipment manufacturing, new energy and new materials, modern high-efficiency agriculture, health care, modern finance and more, local officials said.

Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong, said that Shandong is gradually resuming normal economic and social activities while continuing to fight the epidemic. The province has been ramping up efforts to realize further opening-up and promote business and cooperation.

Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong, delivers a speech at the online ceremony. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Liu also highlighted the province's sound business environment, good industrial foundation and system, preferential policy measures as well as development strategies such as the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone, the Shandong comprehensive pilot zone to replace old economic growth drivers with new ones and the demonstration zone in Qingdao for economic collaboration with Shanghai Cooperation Organization members.

Senior officials of the province's 16 cities also took part in the online signing meeting.

A total of 92 key projects to be built in the province are signed. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Senior officials of the province's 16 cities also take part in the online ceremony. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Courts in Qingdao, Shandong province, heard 1,058 commercial cases involving overseas litigants valued at more than 8.8 billion yuan ($124 million) from 2016 to 2019, according to a white paper released on Monday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Courts in Qingdao, Shandong province, heard 1,058 commercial cases involving overseas litigants valued at more than 8.8 billion yuan ($124 million) from 2016 to 2019, according to a white paper released on May 11.

The cases involved 50 countries and regions, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and France. They also included 17 countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, such as Russia, Kazakhstan, Singapore, India and Thailand.

Thirty-six percent of the cases involved litigants in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. Cases involving South Korea and Japan accounted for 25 percent, and those involving the United States and European countries accounted for 18 percent.

The white paper, released by Qingdao Intermediate People's Court, provided statistics and in-depth analysis of commercial cases involving overseas litigants in recent years.

It said both the quantity and monetary value of these cases had increased year by year, with most of the cases involving typical commercial disputes between international business entities.

New types of cases in fields such as e-commerce and financial innovation have increased annually, a reflection of the rapid development of the city's open economy.

Disputes arising from overseas tourism contracts and insurance contracts have been on the rise, the white paper said.

With the rapid development of the service trade, it is important to strengthen awareness of risk prevention and to regulate service standards, it said."

"The Shandong Library [Photo/sdlib.com]

The Shandong Library, founded in 1909, the first year of the reign of the Xuantong Emperor in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), has a long history and rich collection of works.

The new Shandong Library is located in Jinan Hi-tech Development District and opened to the public in October 2002.

It is a comprehensive public library funded by the state and plays an important role in social science, education and culture. It is also an academic institution that provides reading and information reference services to the public.

The library provides services related to reading, lending, science and technology look-up, referencing, information look-up, translation, exhibitions, seminars, and other services through its rich collection."

"An online workshop is held by Shandong province and Tanzania to exchange prevention and treatment information related to COVID-19, May 12, 2020. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

An online workshop was held by Shandong province and Tanzania on Tuesday to exchange prevention and treatment information related to COVID-19.

Six Chinese medical experts working on the frontlines of the pandemic shared their experiences in preventing and treating patients with Tanzanian medical staff and officials from health authorities and hospitals. They also exchanged information on the current situation and features of the pandemic.

The Chinese experts came from major Shandong hospitals, including Shandong Provincial Hospital, Qilu Hospital of Shandong University, Shandong Provincial Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Shandong Provincial Chest Hospital and Shandong Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

An online workshop is held by Shandong province and Tanzania to exchange prevention and treatment information related to COVID-19, May 12, 2020. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""Facing the coronavirus, the world's common enemy, we'd like to strengthen medical communication and cooperation with Tanzania to stop the pandemic,"" said Li Yongsen, deputy head of the Foreign Affairs Office of Shandong.

Shandong and Tanzania have already cooperated substantially in the fields of healthcare, agriculture, manufacturing and infrastructure construction. Shandong has sent 25 medical teams to Tanzania since 1968 to help promote the health of local people, the provincial foreign affairs office said."

"Three cities in Shandong, namely Dongying, Weifang, and Linyi, were recently approved by the State Council to establish comprehensive cross-border e-commerce pilot zones.

Including the previously approved Qingdao, Weihai, Jinan, and Yantai, Shandong now has seven cities to build national comprehensive cross-border e-commerce pilot zones in a bid to transform foreign trade business processes and data sharing and promote the digital transformation and facilitation of trade supervision.

Containers are unloaded at Qingdao Port in Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

Shandong's cross-border e-commerce industry has been booming in recent years, with 136 provincial cross-border e-commerce entities and more than 10,000 traditional foreign trade and manufacturing enterprises using cross-border e-commerce to achieve new developments, said the Shandong Provincial Department of Commerce.

Since the beginning of this year, traditional foreign trade has been greatly affected by the novel coronavirus pandemic, but cross-border e-commerce and other new types of business have risen in response, contributing to the development of foreign trade.

Official statistics showed that in the first quarter of this year, Shandong's cross-border e-commerce was developing healthily, with related imports and exports valued at 740 million yuan ($104.65 million), up 114.6 percent year on year. Among them, exports totaled 560 million yuan, up 90.8 percent from the same period last year, while imports totaled 190 million yuan, up 242.9 percent year on year.

A total of 105 cities in China have been approved to build comprehensive cross-border e-commerce pilot zones to promote industrial transformation and upgrading, stabilize foreign trade and foreign investment, and promote high-quality development.

Industry insiders have said that cross-border e-commerce eliminates time and space constraints and cuts intermediate links and address information asymmetry between the supply and demand sides. It can also create new growth opportunities for countries, businesses, and consumer groups and help ensure that global supplies, industrial chains, and foreign trade operate smoothly.

""The establishment of comprehensive cross-border e-commerce pilot zones tangible benefits to enterprises,"" said Jing Jing, an official from the Dongying Bureau of Commerce.

The Dongying comprehensive bonded zone [Photo/dzwww.com]

According to Jing, enterprises in the zone will enjoy favorable policies related to taxes, clearance procedures, and more.

Last year, Dongying's foreign trade was valued at 162.91 billion yuan, ranking fourth among cities in the province. The city has a solid foundation for developing cross-border ecommerce with a relatively complete industrial chain and supply chain and strong transport links to global markets.

In recent years, cross-border e-commerce has been developing rapidly in Weifang. The city has 27 e-commerce platforms, nearly 200,000 e-commerce enterprises, and 260 e-commerce brands and trading platforms."

"With a tradition of hospitality that dates back 7,000 years, Shandong beckons travelers from all lands.

This is a stretch of magical and old land. Magnificent mountains and vast sea nurture her 7,000-year history of civilization. It is the place where Confucius was born, where Mount Tai rose skyward, where the Yellow River empties into the sea and where the Olympic Sailing Games took place. It is the land of ceremony and propriety with a perfect combination of ancient and modern civilizations. This is Shandong!

Hospitable place

Shandong has the tradition of being hospitable since ancient times. One of the defiing features of Shandong people, a number of whom are prototypical heroes in China, is being straightforward and great-hearted. That is fully demonstrated in those novel characters that are from Shandong, like Qin Qiong, Cheng Yaojin, Wu Song and Li Kui, all of stocky and imposing build, drinking liquor in big bowls, eating meat in big bites, and sticking together in both good and bad times.

The hospitality, boldness and generosity of Shandong people is also vividly and thoroughly shown in their drinking style, as ""when drinking with a bosom friend, a thousand cups will still be too little"", and ""drink till all's blue"".

Holy Land of Oriental culture

Located in the eastern part of China, Shandong is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilization. Yiyuan Man, from the same period of Peking Man, was discovered in Shandong. Home to the ancient states Qi and Lu, it was within the political and economic center of China from the pre-Qin period to the Northern Song Dynasty. The Great Wall of Qi State, 400 years earlier than the Great Wall of the Qin Dynasty, is well preserved, emitting the scent of Chinese civilization.

Confucius, the greatest educator and the founder of Confucianism, was born in Shandong. His thought has influenced the evolution the Chinese nation and culture, and his family lasted for more than 2,000 years in Shandong, which is a miracle in world history.

Mencius said, ""Having climbed the East Peak (of Mount Tai), Lu seemed small to Confucius. Having climbed to the top of Mount Tai, the whole world below seemed small.""

The towering spirit of Mount Tai is unparalleled among all the grand, peculiar, pretty and beautiful mountains in China. The tremendous body of Mount Tai crystallizes the essence of the mountain culture of China.

""It flows away endlessly day and night."" The Yellow River, mother river of China, embraces the ocean in Shandong after flowing 610 kilometers within the province. The estuary displays a spectacle like ""a yellow dragon jumping into the sea"".

Holiday paradise

When the heat wave of summer starts to harass the north and south of China, the beaches of Shandong peninsula turn out a fairyland that offers unrivaled opportunities to enjoy the breeze, take a sea bath, and eat the seafood.

Qingdao is a modern metropolis blessed with mountains and sea and dotted with red roofs and green trees against the blue sea and sky. It charms travelers with its annual beer festival. Qingdao gained the reputation as ""Sailing City"" as it hosted the Sailing Games of the 2008 Olympics.

Yantai is considered the world's seventh-largest grape coast. It is the fairyland on earth where the legend ""Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea"" took place.

Weihai lies at the easternmost tip of the Shandong Peninsula and faces the Korean Peninsula and Japanese archipelago across the sea. It is surrounded by mountains and water and is known as ""the most livable city"".

Rizhao is a new port city and distinguishes itself with blue sea, golden sand and water sports. It is an ideal place of leisure for holidaymakers who prefer unfrequented places.

A blessed land

The land is blessed with timehonored history, splendid culture, numerous celebrities and charming natural sceneries. The 17 cities with specific characteristics are embedded in the land like 17 sparkling pearls, forming the unique tourist map of Shandong.

With the joint efforts of all working on tourism, Shandong has developed 10 tourist destination brands attracting the people across the globe - Oriental Holy Land, Fairyland Coast, Mount Tai in Peace, Capital of Ancient Qi State, City of Springs under the Heaven, The Grand Canal Bathed in Confucianism, Hometown of Water Margin, Yellow River Estuary, Affectionate Yimeng and China Dinosaur City.

As Confucius said 2,500 years ago, ""Isn't it a great pleasure to have friends come from afar?""

This is a sincere invitation from the hospitable Shandong people to the world. Today, we welcome more friends from home and abroad to appreciate the unlimited charm of ""Friendly Shandong""."

Peonies are in full bloom in Heze, Shandong province. It's the best time to appreciate peonies. Dubbed the "peony capital of China" by the China Flower Association, Heze is China’s largest base of peony cultivation, research, sales and exports. It now has an area of 8,000 hectares growing more than 1,000 varieties of the flowers.

"Shandong Museum [Photo/sdmuseum.com]

Shandong Museum, founded in 1954, was the first provincially comprehensive topography museum in China.

The newly-founded main building in the museum is 74 meters high and occupies some 82,900 square meters. It boasts a larger space, better exhibition environment, an automated management system and advanced protection hardware.

The museum is a collection and exhibition center of Shandong province. Its collections cover the categories of history, nature and art and feature ceramics, bronzes, oracles, bamboo slips, inscriptions on pottery, clay and imperial seals, Han pictorial stones, paintings and calligraphy, and rare books.

The museum houses a collection of more than 210,000 historical artifacts. Highlights of the historical collection include relics from the Neolithic Dawenkou and Longshan cultures, bronze artifacts from the Shang (c.16th century-11th century BC) and Zhou (c.11th century-256 BC) dynasties, stone carvings from the Han Dynasty (206 BC to AD 220), and paintings from the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. The natural history section features fossils from Shanwang and a fossil skeleton of Shantungosaurus.

Address: No 11899, Jingshi Road, Jinan, Shandong province

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00 (Tuesday - Sunday, entry until 16:00)

Closed days: Closed on Mondays (except on national holidays)

Admission fee: Admission is free. Visitors should bring valid documents to receive tickets, such as an id card, senior person certificate, driving license, student card, or passport.

Notice: The latest official notice shall prevail."

"The exhibition featuring relics from the Qin Dynasty (221-207 BC) will open to the public at Shandong Museum on April 28. [Photo/Xinhua]

A special exhibition curated by the Shandong Museum and Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum will open at the Shandong Museum in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, on April 28.

The exhibition will feature over 140 cultural relics, including the famous Terracotta Warriors, which are known as the eighth wonder of the world, and hufu, a tiger-shaped tally issued to generals for troop deployment, showcasing the prosperity of the Qin Dynasty (221-207 BC) and its cultural diversity.

Shandong Museum, founded in 1954, is the first large-scale, provincial, integrated topographic museum in China."

"A special exhibition jointly curated by the Shandong Museum and Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum will open at the Shandong Museum in Jinan on April 28.

The exhibition will feature over 140 cultural relics with a number of top-level exhibits, including the famous Terracotta Warriors, which are known as the eighth wonder of the world, and hufu, a tiger-shaped tally issued to generals for troop deployment, that showcase the prosperity of the Qin dynasty (221-207 BC) and its integration with other cultures.

A poster for the exhibition [Photo/WeChat account: sdmuseum]Info for those interested in visiting:

Date: April 28 to Oct 8

Venue: Hall 4, First floor, Shandong Museum

Ticket price: 75 yuan ($9.89) for adults, 50 yuan for students

Scan the QR code with WeChat or the Ctrip app to buy tickets online (Ctrip is the country's largest online tour agency).

[Photo/WeChat account: sdmuseum]

Scan the QR code with WeChat to follow the Shandong Museum and receive more exhibition information."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The fourth Shandong Cultural Consumption Season kicked off on April 25, with a series of measures and coupons launched to boost consumption in the culture and tourism sectors, in a bid to offset some of the negative impacts of the novel coronavirus outbreak.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism has cooperated with 24 provincial departments and the province's 16 cities to roll out 2,137 activities.

Wang Lei, head of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, provides details about the fourth Shandong Cultural Consumption Season. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Local authorities said that cultural and tourism departments at all levels in the province have started to work with online platforms to offer a total of 138 million yuan ($19.49 million) in coupons to stimulate the consumer market.

The coupons can be used to buy a wide range of products and services, including art and cultural performances, tickets to scenic spot, cultural and creative products and tourist routes.

Shandong officials announce the start of the fourth Shandong Cultural Consumption Season and the ""Shandong people travel in Shandong"" tourism promotion event on April 25. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

More than 700 scenic spots, 1,352 cultural and tourism enterprises and 14 e-commerce platforms have joined the event.

The annual event, which was originally scheduled to be held in July, will last until October this year.

Local authorities have high hopes for the upcoming May Day holiday. The ""Shandong people travel in Shandong"" tourism promotion was also launched, offering 418 tourist routes and over 500 activities, discounts, and itinerary upgrades.

Visitors rest at a park in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

Officials said that the event will take full advantage of the role of cultural and tourism consumption in leading industrial transformation and upgrading.

Yu Xiaoguang, director of the Shandong provincial tourism promotion center, said that cultural venues and scenic spots will take strict epidemic prevention and control measures to ensure the safety of visitors.

Yu also reminded visitors to make travel plans and book tickets in advance, and pay attention to guidelines and announcements by scenic spots and culture and tourism departments.

The beautiful scenery of Taierzhuang ancient town in Shandong. Scenic spots have launched sizable discounts to attract visitors in the province. [Photo/WeChat account: tezgc2008]"

"East China's Shandong province is ramping up efforts to build a so-called ""beautiful countryside"" as well as ""scenic villages"", in an attempt to boost rural tourism and increase incomes for farmers.

Five provincial departments, including the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, the Shandong Provincial Department of Finance and the Shandong Provincial Department of Natural Resources, recently put together a framework for how to construct the scenic villages.

According to the framework, Shandong will oversee the construction of villages and make sure they are in accordance with the standards for national A-level scenic spots.

The province aims to build 1,000 scenic villages by the end of 2022, and will ensure that all tourism facilities meet 3A-level scenic spot standards.

Relying on their natural landscapes and resources, ""scenic villages"" will focus on the preservation and restoration of ancient villages, dwellings, and trees.

Shandong will strengthen tourism services and facilities such as parking lots, public conveniences, and tourist signs in ""scenic villages"" and promote tourism products.

The province will encourage farmers themselves to participate in the construction of ""scenic villages"", and explore new development models such as ""tourism company + specialized cooperative + farmers"", so as to increase villager incomes.

Shandong will also promote the integration of ""scenic villages"" with traditional rural industries such as agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishing, and cultivate new tourism formats such as rural tourism, study tourism, healthcare tourism, and creative agriculture.

The village memory hall in Xinfeng village in Tengzhou, Shandong province [Photo/sipaphoto.com]

A visitor enjoys the beautiful scenery in Nazhuang village in Yantai, Shandong province [Photo/sipaphoto.com]

An aerial photo taken on March 21 shows the beautiful rural landscape in Qingdao West Coast New Area. [Photo/sipaphoto.com]"

"Shandong Airlines recently transformed three of its narrow body aircraft－Boeing 737-800s－into freighter planes by removing the seats, in an attempt to ease supply shortages amid the epidemic.

China's international passenger flight sector is facing unprecedented challenges in the face of travel restrictions imposed around the world due to the ongoing pandemic.

About 70 percent of flights were canceled in the first quarter of the year, and the industry suffered cumulative losses of 39.82 billion yuan ($5.62 billion), according to data from the Civil Aviation Administration of China.

Conversely, the demand for cargo flights has been on the rise, which is why Shandong decided to convert its planes.

The move will boost freight transportation capacity, provide strong support for international logistics, and help airlines stem financial losses.

The cargo-only flights can carry up to 20 metric tons of freight, three times more than before, said Pan Xiao, deputy general manager of the freight department of Shandong Airlines.

After being refitted, the three planes will be used to deliver medical emergency supplies, daily necessities and express mail, and will provide crucial support to the international prevention and control of novel coronavirus pneumonia.

Workers remove seats on a Boeing 737-800 operated by Shandong Airlines, turning it into a freight plane, on April 16. [Photo by Cui Jinan/jinannews.com]

Seats are removed from a passenger flight operated by Shandong Airlines. [Photo by Cui Jinan/jinannews.com]

A Boeing 737-800 aircraft is refitted into a freighter plane to ease supply shortages amid the epidemic. [Photo by Cui Jinan/jinannews.com]"

"The Qixia apple in Yantai, Shandong province was recently included on a list of famous regional brands in Shandong province. Nine local brands made the list.

Since 2016, Yantai’s apples and cherries, Laiyang’s pears, and Haiyang’s persimmons were all included on the list of provincial brands, more than any other city in Shandong province. The city also tops Shandong in terms of number of provincial product brands, with 48.

Yantai is looking to cultivate and promote its local brands in an effort to become an international city with a strong industrial foundation.

The government is particularly focused on the promotion of its agricultural products, including wine, cherries, sea cucumbers, and Longkou fensi (vermicelli made from bean starch).

The city's fruit, wine, and sea products are extremely popular across China. Yantai apples, with a brand value of 14.14 billion yuan ($2.02 billion), have been the leading fruit brand in China for the past 11 years.

To stimulate local agricultural development, the city has been stressing the importance of innovation, quality improvement, and marketing platforms.

Farmers harvest cherries in Yantai. [Photo/WeChat account: yantaifabu]

Yantai apples have been the top fruit brand in China for the past 11 years. [Photo/WeChat account: yantaifabu]"

"Containers are unloaded from a ship at a port of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Feb 17, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

JINAN -- East China's Shandong province reported a 12-percent year-on-year growth in trade with Belt and Road (B&R) countries in the first quarter, despite a slight drop in its overall foreign trade due to the coronavirus epidemic, local authorities said Wednesday.

In the first quarter of this year, Shandong's total foreign trade value was 446.75 billion yuan (about $63 billion), down 3.6 percent from the same period last year.

Imports and exports of foreign-invested enterprises in Shandong dropped 17.7 percent to 104.39 billion yuan in the first quarter, while foreign trade of private enterprises in the province registered a 2.9-percent growth to 299.36 billion yuan, according to Shi Yong, deputy director of Qingdao Customs.

Shandong's trade with countries along the Belt and Road totaled 145.4 billion yuan, up 12 percent from the same period last year, accounting for 32.5 percent of its total foreign trade in the first quarter.

Zhang Yibing, deputy director of Jinan Customs, said that the increase was driven by strong growth in trade with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, smooth operation of China-Europe freight train services and the growth of bulk commodity imports.

""Trade with Belt and Road countries has become an important support for stable development of foreign trade in Shandong,"" said Zhang.

Though the coronavirus epidemic has brought some impact on the province's foreign trade, it has also forced the industrial and supply chains to seek upgrades, and brought new opportunities for sustained and high-quality development, according to Shi."

"Shandong Bangzi (Wooden Clapper Opera) is popular in the southwestern cities and rural areas of Shandong province. This particular style of opera, also known as ""Gaodiao Bangzi"", is commonplace in many Shandong cities, including Heze and Jining, and rural areas throughout Liaocheng and Linyi.

Before being unified under the name Shandong Bangzi in 1952, this opera was once called by different names in different regions.

In May 2006, Shandong Bangzi opera was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage for revealing regional culture and folk customs.

Shandong Bangzi is derived from Shan-Shaan Bangzi, which is native to Shanxi and Shaan'xi provinces. It was introduced to Shandong province over 300 years ago in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

Shandong was a major trade channel in China during the Qing Dynasty, and numerable Shanxi merchants, China's strongest merchant group at that time, settled in Shandong bringing the opera tradition with them.

Through years of development, the opera has been localized, featuring passionate tunes depicting Shandong's culture and folk customs. The catalogue of traditional Shandong Bangzi operas has reached some 600 pieces, with various qupai (the names of the tunes) and systematic tunes. During performance, the music is also meticulously selected between string or percussion music, based on different themes.

Shandong Bangzi Opera covers various topics, including dominating figures in various Chinese dynasties, heroic behaviors, famous wars, folk legends, love affairs and family ethics. Based on different themes, different dialogues will be performed, including rustic slang and noble speeches.

Around 1900, the first group of actresses appeared on stage in Shandong, popularizing the opera during that age.

Shandong Bangzi Qiangtouji  tells a family tragedy deriving from greed for money. Quarrelling brothers of the Zhang family pretend to be filial to their elder father, but perish from falling walls while digging for buried treasure. [Photo/tawh.gov.cn]

Shandong Bangzi Wufengling  tells of the legendry life of a female general living in the Tang Dynasty (618-907). Wu Fengying was first a rebel leader against Tang. After reuniting with her husband and sister during the wars, she finally pledged allegiance to the emperor of Tang. [Photo/tawh.gov.cn]

The opera is an indispensable part of the Chinese dramatic arts and has influenced many traditional operas, such as Laiwu Bangzi, Erjiaxian Opera, Yudongdiao, Xiangfu Opera, Shahe Opera and Jiangsu Bangzi.

Tai'an city of Shandong province has played a crucial role in the development and heritage of this kind of opera. The city has been home to a professional Shandong bangzi opera group since 1953. With a history of more than fifty years, the group has performed and created various plays. Some of the plays have even won provincial prizes and appeared on CCTV.

Shandong Bangzi Qilindai tells a love revenge story deriving from the betrayal of a hero named Yao Qinlin. Yao abandoned his former lover Zhang Caizhen and decided to marry his cousin for wealth, but was strangled by the ghost of Zhang who died during pregnancy. [Photo/tawh.gov.cn]"

"Containers are unloaded from a ship at a port of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Feb 17, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

Trade in East China's Shandong province with countries involved in the Belt and Road grew by 12 percent year-on-year in the first quarter to 145.4 billion yuan ($20.5 billion), according to Jinan Customs on Tuesday.

ASEAN was Shandong's largest trade partner during the first quarter, with imports and exports totaling 58.56 billion yuan, up 16.5 percent year-on-year, followed by Russia and India.

The resumption of China Railway Express, which operates international freight trains, bolstered the province's foreign trade, especially with countries involved in the Belt and Road. Trade generated through railway transportation with Belt and Road countries stood at 2.43 billion yuan, up 5 percent, customs data showed.

Growing trade volume with B&R countries was important for the stable development of Shandong's foreign trade in the first quarter, said Zhang Yibing, deputy head of Jinan Customs on Tuesday.

Influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, total foreign trade in Shandong dropped by 3.6 percent year-on-year in the first quarter to 446.75 billion yuan.

But foreign trade started to recover in March as production was widely resumed, and total trade volume grew by 4.2 percent in March, Customs' data showed."

"Yimeng Mountain, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

To introduce the picturesque tourist attractions in East China's Shandong province to the world, the China Tourism Office in Seoul and Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism teamed up in organizing an online exhibition, showcasing the abundant sightseeing resources in the region.

The 60 photographs on display center on the cultural and natural beauty in the springtime, and 10 of the images highlight the city of Linyi – a place where tourism has helped to lift people out of poverty.Taishan Mountain in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

The introductory video has also drawn attention from many people from South Korea. ""Shandong is such a beautiful place. The photos bring me a lot of joy at this challenging time amid the COVID-19 epidemic,"" Liang Wucheng, the tourism ambassador of Shandong province, said.

Wang Lei, head of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, said this exhibition has proven to be a success in online tourism promotion. The hospitable people in Shandong welcome visitors to enjoy the renowned Taishan Mountain and the hometown of Confucius.

The mouth of the Yellow River in Dongying, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Dai Shishuang, director of the China Tourism Office in Seoul, said that Shandong is the nearest Chinese province from South Korea. With further cooperation between the two sides, more South Koreans will be able to have a pleasant travel experience in Shandong.

May Fourth Square in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

The former residence of ancient Chinese calligrapher Wang Xizhi in the Jin dynasty (265-420), in Linyi, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

A 72-meter-tall statue of Confucius, the ancient Chinese philosopher and educator, in Qufu, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

An aerial view of Yimeng Mountain, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

An aerial view of Yimeng Mountain, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Taishan Mountain in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

A poster for the online exhibition on East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]"

"Customers select bracelets at a jewelry store in Suzhou, Jiangsu province, on Jan 31. [Photo by Wang Jiankang / For China Daily]

JINAN - Shandong Gold Mining Co Ltd, a major gold producer in China, reported a 25.91 percent growth in net profit attributable to shareholders of the listed company in 2019.

The company said Friday its net profit hit 1.29 billion yuan ($182.3 million) last year.

In 2019, its sales revenue reached 62.63 billion yuan, up 11.33 percent year-on-year. The growth resulted mainly from the rise in price and sales volume of gold.

The company, one of the largest gold producers in China, said its gold output is expected to be no less than 39.586 tons in 2020."

"Customs officials check a container truck loaded with international mail in Qingdao, Shandong province, on April 15. [Photo by Li Xuan/for chinadaily.com.cn]

A container truck loaded with international parcels departed from Qingdao, Shandong province, on Wednesday, heading for Yiwu, Zhejiang province.

The deliveries are expected to begin arriving in European countries and other countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative in less than two weeks on a China-Europe freight train that originates in Yiwu.

Qingdao customs officials said it was the start of regular parcel services to Europe from Shandong. It will take 13 days to take the parcels to Poland and then transfer them to 23 other European countries.

The sharp reduction of international flights due to the COVID-19 pandemic has brought big challenges for international parcel deliveries. Customs officials in Qingdao coordinated with their colleagues in Zhejiang to launch a new route with streamlined clearance procedures to help local exporters out of the dilemma.

The new route also helps logistics enterprises to optimize their international routes and provide varied services for international trade in Shandong and North China, the officials said."

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism issued measures to boost the ""Friendly Shandong"" trademark on April 15 by standardizing and strengthening its use and management. The regulations will go into effect on May 1 this year.

The regulations consist of seven chapters and 23 articles, including general provisions, trademark administration, scope and conditions of the trademark usage license, procedures for the trademark license, rights and obligations of the users of the trademark license, the protection of the exclusive right to use the trademark, and supplementary provisions.

The ""Friendly Shandong"" trademark [Photo/dzrb.dzng.com]

The Shandong tourism promotion center was entrusted by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism to manage the ""Friendly Shandong"" trademark.

According to the regulations, the trademark is authorized to be used in two situations -- free use for public welfare purposes and paid use for commercial purposes.

The Shandong tourism promotion center permits natural persons, legal persons and unincorporated organizations to use the trademark for public welfare purposes or for commercial purposes.

The regulations forbid violations of the exclusive right of the trademark, including licensing others to use the trademark without the permission of the Shandong tourism promotion center, as well as violations of the provisions of the licensing contract, such as selling goods that infringe upon the exclusive right of the trademark or forging the trademark without authorization."

"Port employees help a cargo vessel dock at the container terminal of Qingdao Port, Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

The accelerating spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought major shockwaves to the global economy and international trade and investment. Authorities at all levels in Shandong province have been ramping up efforts to help local foreign trade enterprises secure orders and customers.

E-Alliance Group is one of the largest foreign trade enterprises in Weihai Nanhai New District, and about 80 percent of its business involves partners in Japan and South Korea.

Due to the pandemic, the company's orders fell sharply in February.

""When we resumed operations in February, we were receiving only three to four thousand export orders a day. We couldn't get any money from our customers in time due to the epidemic,"" said Huang Shanzhi, deputy manager of the company.

The lack of capital made business unsustainable. After learning about the situation, the management committee of the Weihai Nanhai New District coordinated and helped the company apply for a bank loan of 10 million yuan ($1.41 million), and at the same time tried to put in place an industrial support fund of more than 5.7 million yuan.

""The fund has not only relieved some of our financial pressure we're experiencing, but also helped us to further expand our market,"" said Huang.

The company's orders soon rebounded to more than 10,000 orders per day thanks to the financial support.

The management committee of Weihai Nanhai New District has launched tax, finance and other relevant policies to provide support for enterprises in getting through this difficult period.

In the first quarter of the year, the district's import and export volume reached 2.7 billion yuan, up nearly 30 percent from the same period last year.

Kenli district in Dongying provides accurate services for foreign trade enterprises through big data analysis.

The district has listed all 53 local foreign trade enterprises in its database and has established a dynamic tracking mechanism to provide more accurate and intelligent services.

Thanks to the logistics ""green channel"" opened up for enterprises by the local commercial and transportation departments, the goods produced by Baofeng Auto Parts Co were able to be transported as usual during the epidemic prevention and control period, and were delivered on time to European and American customers.

""In March, the company's exports are expected to reach 42 million yuan, up 46 percent year on year. In the first quarter of the year, its exports are expected to reach 118 million yuan, up 51 percent year on year,"" said Zhang Xuechun, assistant general manager of Baofeng Auto Parts Co.

""We have also established a grid service management system to help local enterprises resume operations and resolve issues such as labor shortages, logistical problems, and supply shortages amid the epidemic,"" said Yang Lihai, deputy director of commerce in Kenli district.

According to Yang, from January to March this year, the total foreign trade in Kenli district reached 2.29 billion yuan, among which exports totaled 930 million yuan, up 9.8 percent year on year."

"Taishan Mountain in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/sipaphoto.com]

A total of 506 Class-A tourist attractions in East China's Shandong province had resumed operations by Sunday as the COVID-19 epidemic recedes, said local authorities Monday.

Among them, 11 top-rated Class-A attractions including Taishan Mountain are now open to the public, more than 90 percent of the total, said the information office of the provincial government at a press conference.

Visitors at the Qingdao Forest Wildlife World, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/sipaphoto.com]

The province has rolled out a series of measures such as online ticket bookings and free voice guides as part of its efforts to prevent close contact among tourists.

Shandong will also issue vouchers worth 138 million yuan (about $19.57 million) to boost tourism by late April, said local authorities."

"The fourth Shandong Culture and Tourism Consumption Season, which was originally scheduled to be held in July, will open this month instead in order to boost the culture and tourism sectors, which have been hit hard by the outbreak.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism held a news conference on April 13 to provide details about the event.

Officials from the department said that the event will begin in mid or late April and will distribute consumption coupons worth about 138 million yuan ($19.58 million) across the province to benefit more customers.

Local officials said that the event will take full advantage of the role of cultural and tourism consumption in leading industrial transformation and upgrading.

The coupons can be used to buy a wide range of products and services, including art and cultural performances, scenic spot tickets, cultural and creative products and special tourist routes.

To date, more than 700 scenic spots, over 600 culture enterprises, over 700 tourism enterprises and over 30 e-commerce platforms have joined the event, and over 2,000 activities related to tourism, culture, entertainment and more will be launched.

Museums, art galleries, and libraries throughout the province will launch activities both online and offline to attract more visitors, and the province's 16 cities will also launch a series of cultural and tourism activities.

In addition, in order to boost rural revitalization, this year the event will offer special coupons for 58 cultural and tourism enterprises and products from poverty-stricken areas. Special e-commerce stores will also be set up to help them expand their market and spread brand awareness."

"[Photo/VCG]

The Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Ministry of Public Security said on Monday they have dispatched a joint team to East China's Shandong province to supervise the investigation of a high-profile case in which a former executive is suspected of sexually assaulting his ""adopted"" teenage daughter.

The case triggered nationwide attention and anger last week after Chinese media reported a man, surnamed Bao, is suspected of sexually assaulting his ""adopted"" teenage daughter in about 2016 when she was 14 years old. Bao has been removed from his positions as senior official with two companies.

The woman also said she has been calling police in Shandong since last year, but the case was withdrawn after it was first filed in April 2019, according to a report by South Reviews, a Guangdong-based magazine, on Sunday.

But Bao, who served as a vice-president in charge of legal affairs at Yangtai-based Jereh Oilfield Services Group and an independent non-executive director of ZTE Corporation, denied the adoption relationship and said the woman falsified the facts, the report said.

On Thursday night, the Zhifu branch of the Yantai Public Security Bureau in Shandong posted a statement on Sina Weibo, saying they received a woman's report on April 8, 2019, in which she said she had been sexually abused several times by Bao over the previous three years.

""We filed the case the next day and asked prosecutors to help investigate,"" the branch said in the statement. ""But after the investigation, we didn't think the evidence was enough to prove Bao committed a crime, so we withdrew the case on April 26 last year.""

""We decided to reopen on Oct 9, 2019 after the woman and her lawyer provided new clues and we also had conducted lots of research on the case,"" it said, adding the investigation related to the second case filing is still ongoing and evidence is being collected.

Meanwhile, Jereh Oilfield Service Group fired Bao, while Bao resigned from ZTE Corporation.

On Saturday, the public security bureau in Yantai also posted a statement, clarifying it has established a special work team to thoroughly inspect how the Zhifu branch handled the case at its early stage and respond to hot issues questions from the public.

According to public information and ZTE's 2018 annual report, Bao, who was born in 1972, worked as a lawyer, partner and senior legal adviser in Beijing and Tianjin, and in New York and California for a couple of years."

"Li Ganjie, minister of ecology and environment, speaks at a news conference celebrating the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, on Sept 29, 2019. [Photo/www.chinanews.com]

Li Ganjie, minister of ecology and environment, has been transferred to East China's Shandong province as deputy secretary of the Shandong Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China, according to a report from the province's official newspaper, Dazhong Daily.

The 55-year-old also was appointed as a member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Shandong Committee. The appointment was announced in a Standing Committee meeting on Thursday morning, the report said.

Li began to work as head of the defunct Ministry of Environmental Protection in June 2017, which was reshuffled into the current Ministry of Ecology and Environment in March 2018.

Since graduating from the country's prestigious Tsinghua University with a master's degree in nuclear engineering in 1989, Li has spent most of his time working in the country's top environmental apparatus though he also worked as deputy Party chief of North China's Hebei province for about half a year from 2016 to 2017.

Before 2006, he was mainly in posts related to nuclear management."

"A fully-automated terminal at Qingdao Port is busy dealing with containers on Sunday. [Photo by Zhang Jingang/Chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong Port Group reported considerable increases in both cargo and containers from January to March this year, despite the coronavirus epidemic.

During the first quarter, cargo throughput was 340 million metric tons, an increase of 5.1 percent from the same period last year, while container throughput reached 7.14 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units), a 4 percent increase.

The port group attributed the progress to its integration efforts since 2019.

In August the group integrated major facilities within Shandong province, including ports at Qingdao, Yantai, Rizhao and the Bohai Bay, aiming to optimize resources and reduce unnecessary competition.

The group has launched five new international container routes heading to Japan and Southeast Asia, in an effort to accelerate the creation of a worldwide logistics network.

Moreover, the group enhanced its connection with inland cities, including Xi'an, Shaanxi province, and Lanzhou, Gansu province, and with cities such as Jinan and Zaozhuang.

Despite the impact by the COVID-19 epidemic, Shandong Port Group saw impressive increases in both cargo and container throughputs from January to March. [Photo by Zhang Jingang/Chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism shall implement the guidelines, policies, decisions and arrangements made by the Communist Party of China Central Committee on culture and tourism, and fulfill the work requirements of the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism shall unwaveringly uphold the centralized, unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee on culture and tourism.

Duties related to the cultural system, cultural undertakings and cultural industries:

1) Implement laws, regulations, guidelines and policies concerning culture and tourism; draft relevant local regulations and government regulations; formulate provincial policies and measures on culture and tourism.

2) Make overall plans for the development of cultural undertakings, cultural industries, tourism and cultural relic protection in Shandong; formulate development plans and organize their implementation, promote the integrated development of cultural and tourism industries and related industries, and promote the reformation of cultural and tourism systems and mechanisms.

3) Administer major cultural and tourism activities throughout the province; guide the construction of key cultural and tourism facilities; and guide and promote all-for-one tourism.

4) Guide and manage provincial literary and artistic undertakings; guide artistic creation and production; support representative and exemplary literary and artistic works that embody core socialist values; promote the development of all types and varieties of art.

5) Be responsible for the development of provincial public cultural undertakings; improve the construction system for public cultural services and public tourism services; expand cultural programs to benefit the public; promote the standardization and equalization of basic public cultural services.

6) Guide and promote the innovation and development of provincial culture and tourism science and technology; promote informatization and standardization in the cultural and tourism industries. 7) Undertake work related to the promotion of excellent traditional culture; take the lead in drafting the provincial plan for the promotion of excellent traditional culture; carry out Qilu cultural inheritance and innovation project together with relevant departments; be responsible for the protection, inheritance, popularization, promotion and revitalization of intangible cultural heritage and outstanding ethnic and folk culture.

8) Make overall plans for the cultural and tourism industries of the province; organize and implement the survey, excavation, protection and utilization of cultural and tourism resources to promote the development of cultural and tourism sectors; be responsible for the overall planning and organization of cultural and creative industries and boutique tourism industries in the transition from old growth drivers to new ones.

9) Formulate provincial tourism marketing strategy and organize its implementation; promote the overall image of ""Friendly Shandong"" and the construction of tourism brand system.

10) Guide the development of provincial cultural and tourism markets; supervise the operation of cultural and tourism markets; promote the development of a credit system for cultural and tourism industries and standardize cultural and tourism markets.

11) Administer and guide work related to cultural relics; examine, apply and administer key cultural relic protection units at or above the provincial level, guide the protection of world cultural and natural heritage, historic and cultural cities (districts, towns and villages), scenic spots and historic sites, and religious facilities in the province.

12) Deal with major issues concerning the protection of cultural relics; put forward professional opinions on major and important cases concerning the handling of theft, destruction and smuggling of cultural relics; guide the safety management of cultural relics in the province.

13) Manage the social dispersion of cultural relics, the cultural relics market, cultural relics entry and exit with relevant departments; identify cultural relics in circulation, inbound and outbound and any criminal acts on behalf of the state regulatory authorities for the import and export of cultural relics.

14) Administer and guide archaeological work in the province; examine and administer archaeological exploration and excavation projects within and in water areas of Shandong; administer funds for the protection of cultural relics and related projects; guide and coordinate the management, protection, rescue, excavation, research, utilization and promotion of provincial cultural relics. 15) Guide comprehensive law enforcement in the provincial cultural market; be responsible for the guidance and supervision of administrative law enforcement in the fields of culture, cultural relics, publishing, radio and television, film and tourism market; supervise the handling of major and important cases; investigate and handle major trans-regional cases, and related work.

16) Guide and administer provincial cultural and tourism exchanges, cooperation, and promotion with foreign countries, as well as with China’s Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan; organize large-scale cultural and tourism exchanges with foreign countries and with China’s Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan; strengthen the international marketing of the province's cultural and tourism industries.

17) Complete other tasks assigned by the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and the Shandong Provincial Government.

18) Transform government functions. In accordance with the decisions and plans of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on the transformation of government functions, advancing reform to delegate power, streamlining administration and optimizing government services as well as implementing the requirements of the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and the Shandong Provincial Government to deepen the reform of the ""Run Once at Most"" campaign, the department will promote the transformation of government functions, deepen the streamlining of administration and delegating power to the lower levels, and innovate ways to regulate cultural and tourism sectors and improve services. The department will strengthen the integrated development of culture and tourism, carry forward fine traditional Chinese culture, promote cultural exchanges, improve the tourism brand image of ""Friendly Shandong"" and the soft power of Qilu culture to better meet people's ever-growing needs for a better life. The department will strengthen policy guidance and planning, integrate various cultural and tourism resources, improve the system of modern cultural and tourism industries, and stimulate cultural innovation across the whole of society."

"A wind tower, 50 meters high and weighing 700 tons, is erected in the sea near Haiyang, Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Construction started on an offshore wind power project in Haiyang, Shandong province on March 31. It is currently the largest and most expensive project of its kind in the province.

The project, with a total investment of 5.2 billion yuan ($737.6 million), will be completed in 24 months. A total of 58 sets of wind power generators will be built in the sea area, ranging from 29 to 32 kilometers off the coast. The projected is being supported by China Huaneng Group.

Haiyang, located along the coast of the Yellow Sea, boasts a 212-kilometer coastline and a sea area of 1,829 square kilometers, making it highly suitable for the development of wind power."

"The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism has donated a batch of masks to its overseas tourism partners to help fight COVID-19.

Local officials said that the masks had been shipped on March 30.

According to the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, 87 tourism partners in 19 countries and regions have donated medical supplies to Huanggang, Hubei province, among the cities hardest-hit by the novel coronavirus outbreak, expressing faith in China's efforts to fight the epidemic.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism purchases masks to donate to its overseas tourism partners. [Photo/dzwww.com]

In China, important progress has been made in the prevention and control of the epidemic, and economic and social order is quickly being restored, but outside China the epidemic is spreading at an alarming rate.

""The virus recognizes no borders, and neither does love or friendship. To express our gratitude to overseas partners and support them in fighting the epidemic, the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism raised funds to purchase epidemic prevention materials such as masks to donate to overseas partners to help them fight the COVID-19 epidemic,"" said an official from the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

""The selflessness displayed during this outbreak has given hope to the idea of a shared future for mankind. We build stronger friendships and lay a more solid foundation of mutual trust for further cooperation in the future."""

"Shandong artists have taken up their brushes to depict stories of ordinary people from all walks of life in the fight against the novel coronavirus pneumonia and in their efforts to return to work.

A set of works by Guo Zhenkun from the Shandong Artists Association depicts people working on production lines as businesses reopen throughout China and the epidemic begins to subside. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A set of works by Nie Xiaojun from the Shandong Artists Association depicts technicians examining gas and power supply equipment to ensure a smooth resumption of production. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

""Out of Huoshenshan Hospital, We're Discharged"", by Liu Shujun from the Shandong Art Academy. Huoshenshan Hospital specializes in treating seriously ill patients infected with COVID-19 in Wuhan, Hubei province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A painting by Li Chaojun from the Shandong Artists Association depicts the country fighting the epidemic and resuming production. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

""Return Home"", by Guo Yi of the Shandong University of Art & Design depicts medics dispatched to aid Hubei in the fight against the novel coronavirus finally returning home. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A painting by Cai Qiaoling of the Shandong University of Art & Design symbolizes the idea that the virus was defeated as a result of cooperation among everyone. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A painting by Zong Ya of the Shandong University of Art & Design depicts medical assistance teams departing from Wuhan, Hubei province, the nation's epicenter of the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak, as the epidemic subsides in the city. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

Some medical workers sent from East China's Shandong province to help fight the novel coronavirus outbreak in Central China's Hubei province reunited with their family members after working there for 40 days and finishing a 14-day quarantine. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

"Provincial-level cultural venues, including the Shandong Library, the Shandong Museum, the Shandong Provincial Cultural Center and the Shandong Art Museum, reopened to the public on March 31 after being closed for almost two months due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Wang Xinhua, a Shandong Library regular, arrived before opening time.

""I'm a regular at the library. It's s my spiritual paradise. I was looking forward to its reopening,"" Wang said.

Visitors maintain a safe distance from each other as they wait for the opening of the Shandong Library on March 31. [Photo/sdnews.com.cn]

Another avid reader arrived with a suitcase of books to return.

""I borrowed a lot of books before the Spring Festival holiday and I finished reading them on Lantern Festival,"" said the 33-year-old resident surnamed Han.

Han said that she started to read digital books via the library's online channels during the lockdown.

A man browses books at the Shandong Library on March 31. [Photo/sdnews.com.cn]

""We are requiring people to make reservations ahead of time and limiting the number of visitors to avoid overcrowding. Our employees will disinfect seats and public areas several times a day,"" said a staff member at the Shandong Library, adding that visitors are also required to have their temperatures taken and information registered before entering.

The returned books will be put on the shelves only after being disinfected, while readers can use the self-service book sterilization machine to ensure the books they borrow are virus-free.

Readers can still access digital reading resources through the official websites, WeChat account and Weibo account of Shandong Library. The library has also waived all overdue charges for physical books and periodicals during the epidemic period.

A visitor enjoys the painting and calligraphy exhibition at the Shandong Provincial Cultural Center on March 31. [Photo/sdnews.com.cn]

The Shandong Provincial Cultural Center welcomed its first group of visitors at 9 o'clock. It has launched two themed exhibitions featuring ancient rubbings and works by famous calligraphers and painters.

""I saw on its official WeChat account that the cultural center will host a painting and calligraphy exhibition featuring works by prominent artists, so I came to enjoy the masterpieces,"" said a local resident surnamed Jiao.

According to Zhao Xintian, vice director of the Shandong Provincial Cultural Center, they are also preparing a number of cultural and art performances, which will be launched through online video-streaming platforms.

Visitors enjoy an exhibition at the Shandong Museum on March 31. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"East China's Shandong province has issued a plan to preserve its Grand Canal culture.

A zone will be built involving 18 counties and districts in five cities located along the canal, namely Dezhou, Liaocheng, Tai'an, Jining and Zaozhuang.

During the zone's 16-year (2020-2035) construction  process, the province will work to protect the canal's cultural heritage, improve its water resources, build a green ecological corridor and promote culture and tourism.

A boat in the Taierzhuang section of the Grand Canal in Zaozhuang, Shandong province. The Grand Canal, the longest artificial waterway in the world, was inscribed onto the World Heritage list on June 22, 2014. [Photo/Xinhua]

The Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal was built in ancient times and is the world's earliest andlongest canal.

It runs through Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei province, Shandong province, Jiangsu province and Zhejiang province and is an important link between the Yangtze River valley and the Yellow River valley, as well as other minor river systems.

The canal has a history of more than 2,500 years. Over 1,000 km of the canal was recognized as a world heritage site in 2014.

The canal's Shandong section is 643 km long. Of the total 58 historical sites along the Grand Canal, 15 of them are in Shandong province."

"While the United Kingdom is experiencing a spreading epidemic caused by the novel coronavirus, East China's Shandong province has offered a helping hand by sending an expert team, sharing its experience and supplying aid.

A 15-member working group from the province departed from the Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport on the morning of March 28.

This is the first time that Shandong has sent an aid team to support a foreign country in coping with the virus.

The team will provide vital information and training in protective measures that could be critical to the safety of doctors and nurses who are most exposed to the virus. They will also provide technical support to UK in judging the epidemic situation and offer China's experience and strategies in epidemic prevention and control to health departments in the country to contain the spread of the epidemic.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, went to the airport to see the team off.

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the UK had risen to 14,590 by March 28 at 3:27 pm Beijing time. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on March 27 became the first major world leader to test positive for the coronavirus.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, delivers a speech during the send-off at Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A working team from Shandong province sets out for the United Kingdom on March 28 to help contain the novel coronavirus pandemic. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The working team members pose for a photo at Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The Shandong team is going to join the United Kingdom in the fight against the virus. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The working team members pose for a photo at the airport. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The working group from Shandong province departs from the Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport on the morning of March 28. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Members of a joint mission team dispatched by Shandong province to the United Kingdom held posters bearing ""We will get through together"" at Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport on Saturday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue for chinadaily.com.cn]

Fifteen members of a joint mission team dispatched by Shandong province left for the United Kingdom on Saturday to help Chinese in the UK contain the novel coronavirus.

The joint mission team is an action after the call of President Xi Jinping for stronger care and support for Chinese citizens overseas, Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, said when he saw the team off.

Bearing the faith of ""We will get through together"", the team will introduce the efficient ways of preventing and controlling the virus to Chinese in the UK and provide them with guidance and consultation service.

The team is also carrying a full load of anti-epidemic materials to the UK.

Anti-epidemic materials are loaded to the plane taking the joint mission team dispatched by Shandong province to the UK on Saturday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue for chinadaily.com.cn]

Workers load the protective materials to the plane on Saturday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Shandong is one of the most beautiful parts in China to visit in spring!

Watch the video to discover the best scenic areas of 16 cities in the province."

"As the threat posed by the novel coronavirus in Shandong decreases, the province has begun making efforts to restore the temporarily paralyzed culture and tourism industry, with more scenic attractions and cultural institutions reopening and travel restrictions being loosened.

Eight major cultural venues in Jinan, the provincial capital, reopened on March 25. At 9 o'clock that morning, the Jinan Library welcomed its first group of visitors. A digital screen inside the library displays real-time information on the number of people in the library and offers tips on how to prevent infection.

After being open for just one hour, the library welcomed 348 visitors.

""We are requiring people to make reservations and limiting the number of visitors to avoid overcrowding. Seats in the study rooms have been moved farther apart. Our employees will disinfect seats and public areas several times a day,"" said Zhang Fan, a senior director from the Jinan Library.

Scenic attractions in Shandong are taking similar measures, as cross-infection is still a danger. They are requiring visitors to give their real names and information about their contacts and whereabouts. They are also using big data technology to keep track of tourists and limit visitor numbers.

Visitors admire cherry blossoms at Five Dragon Pool Park in Jinan. [Photo/WeChat account: jnslyj]

Visitors must have their temperatures checked upon arrival, maintain a distance of no less than 1.5 meters from other people, and wear masks throughout the duration of their stays.

The Mount Tai Scenic Area, one of Shandong's most popular tourist destinations, reopened to the public on March 21.

In recent days, the number of visitors to the scenic area has averaged about 4,000 per day, according to the Mount Tai Scenic Area Management Committee.

""We calculated that two-thirds of the tourists came from other cities in Shandong, while one-third were Tai'an locals. There are few tourists from other provinces.""

Jinan Wild World reopened to the public on March 20.

""The zoo has just reopened and not many people want to travel. Traffic is down about 70 percent from the same period last year,"" said a worker at Jinan Wild World.

""However, things are gradually improving. The average daily number of visitors reached more than 1,000 over the weekend.""

A mother and her child look at an elephant at Jinan Wild World on March 20. [Photo/jinannews.com]

The worker said that animals have been fed well and are being housed in sanitized areas.

Many scenic spots have launched promotions and discounts to attract more tourists.

For example, Taierzhuang ancient town in Zaozhuang, which will reopen on March 28, has introduced a number of preferential measures.

""We are offering free admission and 50 percent discounts on cruises for Chinese medical workers, extending the validity of travel cards that expire after Jan 24, 2020 by 70 days, and lowering ticket prices from 160 yuan ($22.48) per person to 120 yuan per person during the extended 'touring Shandong in winter' promotion,"" said Huang Xiaoli, a senior manager of the scenic area.

An aerial view of Taierzhuang ancient town in Zaozhuang, Shandong province [Photo/WeChat account: tezgc2008]

Culture and tourism authorities throughout Shandong have also launched measures to stimulate the market and facilitate the development of the cultural and tourism industries.

The province will launch a series of cultural activities, including the ""Fourth Cultural Consumption Season"" and the ""Friendly Shandong"" themed tourism promotion."

"Artists in East China's Shandong province have created dozens of paintings depicting the fight against the novel coronavirus pneumonia.

The paintings not only show their strong support for and solidarity with the country in its fight against the epidemic, but also pay homage to medical workers who are playing a vital role in the battle.

A Chinese ink painting titled ""Guardian of Love"" by Zhang Wang of the Shandong Art Museum [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

""Messenger of Spring"" by Shan Wei of the Shandong Artists Association [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

""Warm Spring and Blooming Flowers"" by Xia Xiaohui of Shandong University of Arts [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A painting created by Fang Min from the Shandong Artists Association depicts people in Hubei province expressing their gratitude to the people of Shandong for their help and support in the fight against the epidemic. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A painting by Tu Hailong, a Shandong artist, shows medical professionals fighting on the front lines of the battle against the epidemic. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A painting by Shandong artist Chan Xiaodong portrays a doctor in the fight against the novel coronavirus. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A painting created by Yang Guofang, an artist from Jining, Shandong, depicts family members missing medics fighting on the front lines. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

""Warmth of the Sun"", created by Zhu Gangming from Weifang, Shandong, depicts medical workers in protective suits treating patients suffering from the coronavirus disease in an intensive care unit. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"East China's Shandong province has rolled out 20 measures to boost cultural and tourism-related industries that were hit hard by the novel coronavirus epidemic and to help companies in the sectors resume operations.

""The epidemic has led to substantial losses in the cultural and tourism sectors. It may take longer for the tourism industry to recover,"" said Sun Shu'e, deputy director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

Sun said that the province will focus on solving the current operating difficulties faced by enterprises, but also consider the entire year or longer for tourism market recovery and industrial development.

""In the name of preventing imported cases and avoiding a rebound of the outbreak and to ensure all our efforts thus far are not in vain, we have released measures to reduce pressure on enterprises, stimulate the vitality of the market, and strengthen industrial development.""

Sun said that culture and tourism departments at all levels throughout the province will also launch measures to assist severely affected enterprises and boost market recovery.

Five Dragon Pool Park in Jinan, Shandong province, is among a growing number of tourism spots that are reopening as the epidemic subsides across China. [Photo/Xinhua]

As the virus becomes a lower threat throughout the province, cultural and tourism enterprises and service-oriented businesses are being allowed to gradually reopen according to their security-risk level and business category.

At the same time, they are being urged to take stringent epidemic-control measures when resuming operations.

The Shandong Provincial Government is encouraging A-level tourist attractions throughout the province to offer free admission to medical workers as a gesture of gratitude for their efforts and sacrifices on the frontlines.

In addition, a special fund will be used to provide awards and subsidies for the creation, distribution, and projection of film and television programs.

The Shandong Provincial Government is also encouraging banks and financial institutions to reduce interest rates and adjust repayment periods for hard-hit enterprises and key construction projects such as cultural creativity parks and rural tourism facilities.

Lastly, a development fund of 150 million yuan ($21.24 million) will be used to help hard-hit enterprises, upgrade cultural facilities, and introduce more cultural and tourism construction projects."

"A nurse adjusts an Extra-Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation machine, or ECMO, used by a critically ill patient in the temporary ICU ward at Wuhan Red Cross Hospital on Feb 28, 2020. [Photo by Chen Zhuo/For chinadaily.com.cn]

A team in Shandong University has recently developed an Extra-Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation machine at a lower cost than foreign brands that is expected to move into mass production amid the country's efforts in fighting novel coronavirus pneumonia, according to the university.

The new ECMO machine is small and boasts an efficient pump system. Its design lowers the risk of hemolysis-the destruction of red blood cells-and promotes easy blood flow, said Liu Shuqin, a member of the research team.

Performance data show it meets global standards, she said.

An ECMO machine, a kind of life support device, may be used during life-threatening conditions such as severe lung damage from an infection or to treat shock after a massive heart attack. It has played a crucial role in treating novel coronavirus pneumonia patients who are in critical condition.

A 16-member team consisting of researchers from fields including fluid engineering, emergency medicine, cardiac surgery, critical care, electrical engineering and systems and control engineering spent more than 10 years developing the new machine.

They successfully developed the ECMO pump with full magnetic levitation technology.

Working as an artificial heart, the pump is one of two crucial parts. The other is the artificial lung that has already been produced in China.

The team has applied for three patents for their invention, two of which have been approved, Liu said.

Currently, the ECMO market in China is dominated by one US brand and two German brands, said Liu, adding there are around 400 ECMO machines in use in China.

""If the ECMO equipment we developed could be produced in batches, the price would be around 1 million yuan ($142,000) for each machine… lower than that of imported ECMO machines that usually cost 1.5 million yuan to 2 million yuan,"" Liu said.

""We hope producers of medical machines could join hands with us to put our invention into production as soon as possible,"" she said.

""It's progress to develop the pump. It's not easy,"" said Gan Yiwu, chairman of Biobase Group, a manufacturer of laboratory equipment and medical equipment based in Shandong province.

""There is still a long way to go before putting it into clinical use.""

The number of patients who need to use ECMO in China is increasing, and the epidemic will create higher demands for it, Gan said.

The Guangdong Medical Devices Quality Surveillance and Test Institute will organize experts to conduct research on the ECMO sector to make plans on how to integrate domestic resources for production, according to a meeting held by the institute."

"Professor Liu Shuqin shows how an ECMO machine works at Shandong University Qianfo Mountain campus on March 9. [Photo/jinannews]

A 16-member team from Shandong University has developed an extracorporeal membrane oxygenation machine (ECMO) which can temporarily function as people's hearts and lungs.

The device is considered the last resort for critically-ill coronavirus patients. Its applications could further push down the mortality rate of the disease, said Liu Shuqin, a professor and member of the R&D team at SDU.

Staff members of the team, who are professionals in electrical engineering, control engineering, cardiac surgery, and intensive care medicine, worked more than 10 years to develop the first ECMO prototype machine in China.

The machine adopts full magnetic suspension technology and is small in size, with a small hemolysis and large pressure buffer.

The machine has been used in animals and ranks among the best in the world in terms of performance.

ECMO bypasses the damaged lungs and pumps oxygen into the blood from outside the body, giving the lungs time to recover while stabilizing the patient's condition, Liu introduced.

At present, ECMO devices in China are all imported. One device costs 1.5 million ($214,175.56) to 2 million yuan, and the cost of starting consumables is generally 40,000 to 60,000 yuan.

""The price for one of our independently-developed ECMO machines is only about one million yuan, and the cost of consumables is expected to be reduced to 30,000 yuan,"" Liu said.

ECMO is a high-end medical machine with around just 400 sets in China. There are about 20 in Shandong province, including four at Qilu Hospital of Shandong University.

SDU applied for three invention patents for the ECMO prototype machine, which is expected to eventually replace imported equipment.

Liu expects that the prototype machine will soon enter mass production, which would give Chinese patients access to the domestic version.

The ECMO development team at SDU has undertaken many national and provincial research projects related to magnetic suspension artificial heart pumps, including four items used at the China National Natural Science Foundation."

"Volunteers disinfect passenger buses in Tengzhou, Shandong province on March 4, 2020, in preparation for the resumption of bus services in the province. [Photo/Xinhua]

Cities in Shandong province are set to resume inter-city and village passenger bus services starting on Wednesday, as part of the province's effort to restore economic and social development amid the prevention and control of COVID-19, according to the Shandong Department of Transport.

Inter-provincial passenger bus services whose departures and arrivals are in low-risk regions for COVID-19 will also resume gradually.

Measures to prevent the spread of the epidemic apply to passenger bus services. For example, vehicles need to be disinfected frequently and long-distance buses must have at least two drivers."

"East China's Shandong province will reopen its scenic spots, hotels, restaurants, cinemas, museums, and more in regions with a lower risk of infection, local authorities said.

The Shandong Provincial People's Government has issued guidelines on developing cultural and tourism sectors as the novel coronavirus becomes a lower threat in the province.

Cultural and tourism enterprises and service-oriented businesses will be allowed to gradually reopen according to their security-risk level and business category.

The Shandong Provincial Government has also urged scenic areas, hotels, museums, cinemas, and more to adopt stringent epidemic-control measures when resuming operations.

It has urged tourism and cultural spots to open online ticketing channels, adopt electronic payment systems, implement crowd control measures, and more to avoid the spread of infection. All workers are required to wear protective gear, and all visitors must have their temperatures taken before entering.

Shandong will also encourage scenic spots, museums, art galleries, and more to extend their evening hours to fuel the nighttime economy.

In addition, development funds will be allocated to help hard-hit enterprises, upgrade cultural facilities, and introduce more cultural and tourism construction projects."

"Aerial photo taken on March 5, 2020 shows villagers sowing seeds at a family farm in Zhuji village of Jiaozhou, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

Shandong, a province known for its superior agriculture, has started orderly yet busy farming work across the province.

Thursday marked the Awakening of Insects solar term. It is a key time of year for spring agricultural activities, according to the traditional Chinese calendar that divides the solar cycle into 24 periods.

At Shouguang, a major vegetable production base in China, farmers tend strawberries in greenhouses at Yujia village.

""Years ago, farmers plowed and watered crops around the Awakening of Insects. But now, thanks to the greenhouses that keep the plants living at a constant temperature, farmers are busy almost every day,"" said Gao Xiangpeng, Party secretary of the village, adding the epidemic has barely affected their work.

In Yantai and Weihai, dozens of farmers are busy trimming apple trees; in Zaozhuang, farmers tend to pomegranate trees; and in Jining, farmers select good ginger in a basement 8 meters underground.

The busy agricultural activities have attracted netizens to express their feelings.

""The epidemic will surely collapse as the Awakening of Insects comes,"" said an online user named Danbo Ningjing.

Some online users were impressed by the highly efficient machinery used in farming work.

Amid the prevention and control of novel coronavirus pneumonia, such machinery - including drones, self-propelled agricultural machines and automatic driving tractors - is being widely adopted, along with information technology.

On Thursday, automated tractors equipped with the Beidou navigation system were used to plow the field at Pingdu, rolling out smooth, even ridges.

""The tractor can plow over 6 hectares of field a day, equal to the work of more than 70 farmers,"" said Gao Hongyun, a tractor driver at Wanggezhuang village at Pingdu.

At Xuzhuang village in Heze, 10 machines were spraying pesticide over a large expanse of wheat on Thursday to help rid the wheat of disease caused by pests.

The machine can spray pesticide evenly over 40 hectares of farmland a day.

It barely harms wheat while it passes over, according to Sun Fengguang, an agricultural technician at an agricultural technique station in Heze.

To reduce the chances of spreading the coronavirus, agricultural experts have adopted an online channel to help farmers with agricultural problems instead of going to the fields in person.

Fu Minzong, an agricultural technician in Lijin county, Dongying, zoomed in on two pictures of cucumber seedlings that a farmer in the county had sent to his WeChat. Fu observed that there were white dots on the leaves and told the farmer he needed to give the seedlings some medicine.

Shandong is scheduled to plant over 2 million hectares of vegetables and crops in the spring.

Agricultural materials, including seeds, pesticides and fertilizer are ready to ensure spring farming work, according to the Shandong Provincial Department of Agricultural and Rural Affairs."

"[Photo/VCG]

The Ministry of Justice has urged prisons nationwide to rectify their management practices after a recent investigation has led to 12 current and former officials and workers in the justice and prison system of Shandong province being held responsible for dozens of prisoners and staff becoming infected with the novel coronavirus.

Eleven of the 12 people have been placed under investigation for possible serious violations of disciplines and laws, the provincial anti-corruption watchdog said on Wednesday.

They include Xie Weijun, former head of the Shandong Justice Department and the Prison Administration of Shandong; Liu Baoshan, former head of Rencheng Prison; and Chen Minhua, a Rencheng correctional officer.

Among the 11 people, three are also being investigated by prosecutors for possible dereliction of duty.

Further, Chen and another prison worker, Dai Guanghui, are being investigated by the local public security bureau on suspicion of disturbing the prevention and control work of infectious diseases, the release said.

On Feb 21, more than 200 confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus pneumonia were reported in the prison in Jining, Shandong province. Later that day, a team led by the Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the Communist Party of China Central Committee visited the prison to look into the cluster infection.

A statement issued by the team on Wednesday concluded that the outbreak in the prison happened after a person transmitted the virus to a correctional officer and a worker at the prison.

That person had driven to Jining from Wuhan, Hubei province, the center of the epidemic, on Jan 21.

The statement did not disclose the person's identity.

The team said that former prison officials failed to implement outbreak control requirements mandated by the central leadership and engaged in excessive bureaucracy and formalism.

The officials also failed to recognize the importance of the measures put in place to prevent the spread of the disease.

Due to lax management, the correctional officer carried the virus inside the prison, causing it to quickly spread among inmates, the team said.

It pointed out that the Shandong Justice Department, as the regulator for the provincial prison management, neglected its duty to guide and supervise the epidemic control in the Rencheng prison.

The Ministry of Justice, the nation's top regulator for prison management, said on Wednesday that it will address loopholes and problems exposed in the case.

The ministry noted the Rencheng case reflected a neglect of duty, saying it has urged prisons across the country to improve their management and governance capability.

By Feb 27, a total of 555 confirmed cases had been reported in five prisons in three provinces－Shandong, Zhejiang and Hubei. So far, no fatalities have been reported."

"An employee of a South Korean steel company works at the company's subsidiary in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province.[Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

Local help in work resumption at 32 auto parts makers receives big praise

China's timely measures for orderly resumption of work at foreign and domestic businesses have helped sustain the global supply chain, industry experts from South Korea said on Wednesday.

The comments came after the Ministry of Commerce said last week that despite the novel coronavirus epidemic, the local government in Shandong had helped 32 South Korean auto parts companies in the province restart work before Feb 15, thereby stabilizing the global automotive supply chain.

In addition to automobile businesses, the South Korean government branches and companies including South Korea's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy and Samsung Group have sent letters to the Shandong provincial government lauding its efforts to help stabilize the supply chains.

Choi Chang-woon, general manager of TS Technology Co Ltd, a Dezhou-based wire harness manufacturer, said because all its products are exported to South Korea, the timely work resumption with sufficient industrial and epidemic prevention materials in Shandong will help the company supply parts to companies such as Hyundai Motor and (its affiliate) Kia Motors on time.

With an order book running till May this year, the firm currently produces 15,000 sets of wire harnesses every day and has nearly 40 percent market share in South Korea.

To prevent possible infection from the virus, Choi said governments from different towns have helped the company to arrange its workers' transportation and accommodation to solve practical issues.

China's measures will not only lift the role of the national economy as the world factory and market, but also ease pressure on multinationals and add stability to the global supply chain, as well as boost the global economy, he said. The ministry said local governments have been working to support work resumption in key industries. Nearly all key foreign companies in the traditional export-oriented provinces and cites such as Shanghai, Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Guangdong have resumed operation.

In the long run, the outbreak's impact on China's supply chain and production chain is temporary, said Huo Jianguo, a researcher at the China Center for International Economic Exchanges in Beijing.

""China's vital position in manufacturing, services and the retail sector won't change. The outbreak has not caused a notable shift in the consumption trend, supply and production chains,"" he said.

Despite the temporary impact of the novel coronavirus epidemic, foreign direct investment from nonfinancial sectors into the Chinese mainland grew by 4 percent year-on-year to 87.57 billion yuan ($12.54 billion) in January, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

In January, 3,485 new foreign-funded enterprises were established across China, while FDI increased by 157.1 percent in South Korea, 50.2 percent in Japan and 40.6 percent in Singapore, data showed.

As the epidemic is largely a regional and short-term event, Charles Kao, China branch president of South Korean cosmetics group Amorepacific, said China's robust market, diversified channels and flexible business transition will help mitigate the outbreak impact.

""Speaking of digitalization, we normally put it in the context of a growing proportion in business (against traditional tech or services)－and since the outbreak, digitalization is poised to get even better,"" he said.

Consumers have turned to online services including ""cloud-based"" technologies and services for their daily supplies. The surging orders have also helped boost new derivative services such as ""contactless delivery"", all of which indicate that consumer confidence is largely steady, he said."

"Artists in Shandong have created a variety of works, including songs, paintings, sculptures, and photographs, that tell the stories of ordinary people from all walks of life fighting against the novel coronavirus epidemic.

Let's enjoy some of their works together!

A piece created by Gong Yongxian depicts medics signing up to support Wuhan, the city hardest hit by the epidemic in China. [Photo/WeChat account: sdsmsjxh]

""The dawn in the night"", created by Wang Xianming, conveys the artist's respect and admiration for medical workers on the frontlines. [Photo/WeChat account: sdsmsjxh]

A torn-paper work by Liu Xianfeng from Liaocheng, Shandong province depicts the courage and determination of medical personnel fighting on the frontlines. [Photo/WeChat account: gh\_c0bac4c422ac]

Clay figurines created by Liu Jinchao from Zaozhuang, Shandong province depict people disinfecting streets in a village. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Clay figurines created by Liu Jinchao depict a child getting his temperature taken in a rural area. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

The Huanghe (Yellow Crane) Tower, a landmark of Wuhan, Hubei province, is shown in a piece entitled ""Hope"" by Wang Shunzheng of the Shandong University of Arts. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"[Photo/VCG]

Eleven former officials and current staff members with the justice and prison systems in East China's Shandong province have been placed under investigation for possible serious violations of disciplines and laws, the provincial anti-corruption watchdog said on Wednesday.

Those under the probe include Xie Weijun, former head of the Shandong Justice Department and the Prison Administration of Shandong, Liu Baoshan, former head of Rencheng Prison, and Chen Minhua, a correctional officer at the prison, according to a news release from the provincial Discipline Inspection Commission and Supervisory Commission.

Among the 11 people, three also have been probed by prosecutors for possible dereliction of duty, the release said.

In addition, Chen and another worker at the prison, Dai Guanghui, have been probed by local public security bureau for allegedly disturbing prevention and control work of infectious diseases, it added.

All the investigations came after more than 200 confirmed infections of the novel coronavirus pneumonia had been reported in the prison in Jining, Shandong, on Feb 21. Later on the same day, a team led by the Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the Communist Party of China Central Committee went to inspect the outbreak situation in the prison.

A statement issued by the team on Wednesday clarified that the prison outbreak happened after a person transmitted the virus to a police officer and a worker at the prison after the person drove to Jining from Wuhan, on Jan 21.

The team said the prison's management team failed to implement epidemic control requirements given by the central leadership, with serious bureaucracy and formalism. They had little awareness on preventing the disease in this particular type of facility.

Due to poor management, the police officer carried the virus and entered the ward, causing the disease to quickly spread among prisoners, according to the team.

The Shandong Justice Department, as the regulator for provincial prison management, neglected its duty on supervising and guiding epidemic control in Rencheng Prison, it said.

The country's prison management authorities are urged to learn a lesson from the prison outbreak and to lift the capability of prison governance.

On Wednesday, the Ministry of Justice, the nation's top regulator for prison management, said it will address loopholes and problems exposed in the case.

The ministry noted the case in Rencheng Prison reflected neglect of duty and irresponsibility in work, adding it has ordered prisons to fix the problems to ensure a final victory in the battle against the virus."

"A drone is used to spray pesticide over wheat in East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

High-efficient machinery and drones are being widely used in spring farming work in East China's Shandong province amid prevention and control of the COVID-19 outbreak.

On Saturday, more than 10 self-propelled agricultural machines sprayed pesticide over a large expanse of wheat in Bandi town, Dingtao district of Heze.

Self-propelled agricultural machines spray pesticide over a large expanse of wheat in Bandi town, Dingtao district of Heze in East China's Shandong province. [Photo by Liang Shaoting for chinadaily.com.cn]

""The machine can spray pesticide evenly over 40 hectares of farming land a day. In addition, it barely harms wheat while it passes over,"" said Sun Fengguang, head of the town's agricultural technique station.

In Shandong, a province featuringagricultural advantages, farmershave completed planting 153,000 hectares of potatoes and other vegetables growing in greenhouses.

Self-propelled agricultural machines spray pesticide over a large expanse of wheat in Bandi town, Dingtao district of Hezein East China's Shandong province. [Photo by Liang Shaoting for chinadaily.com.cn]

The province is scheduled to plant over 2 million hectares of vegetables and crops in the spring.

Agricultural materials, including seeds, pesticides and fertilizer, are ready to ensure spring farming work, according to the Shandong Provincial Department of Agricultural and Rural Affairs."

"The Yantai area of the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone [Photo/WeChat Account:yantaifabu]

The Yantai area of the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone (FTZ) announced its inauguration in Yantai, Shandong province on Aug 31, 2019.

The area covers an area of 29.99 square kilometers and is located in the Yantai Economic and Technological Development Zone. It consists of the Sino-Korea (Yantai) Industrial Park and the west part of the Yantai Bonded Port Area.

It will focus on the development of high-end equipment manufacturing, new materials, new generations of information technology, energy conservation, biomedicine, and producer services.

Yantai is expected to develop the new area into a pilot zone for trade and investment cooperation between China and South Korea and to serve as an intelligent marine manufacturing center.

Industrial foundation

The Yantai area of the Shandong FTZ is located in the Yantai Economic and Technological Development Zone, which provides it with a strong industrial foundation. The zone is home to more than 3,000 industrial companies involved in manufacturing, electronic information, biological medicine, chemical new materials, and intelligent manufacturing.

The zone is also home to 124 financial institutions and has set up 174 funds totaling more than 130 billion yuan ($18.65 billion). It has 215 scientific and technological innovation platforms, including 130 above the provincial level, and seven international five-star hotels, including Sheraton, Hilton, and Marriott.

Regional advantages

The Yantai area of the Shandong FTZ is situated in the south of the Bohai Economic Rim area, one of China's largest economic circles. It faces Liaodong peninsula, Japan, North Korea, and South Korea across the sea. It is also located at the central point between Beijing, Shanghai, and Seoul."

"Visitors can now explore the rich culture and marvelous landscapes of Shandong through live streaming platforms, as the epidemic has forced many Chinese people to stay indoors.

A sweeping view from Laoshan Mountain in Laoshan district of Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdta12301]

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism has worked with a number of media outlets and live video streaming platforms to launch online tours of its scenic spots, intangible cultural heritage items and traditional culture.

From Feb 25 to March 15, the live streams will start at 11:00 and run for one hour. Many of the province’s cities, iconic tourist attractions and cultural traditions will be highlighted.

Scan the QR codes to access the official live-streaming accounts on different platforms:

From left to right: official live-streaming accounts on Douyin, Kuaishou, Weishi and Yizhibo [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A quiz will also be held during this period. Participants will have the chance to win scenic spot tickets, hotel cash coupons, quality home stay experience vouchers and other gifts. Scan the QR code via WeChat to join:

The majestic Mount Tai in East China's Shandong province [Photo/WeChat account: sdta12301]"

"Hubert Aiwanger, vice-governor of the southern German state of Bavaria, recently sent his regards on behalf of the state government to East China's Shandong province in a video.

He said the state shares Shandong's concerns about the ongoing novel coronavirus outbreak and has confidence that the province will soon overcome the crisis.

Over the past 33 years, Shandong and Bavaria have maintained a close friendship and made significant achievements in economic cooperation. He expressed hope that regular cultural and economic exchange between the two sides can resume soon.

In the video, he also praised the quick and effective measures Shandong has taken to curb the epidemic and expressed his solidarity with the province.

Shandong and Bavaria officially established sister-province relations in 1987. The two sides signed a consensus to strengthen the strategic relationship in 2017, which marked the 30th anniversary of the partnership."

Yantai Museum烟台市博物馆 Addresses: 61 South Street, Zhifu district, Yantai (new site)257 South Street, Zhifu district, Yantai (old site)Hours: 9:00-16:00Closed days: Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)General admission: Free (passport required for entry) [Photo sd-aiguo.com] Yantai Museum is a comprehensive modern museum showcasing the city's culture, history and art. The museum has two sites. The original one, popularly known as the Fujian Hall, which is also a national key cultural relic site, presents Yantai’s local folk culture and Mazu culture. The new site, with an area of 17,000 square meters, is located in the western end of the Yantai Culture Square and provides visitors with a place to get to know Yantai’s history and culture. The museum houses 60,000 pieces and sets of artworks in 24 categories including painting and calligraphy, porcelain, pottery, bronze ware, jade carving, embroidery, and historical archives. Permanent exhibitions feature calligraphy, painting, porcelain and unearthed cultural relics from the Ming (1368-1644) and the Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. They not only showcase Chinese ancient culture and traditional arts but also reflect local customs, historical development and folk culture in the Jiaodong area.

"Qingdao Customs officers carry out in-flight epidemic control and prevention measures. [Photo by Liu Xuewen/chinadaily.com.cn]

Yantai city in Shandong province will provide free nucleic acid tests for all travelers arriving from abroad amid efforts to prevent and control novel coronavirus pneumonia, the city’s government said on Wednesday afternoon.

As an increasing number of travelers are coming to Yantai from neighboring countries, the city will strengthen prevention and control measures, it said.

The city established a joint prevention and control mechanism at Yantai International Airport on Tuesday to examine travelers’ health conditions and has set up special channels for them, according to the Information Office of the People’s Government of Yantai.

After health exams, people having a negative result from nucleic acid tests will be sent to their destinations by designated vehicles. They are advised to stay at home for further observation.

People testing positive will be sent to local designated hospitals for further checks and treatment, it said.

The city has also arranged teams in other Shandong province cities of Qingdao and Weihai to carry out the same measures."

"An online video-featured signing meeting for foreign-funded projects was held in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province on Tuesday.

A total of 66 projects to be built in the province were signed on an online platform. The projects, involving 13 countries and regions, including the Republic of Korea, Japan and Singapore, will attract contractual foreign capital of $4.27 billion.

""A batch of major projects across Shandong started construction days before. These moves consolidate our confidence and strength in winning the fight against the epidemic, as well as boosting economic and social development to realize further opening-up and achieve win-win results between us and our partners,"" said Liu Jiayi, Party secretary of Shandong."

"East China's Shandong province recently donated 100 ICU beds to designated medical institutions in Huanggang, one of the hardest hit cities in Hubei province, amid the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak, local authorities said.

Shandong officials said that the ICU ward beds will be used to treat critically ill patients in Huanggang.

According to local authorities, 20 ICU beds worth 32 million yuan ($4.56 million) will be allocated to Dabie Mountain Regional Medical Center, a new center affiliated with the Huanggang Central Hospital that began providing services for novel coronavirus patients on Jan 28. It is known as Huanggang’s version of Xiaotangshan Hospital.

Xiaotangshan Hospital, located in Beijing, was an ""instant infirmary"" hastily built to treat patients infected with severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003.

Another 80 ICU beds worth nearly 100 million yuan will be added to designated hospitals in Huanggang's counties (county-level cities) of Tuanfeng, Xishui, Qichun, Wuxue and Huangmei, as well as the Huanggang Maternity and Child Healthcare Hospital.

In addition, Shandong also donated five negative pressure ambulances to designated hospitals in Tuanfeng, Xishui, Qichun, Wuxue and Huangmei.

Shandong has already sent 12 medical teams consisting of over 1,700 members, including medical personnel, psychologists, and disease control experts, to aid Hubei. Shandong medical teams are mainly working in hospitals in Wuhan, Huanggang, Ezhou, and other cities."

"The Association for Sri Lanka-China Social and Cultural Cooperation holds an activity to convey the Sri Lankan people's support for the people of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Shandong People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries has been striving to keep foreigners in Shandong province informed about prevention and control measures against the virus.

The association has set up several 24-hour hotlines for foreigners to offer them advice on how to protect themselves from the virus.

The association did its best to keep in contact with partnered international organizations and has received a number of telegrams from such organizations expressing support and solidarity.

Some of the organizations have also held activities to support locals in Shandong province, according to the secretariat of the association.

""As a doctor of medicine, I have been very concerned about the fight against the coronavirus in China. I hope Japan and China can further cooperation and jointly prevent the spread of the virus,"" said Wakisaka Nobuhisa, the province's citizen of honor and head of a Japanese association for friendship with Chinese people, in a letter.

In addition, the Association for Sri Lanka-China Social and Cultural Cooperation recently held an activity to convey the Sri Lankan people's support for the people of Shandong.

Indrananda Abeysekara, president of the association, said: ""We all wish the people of Shandong well and hope they stay healthy throughout their fight against the virus."""

"""We found a fatal flaw in the design of our protective clothing – there are no pockets for us carry paper and pens,"" said Li Xingguo, a member of the Shandong medical team that is helping fight the novel coronavirus pneumonia in Hubei province.

""We need to carry around a pen and paper to constantly record data about patients,"" said Li, adding that records of clinical nursing work are very important, and heart rates, respiration, blood pressure, blood oxygen, and other data all directly affect the type of treatment patients will receive.

Li and his colleagues thus decided to create ""pockets"" made out of empty bottles of disinfectant laced with infusion tubing.

""I drew a picture of Peppa Pig on mine to remind me of my kid. It's badly drawn, but I hoped the patients would get a kick out of it,"" Li said, ""It turns out that most people think it's kind of cute.""

Li's colleagues eventually upgraded the pocket to a ""pouch"" by using shoe shine cloth, ties, and other materials from the hotels they are staying in. Many workers got creative by drawing and writing on their pouches.

Li Xingguo, a member of the Shandong medical team on the frontlines of the fight against the virus in Hubei province, shows off his pocket made from an empty bottle of disinfectant. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Pouches made by Shandong medical personnel [Photo/dzwww.com]

Shandong medical workers show off their pouches made from items they found in their hotels. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Many of the workers spruced up their pouches with drawings and words. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Shandong medical workers show off their handmade pouches in an isolation ward in Hubei province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Shandong medical workers show off their handmade pouches. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Shandong province, an economic powerhouse in East China, has been providing strong support in the fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic while also promoting economic and social development.

Last year, the total value of Shandong's imports and exports exceeded 2 trillion yuan ($285.2 billion) for the first time. This year the province will continue to expand foreign trade and international cooperation as well as promote high-quality development through a series of favorable policies and national strategies.

A series of high-speed high-horsepower engines are currently being assembled at a workshop operated by Weichai Group, one of the largest heavy truck and component developers in the Shandong city of Weifang. Overseas rush orders prompted Weichai to restore full production on Jan 27.

In January alone, Weichai sold 90,000 engines, up as much as 20 percent year on year.

Employees works on a production line at a factory operated by Weichai Group. [Photo/dzwww.com]

""Trade frictions and protectionism have cast a shadow over global trade; nevertheless, Weichai has pledged to expand the foreign market under the Belt and Road Initiative,"" said Tan Xuguang, chairman of Weichai Group, adding that the company's sales to India, Italy, Romania and other countries increased by more than 200 percent last year.

With Weichai setting a strong example, countries in the Belt and Road, ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), South America and other emerging markets have become engines for the growth of Shandong's foreign trade.

Official data showed that in 2019, Shandong's imports and exports to all major markets except the United States continued to grow, among which the total trade value with Belt and Road countries hit 603.09 billion yuan, up 15.9 percent.

""87 of the world's top 100 tire companies have partnered with us,"" said Zhang Gongyun, chairman of Himile Group in Shandong's Gaomi city.

Zhang said that his company has seen a surge in European orders since last year and is operating at full capacity. He added that they have built warehouses in Europe which offer faster delivery than their local counterparts.

Shandong is also playing a significant role in supporting the nation's economic upgrading. The region became the first comprehensive pilot zone in China to replace old economic growth drivers with new ones. Efforts began to show results in the structure of its export products."

"LevePower, a machinery company based in Dezhou, Shandong province has donated three disinfection robots to Huanggang, a city in Hubei province and one of the hardest hit by the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak.

""The robots can operate continuously and can be remotely operated at a distance of up to 500 meters, protecting operating personnel and saving on time and disinfectant,"" said Chen Liang, a manager at LevePower.

The robots now serve the Dabie Mountain Regional Medical Center, a new center affiliated with the Huanggang Central Hospital that began providing services for novel coronavirus patients on Jan 28. It is known as Huanggang's version of Xiaotangshan Hospital.

Xiaotangshan Hospital, located in Beijing, was an ""instant infirmary"" hastily built to treat patients infected with severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003.

Technicians at LevePower debug disinfection robots in Dezhou, Shandong province on Feb 16. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Disinfection robots donated by LevePower arrive in Huanggang on Feb 19. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A disinfection robot at work outside the Dabie Mountain Regional Medical Center. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Disinfection robots are now being used in Huanggang. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A disinfection robot donated by LevePower sprays the streets of Huanggang on Feb 19. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"An international student at a Shandong university takes part in an online Chinese language lesson during the outbreak. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A number of universities in Shandong province are holding online classes to help international students continue with their studies during the virus outbreak.

For example, international students in a Chinese language master degree’s program at Shandong Normal University have formed a QQ chat group for teachers and students to discuss Chinese language learning.

The School of International Education at Shandong Polytechnic College also established a teaching team specializing in online teaching to design an online curriculum focusing both on Chinese language learning and the respective majors of international students.

Jining Medical University initially planned for four weeks of online teaching for its international students.

Courses that cannot be held on the internet, such as physical education and topographic anatomy, will be dealt with after the official start of the semester.

Liaocheng University focused on providing psychological counseling services for international students while holding online lessons. The university hopes that this will help them better cope with the current situation emotionally.

China University of Petroleum (East China) is relying on QQ and WeChat groups to provide online lessons for international students.

A screenshot of an online teaching platform at a university in Shandong province [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Four mine workers have been trapped by a collapse which took place in a coal mine around 6 am on Saturday in Heze, East China's Shandong province, according to CCTV.com.

The collapse was caused by a rock burst at a mine run by Shandong Xinjulong Energy Co Ltd. Comprehensive rescue efforts are underway."

"The twelfth group of 170 medical staff from Shandong province left for Hubei province on Feb 20 to help fight the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak, according to local officials.

The team consisted of 50 doctors and 120 nurses from Shandong's 47 medical institutions. Zhang Fengwei, deputy director of Linyi People's Hospital, is the team captain.

All of the medics have ample experience in the prevention, control and treatment of infectious diseases and life-threatening illnesses, local authorities said.

Wu Weizhi, head of the out-patient department of the Dermatology Hospital Affiliated with the Shandong First Medical University, is a member of the team.

“I participated in medical relief work for the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake in Sichuan province. I have a lot of experience and have made adequate preparations to work on the frontlines,” Wu said.

“Many of my classmates and friends have already been fighting on the frontlines in Hubei, and we can offer them better support now.”

“I hope we can complete our task successfully, and we can all return home safely,” Wu added.

The medical team and a batch of medical supplies departed via two chartered planes from Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport.

Shandong has already sent 11 medical teams with 1,582 members, including medical personnel, psychologists, and disease control experts, to aid Hubei. Shandong medical teams are mainly working in hospitals in Wuhan, Huanggang, Ezhou, and other cities.

Medical workers at the Second Affiliated Hospital of Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine pack suitcases for their colleagues leaving to fight on the frontlines in Hubei province. [Photo/sdnews.com.cn]

A medical team from Shandong province waits to board the plane for Hubei province on Feb 20. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Wu Weizhi, a member of the medical team, gives an interview. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A medical team from Shandong province sets out for Hubei province on Feb 20 to help fight the virus. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"A man surnamed Zhang, who has recovered from the novel coronavirus pneumonia infection in Huanggang, the second-worst hit city in Hubei province, recently sent a letter to Shandong medical workers on the frontlines to thank them.

“Thank you, nurses and doctors from Shandong, for helping fight the infectious disease in Huanggang,” the letter said, “I expressly salute all of you on behalf of the patients.”

A man surnamed Zhang, who recovered from a novel coronavirus pneumonia infection in Huanggang, sends a thank-you letter to Shandong medical workers on the frontlines. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Zhang also specially thanked Hu Meng, a member of the Shandong medical team.

“Thank you very much for your care and encouragement during my stay in the hospital. Please protect yourself and return home safely.”

Hu, a nurse from Pingyi county in Shandong’s Linyi city, is a member of the second support team from Shandong. She has 17 years of work experience.

Hu Meng, member of the second support team from Shandong sent to fight against the virus in Huanggang, one of the hardest hit cities in Hubei province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

“There are over 60 patients in our department and we treat them as if they are our own relatives, doing our best to satisfy their daily needs,” Hu said, “I always tell them that the current crisis is only temporary and that victory is imminent.”

“Despite the hard work, we feel it is all worth it when we get the patients’ admiration and respect. Our greatest wish is that our compatriots in Huanggang recover soon.”

Huanggang is receiving pairing support from Shandong and Hunan provinces in the fight against the epidemic, as directed by the National Health Commission."

"The Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the Communist Party of China Central Committee sent a team to Shandong province to inspect the situation of the novel coronavirus outbreak in Rencheng Prison.

Team members include those from the Ministry of Public Security, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Ministry of Justice.

Shandong province reported 202 new cases of novel coronavirus pneumonia on Thursday, with 200 cases originating in the prison."

"Nie Peng and his father, Nie Chenxi, who make Gaomi clay sculptures, have created artwork to support China's fight against the novel coronavirus pneumonia and thank medical workers on the frontlines.

Gaomi (a county-level city Weifang, Shandong) clay sculptures have a history of 400 years. The sculptures often take the form of tigers with sheepskin stomachs, allowing them to make roaring sounds to ward off ghosts and monsters.

""I saw on the news that frontline workers are struggling against the epidemic and I was touched by their bravery and diligence,"" said Nie Peng.

""We created the new sculptures to pay homage to frontline workers and help spread awareness of the importance of epidemic prevention and control.""

Shandong artists create clay sculptures to support China's fight against the epidemic. [Photo/chinanews.com]

Nie Peng, an inheritor of the Gaomi clay sculpture art form, creates works to pay tribute to frontline medical workers. [Photo/chinanews.com]

Nie Chenxi, an inheritor of the Gaomi clay sculpture art form, creates works to support China in its battle against the virus. [Photo/chinanews.com]"

"Six patients infected with the novel coronavirus were discharged from Shandong Provincial Chest Hospital in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, on Thursday. Among them, a woman pregnant for three and a half months was cured through treatment with traditional Chinese medicine, according to the hospital.

Considering some Western medicines might have side effects on the fetus, the hospital only adopted traditional Chinese medicine treatment on her during the whole process. The other five patients were given medical treatment with both traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine.

Four of the six patients said they would like to donate their plasma to save those in critical condition after learning that plasma from recovered patients is effective in treating the coronavirus."

"Workers perform docking operations at Qingdao Port in East China's Shandong province, on Feb 11. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

The amount of foreign investment in actual use in Shandong province in January reached $940 million, up 1.9 percent year on year, according to the Shandong Provincial Department of Commerce.

Official statistics showed that the actual use of foreign investment in the province's manufacturing sector was $280 million, up 47.4 percent year on year, while special equipment manufacturing saw an increase of 3,074.6 percent and chemical raw materials and products manufacturing saw an increase of 1,329.8 percent.

Real investment from the United States, Germany, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan increased by 186.8 percent, 11,617.4 percent, 1,236.7 percent, 10.2 percent, and 24.8 percent, respectively.

In addition, 181 new foreign-invested enterprises were established in Shandong province, up 9 percent year on year."

"Geng Xingliang, a vegetable grower in Gengdian village, Jiazhai town, Chiping district, Liaocheng, Shandong province, picks peppers on Feb 18 for Xiangyang, a city in Hubei and one of the hardest-hit by the ongoing novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak. [Photo by Zhao Yuguo/Xinhua]

An aerial photo taken on Feb 18 shows that villagers in Gengdian village in Chiping district, Liaocheng pack tomatoes for frontline workers in Xiangyang, Hubei province on Feb 18. [Photo by Zhao Yuguo/Xinhua]

Villagers pack peppers on Feb 18 to donate to Xiangyang in Central China's Hubei province to augment the city's supplies of daily necessities and help the city in its fight against the epidemic. [Photo by Shang Jinghao/Xinhua]

Trucks loaded with 15 tons of agricultural products produced in Gengdian village in Chiping district, Liaocheng, set off for Xiangyang in Central China's Hubei province on the evening of Feb 18. [Photo by Zhao Yuguo/Xinhua]

Medical workers unload donated vegetables from Liaocheng's Gengdian village on Feb 19 at the Xiangyang Hospital of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine. [Photo by Wang Hu/Xinhua]

Fresh vegetables donated by Liaocheng's Gengdian village arrive at the Xiangyang Hospital of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine on Feb 19. The vegetables are meant for frontline medical workers. [Photo by Wang HU/Xinhua]"

Qingdao Museum 青岛市博物馆 Address: 51 East Meiling Road, Laoshan district, Qingdao, Shandong provinceWebsite: www.qingdaomuseum.com (Cn)Hours:9:00 - 17:00 (1 May - 31 October, no entry after 16:30); 9:00 - 16:30 (1 November -30 April, no entry after 16:00)Closed days: Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)General admission: free (passport required for entry, a max of 3,000 admitted daily) [Photo qingdaomuseum.com] The museum houses as many as 160,000 historical and cultural artifacts, such as chinaware, bronze ware, jade items, ancient coins, and oracle bones; 150 of them are classified as the country's first-level cultural relics. There are also more than 4,000 calligraphy and painting works from the Ming (1368-1644) and the Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.

Shandong Museum 山东博物馆 Address: 11899, Jingshi Road, Jinan, Shandong Province Hours: 9:00 - 17:00 (no entry after 16:00) Closed days: Closed Mondays (except for national holidays) General admission: Free (Passport required for entry) The Shandong Museum houses more than 140,000 historical relics, more than 130,000 pieces of cultural relics and written materials of modern and contemporary times, and over 8,000 natural specimens. It is a leading museum in its collections of stone Buddha statues, pictorial stones, pottery and porcelain, bronze ware, bamboo slips, calligraphy, paintings and ancient fossil specimens. Shandong is one of the cradles of the Chinese civilization. Neolithic cultures, such as the Dawenkou and Longshan cultures, existed in the region between 8,500 and 4,000 years ago. Pottery from those prehistoric civilizations is a highlight exhibition in the museum. The pictorial stones in Shandong Museum are collected from across the province and the exhibits are known for both the quantity and high quality of their relics. In a mural unearthed from a Han Dynasty tomb in the Dongping area, details and colors can still be seen today. In addition, Buddhist art, including statues and scrolls, make up another exhibition highlight in the museum. A statue from the Eastern Wei Dynasty (534-550) shows a Bodhisattva wearing a headpiece decorated with a cicada. The type of headpiece had been used by officers in the imperial household of the Han Dynasty and in later dynasties became a symbol of high social status. The Bodhisattva wearing such a headpiece is regarded as an embodiment of the localization of the Buddhism. The Shandong Museum boasts over 10,000 pieces of oracle bones, which were unearthed from the Yin Ruins, the archaeological site of the capital of the Shang Dynasty (c. 16th century -11th century BC). They were acquired by the museum through private donations worldwide. One of the pieces, made of ox shoulder blade, still preserves the red paint thousands of years ago. The content of the script is about the king of Shang inquiring if it was going to rain. The character for rain is vividly inscribed like rain drops. Bamboo slips were another main way to write in early China before paper was invented and widely spread. Shandong Museum discovered two tombs from the early Han Dynasty in 1972 in Linyi city, and found more than 7,600 bamboo slips, which are mainly about the Art of War, the ancient Chinese military treatise dating to the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC) .

"A certificate from the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence recognizes a project co-developed by Dareway Software Co and the Joint SDU-NTU Center for Artificial Intelligence Research. [Photo/sdu.edu.cn]

Dareway Software Co affiliated with Shandong University (SDU) won an award at the 34th Conference on Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence held in New York, the United States from Feb 9 to 11.

The award-winning project, entitled ""PIDS: An Intelligent Electric Power Management Platform"" was co-developed by Dareway and the Joint SDU-NTU Center for Artificial Intelligence Research (C-FAIR).

PIDS is an electric power management platform that helps ensure a stable supply of electric power through the use of big data based on the actual power consumption of users. The platform is currently managing one-eighth of all electricity consumption nationwide.

Dareway has been cooperating with C-FAIR since 2018. This is the second time in the past three years that the two parties have worked together to win the award. The team, headed by Professor Zheng Yongqing, the company's president, has also won the award twice.

SmartHS, a smart human resources and social security platform co-developed by the two parties, won the AAAI award in 2018 and has since been widely used to improve local government services in China.

Officials said the achievements resulted from an in-depth integration of academic research and commercial applications and should enhance SDU's international clout in the field of AI. In the future, Dareway plans to further promote international cooperation and contribute to the high-quality development of Jinan and Shandong province.

The Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) holds an annual meeting every February. At this year's event, 11 innovative application awards were handed out to industrial leaders, including Alibaba, WeBank, Amazon, and IBM."

"Farmers drive machines to spray pesticide over wheat plants at Gushao town, Yicheng district of Zaozhuang. [Photo by Zhao Feng/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Amid the fight against the novel coronavirus, East China's Shandong province has begun preparing for the spring farming season to ensure an agricultural harvest in summer.

A farmer at Maozhuang village, Gushao town, Yicheng district of Zaozhuang sprays pesticide over potatos planted in a greenhouse. [Photo by Zhang Feng/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Yanghu town, Yangxin county, Binzhou water their farmland. [Photo by Lao Shufang/for chinadaily.com.cn]

A farmer in Yanghu town, Yangxin county, Binzhou manages the farmland. [Photo by Lao Shufang/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Yanghu town, Yangxin county, Binzhou work at their farmland. [Photo by Lao Shufang/for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The test kits for novel coronavirus pneumonia, developed by Shandong ACV Biotech Company in Jinan [Photo/iqilu.com]

The test kit for novel coronavirus pneumonia is recognized as an effective instrument in helping to detect the virus and curb the spread of the epidemic.

The first test kit for the virus in Shandong province was developed by the Shandong ACV Biotech Company in Jinan. The kit is the work of eight staff members in the company and can detect the virus in around two hours.

The kit, which is highly sensitive and easy to use and transport, will be vital for the prevention and control of the epidemic. It is currently undergoing mass production. The company said it can produce kits for 20,000 people a day.

The local government has also helped the company expand production with supporting measures such as reducing tax payments.

Shandong ACV Biotech, with only over 80 employees, has made significant achievements in the field of genetic testing.

Its innovative molecular diagnostic products were widely used for the hand-foot-and-mouth disease in 2008, H1N1 pandemic (swine flu) in 2009, and H7N9 influenza (bird flu) in 2013."

"The tenth group of 123 medical staff from Shandong province left for Huanggang, central Hubei province on Feb 13 to help fight the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak, according to local officials.

The team consisted of 40 doctors and 83 nurses from Shandong's 35 medical institutions. Wang Tao, director of pulmonary and critical care medicine department at Binzhou Medical University Hospital, is the captain of the team.

Local authorities said that the medical personnel all have ample experience in the prevention, control and treatment of infectious diseases and life-threatening illnesses.

The medical team and a batch of medical supplies departed via a chartered plane from Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, went to the airport to see the team off.

To date, Shandong has sent 1,499 medical workers to assist Hubei in fighting against the virus.

Huanggang, one of the hardest hit cities by the epidemic, is being assisted by Shandong and Hunan provinces in local disease control work.

The new ""pairing assistance"" program was launched by the National Health Commission. Cities which are severely affected by the epidemic will receive joint assistance from two partners.

A medical team from Shandong province sets out for Hubei province on Feb 13 to help fight the epidemic outbreak. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, delivers a speech during the send-off at Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport. [Photo/dzwww.com]

An airport staff member at Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport raises his hand in salute to medical personnel departing for Huanggang. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The medical team will assist Huanggang in fighting against the virus. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"Trucks loaded with garlic donated by Jinxiang county, Jining set off for Huanggang on Feb 12, 2020. [Photo provided to dzwww.com]

Jinxiang county in Jining, Shandong province, famous for its high-quality garlic, donated 300 tons of garlic on Feb 12 to Huanggang, one of the cities hit hardest by the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak in Hubei province.

According to Zheng Shimin, head of Jinxiang county, the donation was worth 2.4 million yuan ($343,800) and would reach Huanggang city in just 10 hours.

The county also donated 300 tons of garlic to Wuhan, the city hardest hit by the epidemic in China, on Jan 31.

A new round of ""pairing assistance"" has been launched and 19 provinces are working to alleviate pressure on cities in Hubei province affected most by the epidemic. Shandong and Hunan provinces have been assigned to support Huanggang.

Shandong province has also sent medical personnel to assist with local virus control efforts.

In addition, many enterprises and organizations in Shandong have donated medical supplies and daily necessities to Huanggang."

"Stick figure of Shandong Library. [Photo/WeChat account: shandonglibrary]

Readers can still access high-quality digital reading resources through the official websites, WeChat account and Weibo account of Shandong Library, which has been closed since Jan 25 due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus pneumonia.

The library has also exempted all overdue charges for physical books and periodicals during this period.

According to the library, 1.2 million electronic books, 7,000 electronic literature and art journals, more than 20,000 video resources, and more are available on its official website. Registered readers can log in with their library cards to read them.

Readers can also access the resources through a mobile phone app called ""Mobile Library"" (Chinese: 移动图书馆 公图版).

In addition to electronic books, electronic periodicals and video resources, Shandong Library's digital reading platform also provides an additional 10,000 audio books, which are also available via the library's official WeChat account.

The library said that audio books are quite popular among readers and over the past month its audio products have been listened to by nearly 150,000 people.

In addition, Shandong Library has also organized a series of online reading promotion activities.

On Feb 1, its WeChat account launched an online quiz activity. By Feb 9, more than 15,000 people had participated in the event, and the page had more than 260,000 views.

""In this critical period of epidemic prevention and control, we are unable to remain open, but we will continue to provide online services,"" said a staff member from Shandong Library.

Scan the QR code below to follow the library's official WeChat account:

Scan the QR code below to follow its official Weibo account:"

"Nie Peng and his father, Nie Chenxi, who make Gaomi clay sculptures, have created artwork to support China's fight against the novel coronavirus pneumonia and thank medical workers on the frontlines.

Gaomi (a county-level city Weifang, Shandong) clay sculptures have a history of 400 years. The sculptures often take the form of tigers with sheepskin stomachs, allowing them to make roaring sounds to ward off ghosts and monsters.

""I saw on the news that frontline workers are struggling against the epidemic and I was touched by their bravery and diligence,"" said Nie Peng.

""We created the new sculptures to pay homage to frontline workers and help spread awareness of the importance of epidemic prevention and control.""

Shandong artists create clay sculptures to support China's fight against the epidemic. [Photo/chinanews.com]

Nie Peng, an inheritor of the Gaomi clay sculpture art form, creates works to pay tribute to frontline medical workers. [Photo/chinanews.com]

Nie Chenxi, an inheritor of the Gaomi clay sculpture art form, creates works to support China in its battle against the virus. [Photo/chinanews.com]"

"The Shandong Provincial Government recently launched 19 measures to help foreign companies resume production and operation and promote foreign investment.

The province will assist foreign companies in resuming operations under the precondition of adequate prevention and control work.

Local government will assist foreign firms in purchasing epidemic prevention equipment for staff in need and guaranteeing hygiene at the workplace.

Shandong will provide catering distribution services for foreign firms that do not meet the minimum sanitary conditions by cooperating with local qualified catering enterprises and fast food chains.

The province will help employees return to work through chartered buses from areas outside Hubei province, the epicenter of the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak in China.

It will help solve labor shortages brought about by virus-related travel restrictions and encourage enterprises to work with online recruitment platforms and human resource agencies to boost employment.

Shandong launched measures to ensure the transportation of production materials. Local companies will need to apply for transport vehicle permits due to travel restrictions.

The province also launched a set of measures designed to reduce rent, taxes and other financial burdens companies may be facing due to the outbreak. It proposed to return half of the unemployment insurance premiums paid in the previous year to employers that lay off no or few workers.

Shandong also is also allowing foreign firms to apply to delay tax payments for a maximum of three months and encouraging banks to offer loans, lower loan interest rates and streamlined approval processes.

The province will promote more foreign investment and cooperation through video conferences and online channels.

Shandong also pledged to improve the investment climate for foreign investors."

"With many people stuck at home with nothing to do amid the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak, Shandong has decided to provide online tours of its scenic spots, museums and art galleries.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism recently opened an online service featuring virtual tours of museums, libraries and scenic spots, online science, culture and history exhibitions, and lectures on traditional culture, operas and other topics.

A screenshot of the online streaming service launched by Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Local authorities said that the application combines panoramas and 3D reconstruction techniques, offering visitors an immersive experience while exploring the province’s magnificent natural landscapes, long history and rich culture.

There is also an option to watch 24-hour live streams of all the province's scenic spots on high-definition real-time webcams.

Various lectures on Confucianism are available on the website. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The Shandong Provincial Cultural Center has launched online lectures on Confucianism by renowned scholars and professors.

Shandong Library brings the public free online electronic resources, with 1 million books, more than 7,000 periodicals and 120,000 sets of videos.

Training courses are also available for cultural and tourism practitioners to prepare for a rebound in demand after the outbreak.

Scan the QR code to access the online service."

"The busiest time for agricultural work begins in eastern Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

As the start of spring, the first solar term of the year has passed, the busiest time for agricultural work is beginning in eastern Shandong province, according to local officials.

While the province continues to fight against the outbreak of novel coronavirus pneumonia, it has also begun to prepare for the spring ploughing season to ensure a bumper agricultural harvest in summer.

In a 133.33-hectare potato planting base in Tengzhou's Dawu town, villagers were recently busy planting potatoes -- all wearing masks.

""Now is the best time to plant potatoes in spring. The season waits for no-one, so we organized about 100 villagers to sow seeds after checking their physical health and taking their temperatures,"" said Liu Hengtao, who is in charge of the local vegetable cooperative.

Liu said that in order to ensure the health and safety of all villagers and to prevent any workplace contagion, the cooperative distributed masks to farmers every day and asked them to work at a distance.

""We plan to grow about 26,666 hectares of greenhouse potatoes this spring and we have finished planting about 85 percent,"" said Li Guangyao, director of Tengzhou bureau of agriculture and rural affairs.

As the outbreak is posing challenges to logistics, supply and manufacturing operations, many farmers find it difficult to buy seeds and farm machinery. Government departments and agricultural service organizations have offered help.

In Heze's Shanxian county, local government rented transport vehicles to deliver more than 300 households with melon seedlings directly from the breeding base to the fields, to sustain daily operations and curb the spread of the virus.

Local cooperatives also counted up the brands, specifications and quantity of chemical fertilizers, pesticides -- and other agricultural production materials needed by farmers -- through instant messages and then purchased and distributed to them.

Shandong Finsence Agricultural Co has launched online shopping and delivery services for local farmers.

Agricultural specialists and experts have also offered technical guidance and services through live streaming platforms, Weibo, WeChat and other social media.

Shandong’s authorities said that the over 9,000 agricultural cooperatives in the province were continuing to play a very important role in epidemic prevention and control, as well as boosting farming work."

"Ships prepare to set out from the foreign trade container terminal of Qingdao Port in Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

In the first month of 2020, Shandong Port Group's total cargo throughput increased by 6.3 percent year on year to 121 million tons, local authorities said.

Shandong Port Group, consolidated in August 2019, has integrated many of the province's major ports, including Qingdao Port, Yantai Port, Rizhao Port, and the Bohai Bay Port Group, in order to maximize port resources and eliminate regional competition.

Official statistics showed that in January, Shandong Port Group handled 2.58 million TEUs of containers, up 6.4 percent year on year. Just seven days before the Spring Festival holiday, its cargo throughput had reached 24.22 million tons, up 15.2 percent year on year, including 518,000 TEUs of containers, up 15.7 percent year on year.

According to official data, during the Spring Festival holiday, the average daily trains loaded at Qingdao Port reached 3,933, a year-on-year increase of 29.5 percent, while the average daily trains unloaded was 1,073, a year-on-year increase of 72.5 percent, both of which are new records.

In order to help prevent and control the novel coronavirus pneumonia, Shandong Port Group has strengthened cooperation with local railway departments to ensure a sufficient supply of vehicles, goods and containers and to promote railway transportation.

Shandong Port Group said that it has introduced fast lanes and special service windows to speed up the clearing process for imports related to epidemic prevention and control, playing its part in the battle against the coronavirus epidemic.

The group has purchased 10,000 sets of protective clothing and donated them to the Shandong branch of the Red Cross Society of China. It has also donated 10 million yuan ($1.43 million) to support the fight against the epidemic."

"A Fuxing bullet train runs on the Jinan-Qingdao high-speed network at the Qingdaobei railway station in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Dec 26, 2018. [Photo/IC]

East China's Shandong province resumed construction on key transportation projects on Feb 10 in order to ensure stable economic and social development amidst the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pneumonia, or NCP.

According to a video conference held on Feb 10 by the Shandong Provincial Government, this year the province has set a record in terms of both the number and size of its transportation projects.

Ling Wen, vice governor of Shandong province, said that Shandong plans to invest 184.2 billion yuan ($26.4 billion) into transportation construction in 2020. It will advance construction on 23 expressways which are currently in progress and start construction on five new ones.

Ling added that this year Shandong will push forward the construction of five high speed railway projects and finish construction on the Weifang-Laizhou high speed railway.

Ling stressed that construction enterprises should take measures to ensure the supply of virus prevention equipment for staff, maintain hygiene at the workplace, and implement other measures to prevent any workplace contagion.

He added that, in view of the shortage in labor and raw materials, limited transport capacity, and other problems restricting the resumption of construction, government departments at all levels should take effective measures to resolve problems as soon as possible.

On Feb 4, Shandong released a plan to resume full production by the end of this month. The province has pledged to resume production for major projects, particularly those which will contribute to economic growth, and resume operation of all qualified businesses in the region, prioritizing infrastructure services and essential supplies."

"A painting by Guo Yinghua shows medical workers united in the fight against the epidemic. [Photo/WeChat account: ytwlgw]

Artists in East China's Shandong province have produced a series of imaginative paintings and touching songs to voice support for China's fight against the NCP, novel coronavirus pneumonia.

Cultural and tourism departments in Shandong as well as literary and artistic units are encouraging local artists to play their part in the fight against the epidemic by promoting knowledge of epidemic prevention and control.

In the coastal city of Yantai, the Yantai Academy of Painting and the Yantai Artists Association jointly issued an initiative to mobilize local artists to produce works on workers in the fight against the epidemic and popularize knowledge of epidemic prevention and control through various art forms, including Chinese painting, oil painting and caricature.

The Weifang bureau of culture and tourism has collected literary works, folk songs, paintings and operas that honor workers who have contributed to epidemic prevention and control, particularly front line medical workers.

The Zibo bureau of culture and tourism released a series of works depicting epidemic prevention and control efforts through video sharing platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou, its official WeChat account and website, as well as social media platforms such as Sina Weibo.

The Jinan Artists Association and Dacheng Gallery of Jinan Urban Construction Group launched an online art exhibition focusing on the battle against the virus.

According to the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, to date, the province's artists have produced more than 4500 works focusing on the fight against the epidemic, including more than 1,000 songs and operas, nearly 3,000 art works, over 200 poetry recitations and over 300 photographs.

Local authorities said that all the works have been released online to express their solidarity with the country and confidence in winning the battle against the epidemic.

A painting by Kong Weike, president of Shandong Art Academy, pays homage to frontline medical staff. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

A cartoon depicts society coming together to win the battle against the virus. [Photo/WeChat account: wlweifang]

A painting by Ji Yongzhen [Photo/WeChat account: zibowenhualvyou]

A painting by Wang Changqiu [Photo/WeChat account: Linyi bureau of culture and tourism]

A painting by Zhang Yutai showcases the brave workers on the frontlines of the epidemic. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"[Photo/VCG]

Over 100 million yuan (about $14 million) worth of donations have been made from 28 companies supervised and administered by the Shandong Provincial State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission as of Sunday to aid in fighting against the novel coronavirus pneumonia, according to the commission.

The donations consist of 81.22 million yuan ($11.6 million) of cash and 22.03 million yuan ($3.15 million) worth of goods.

Several companies including Yankuang Group, Shandong Port Group Co Ltd, Hualu Holdings Co Ltd, Shandng Hi-Speed Group Co Ltd and Shandong Energy Group Co Ltd have made donations worth of over 10 million yuan, respectively."

"East China's Shandong province has introduced more online resources to help local businesses resume full production after the Lunar New Year holiday that was extended due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus pneumonia, or NCP, as human-to-human contact is being discouraged across the country to reduce the risk of infection.

The province has launched a number of online government services for local residents and enterprises, including approvals, real estate registration and integration, and more.

""All 687 examination and approval items at the Qihe county service center can now be inquired about and examined online, while 560 items can be handled entirely online,"" said Ding Ran, director of the Qihe county government service center in Dezhou, Shandong province.

""While we are pooling efforts to fight against the epidemic, it is equally important to assess its impact on the development of the local economy,"" said a Shandong official.

The province has also been promoting business and investment through video conferences, an innovative way to maintain economic growth amid the NCP outbreak.

After preliminary online negotiations, Qingdao's Chengyang district signed strategic cooperation agreements with several partners on Feb 6 using online channels. The contract is worth 2.15 billion yuan ($308 million) and involves high-end equipment manufacturing and a new generation of information technology industries.

Beijing-based software company DHC confirmed investment in a project valued at 3 billion yuan in Qingdao's Laoshan district on Feb 7 through a video conference between Beijing and Qingdao.

""During this critical period in preventing and controlling the epidemic, Qingdao is using online channels to accelerate business cooperation and attract investment and talent,"" said Wang Qingxian, Party secretary of Qingdao.

The Beihai Economic Development Zone in Binzhou held a video meeting on Feb 8 to detail current epidemic prevention and control work and progress on cooperative projects to its partners in South Korea.

Officials from the Weihai municipal bureau of commerce said that they are keeping in close contact with investors through WeChat, e-mail, and more.

""Although we can't currently have face-to-face meetings, we are sending promotional videos, investment guides and industry information to investors and merchants to keep them up to date on our epidemic prevention work and local factory conditions.""

The bureau's efforts are gradually paying off. Weihai currently has 144 major projects under negotiation, a local official revealed.

""Despite certain negative influences on the short-term growth of the economy, the NCP outbreak will not affect the nation's long-term outlook,"" said an official from Qingdao.

""We need to find innovative ways to promote development and work to improve the business environment for local enterprises.""

People work in a food-processing plant in Gaoqing county, Zibo, Shandong province on Feb 7. [Photo/Xinhua]

An man works in a construction steel plant in Binzhou, Shandong province on Feb 7. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"Due to the impact of the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak, some enterprises are facing difficulties resuming production.

East China's Shandong province is providing help through the promotion of digital transformation. To date, a total of 460 Internet platform products are available, offering services in epidemic prevention and control, office collaboration, production and other fields.

According to local authorities, the Internet products can be used for epidemic monitoring, emergency information release, intelligent diagnosis and treatment and other epidemic prevention and control work. They also include services in traffic information, office automation, enterprise monitoring management and Internet donation.

Inspur Group, a leading domestic company based in Jinan, Shandong province which provides big data services, has launched an app providing free online epidemic reporting services for governments, hospitals, schools, communities and enterprises.

The production of customized product with Haier's COSMOPlat is displayed at the booth of Haier at Hanover Fair 2018 in Hanover, Germany, April 24, 2018. [Photo/Xinhua]

The app also provides data support in personnel deployment and movement tracking, epidemic situation analysis and judgment, emergency resource scheduling and more.

In addition, JD Cloud, the cloud unit of Chinese e-commerce giant JD, has rolled out a public reporting system for potential outbreaks. The system allows the public to report potential epidemic hazards and supply shortages whenever and wherever possible. It assists decision-making departments in dealing with the crisis and responding to public needs in a timely manner.

Massclouds, a Shandong-based high-tech company, has launched a desktop virtualization system enabling employees to telecommunicate.

According to Massclouds, the system also allows employees to connect to the cloud from home and grants them access to high-performance virtual computers.

The smart manufacturing platform COSMOPlat, launched by Haier Group, China's largest home appliance manufacturer, based in Qingdao, Shandong province, enables companies to customize products at speed and scale while boosting productivity and cutting costs.

According to the Shandong Provincial Big Data Bureau, big data bureaus at all levels in Shandong have published product lists to the public, and all units can contact the person in charge of each product when needed.

A detailed Internet platform product catalog can be found by scanning the QR code."

Qingzhou Museum 青州博物馆 Address: 1 West Fangongting Road, Qingzhou, Shandong ProvinceWebsites:bowuguan.qingzhou.gov.cn (Cn)bowuguan.qingzhou.gov.cn en (En)Hours: 9:00 - 16:30 (October to next April, last ticket: 16:00)9:00 - 17:00 (May to September, last ticket: 16:30)General admission: Free (passport required for entry, a max of 3000 admitted daily) [Photo qzbowuguan.com] Receiving about 300,000 visitors each year the Qingzhou Museum is China's only county-housed top-level museum. One of its most valuable collections is an exam paper belonging to Zhao Bingzhong, who in 1598 won the title of zhuangyuan during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), an honor given to the scholar who achieved the highest score at the highest level of the Chinese imperial examinations. It is the only original exam paper of a zhuangyuan preserved on the Chinese mainland. Zhao offered his suggestions to the emperor on how to improve the country’s statecraft. The museum houses about 4,000 items from the Xiangshan tomb dated to the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220), of which about 2,000 are on display in the museum's permanent exhibition "Unearthed Items from the Subordinate Pits of the Xiangshan Tomb of the Han Dynasty". The tomb was discovered by accident during a construction project in 2006. Another permanent exhibition focuses on the hoarded Buddhist sculptures discovered at the site of the local Longxing Temple built around the fifth century and demolished some 800 years later. Some 400 Buddhist statues, lying in a neat order, were unearthed from a pit 8.7 meters long and 6.8 meters wide. Once excavated, the richness of the Qingzhou hoard of Buddhist statues shocked the country. The discovery was ranked among the top 10 archaeological findings of 1996. The Buddhist statues span nearly five centuries with the earliest dated to AD 529. Many sculptures feature a high halo carved in relief with intricate patterns in the distinctive "Qingzhou style".

Weifang Museum 潍坊市博物馆 Address: 6616, East Dongfeng Street, Weifeng, Shandong provinceWebsites:www.wfsbwg.com English about ?48.html (En) www.wfsbwg.com (Cn) Hours: 9:00 - 17:00 (Summer, no entry after 16:30)9:00 - 16:30 (Winter, no entry after 16:00)Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)E-mail: wfsm2016@126.com General admission: Free (passport required for entry) [Photo wfsbwg.com] Weifang Museum houses nearly 80,000 cultural relics in 33 varieties including fossils, pottery, porcelain, bronze, jade, coin, artifacts made of bamboo, wood, ivory, and horn, painting and calligraphy, rubbing and stone tablets, rare books, inscription, statues, embroidery, seals and tallies, folk costumes and ornaments. There are also cultural relics from modern and contemporary periods. Visitors to the museum can have a close look at the archidiskodon fossils from about 200,000 years ago, the iron Buddhist statue of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and the paintings of Zheng Banqiao, a renowned painter from the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). The museum has several permanent exhibitions about the history of the city of Weifang, painting and calligraphy works, folk customs and arts, and stone inscriptions and carvings.

"A group of 130 medical staff members from Qilu Hospital of Shandong University left for central Hubei province on Feb 7 to lend a hand in the fight against the novel coronavirus outbreak, local medial reported.

The team flew to Hubei from Jinan Yaoqiang International  Airport. Local officials said the medical personnel all had rich experience in the prevention, control and treatment of infectious diseases and life-threatening cases.

Accordingly, Qilu Hospital of Shandong University has sent 19 medical staff members to Hubei, the epicenter of the outbreak in China.

A total of 130 medical staff members from Qilu Hospital of Shandong University depart for central Hubei province on Feb 7. [Photo/w.dzwww.com]

Medical workers from Qilu Hospital of Shandong University pose for a photo before leaving on Feb 7. [Photo/w.dzwww.com]

Medical staff in the team cut their hair before leaving on Feb 7, making it more convenient for treating patients. [Photo/ w.dzwww.com]"

"East China's Shandong province has launched financial and fiscal relief measures to help small businesses pull through the hardships imposed by the novel coronavirus outbreak, according to local officials.

""The epidemic has slowed down the turnover of small and medium-sized enterprises,"" said Chi Hong, director of the investment and financing department of the Shandong Macroeconomic Research Institute.

He said that the payments of fixed costs and wages would ""inevitably"" lead to the tension in the capital chain and a surge in costs.

""The 20 new policies rolled out by Shandong provincial government involves capital, expenses and employment issues, which are the areas of most concern for SMEs,"" he added.

According to local officials, Shandong has implemented various measures, including lowering interest on loans and cutting tax and fees to help small businesses to weather the difficult times.

The province launched measures to support small businesses, including making sure they get much-needed loans in time, especially those companies that are badly influenced by the virus.

It has extended the collection period of social insurance premiums by up to six months, allowing them to delay their payments during the coronavirus epidemic.

Many cities in Shandong, including Qingdao, Linyi and Binzhou, have also introduced measures to ease labor shortages and the financial strain for impacted sectors, such as postponing the payment of social security fees for enterprises, lowering rents and reducing their financing costs."

"A farmer in Shouguang picks vegetables for Wuhan on Jan 28, 2020. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A special train loaded with 275 tons of selected agricultural products produced in Heze, East China's Shandong province, set off from the city's railway station on Tuesday at noon, headed to Wuhan in Central China's Hubei province to augment the city's supplies of daily necessities while fight against the novel coronavirus.

The agricultural products donated to Wuhan consist of 90 tons of Chinese yams, 90 tons of garlic, 60 tons of eggs and 35 tons of Chinese cabbage.

As major production bases of agricultural products in China, cities in Shandong have been donating agricultural products, mainly a variety of vegetables, to Wuhan since the outbreak began.

Workers load agricultural products onto a train that set off for Wuhan on Tuesday at noon, Feb 4, 2020. [Photo by Wu Pei for chinadaily.com.cn]

Shouguang in Weifang city, known for its vegetable planting industry, donated 350 tons of high-quality vegetables to Wuhan on Jan 28. The city is supporting Wuhan with a daily supply of 600 tons of high-quality and affordable vegetables as needed.

Shouguang has activated emergency plans to promote the supplies of fresh vegetables to cater for vegetable demands across Shandong, as well as Beijing and Shanghai, according to Shouguang's information office.

Lanling county in Linyi and Jinxiang county in Jining, two places famous for quality garlic, donated 500 tons of garlic to Wuhan last week.

Tengzhou in Zaozhuang donated 66 tons of potatoes to Wuhan on Saturday.

Trucks loaded with garlic donated by Jinxiang county in Jining set off from Jinxiang to Wuhan on Jan 31, 2020. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""As a place famous for growing potatoes, we will spare no efforts to support Wuhan with quality potatoes,"" said Shan Jinfeng, head of the Commerce and Investment Promotion Bureau of Tengzhou.

Supplies of daily necessities matter to people's basic needs and have a great impact in preventing and controlling the epidemic, said Lian Weiliang, deputy head of the National Development and Reform Commission, at a press conference in Beijing on Monday.

A truck loaded with potatoes left for Wuhan on Feb 1, 2020 from Tengzhou, Zaozhuang. [Photo by Zhang Xin for chinadaily.com.cn]

With concerted efforts, the supply of daily necessities in Wuhan and the whole of Hubei province, as well as other places in China, has been secured, Lian said.

Some problems, such as fewer varieties of leafy vegetables and delayed replenishment due to logistics, still exist and efforts are underway to solve these shortcomings, Lian said."

"Farmers in Tancheng county, Shandong province, prepare to ship straw handicraft articles they made via express delivery. FAN CHANGGUO/XINHUA

JINAN－Winter is a slack season for most Chinese farmers, but that's not the case for Jiang Suye and her friends.

While chatting in her living room, they plait straw into pads and strips by hand.

Jiang, 67, is from the town of Xinhe, in Pingdu, Shandong province. She works eight hours a day making plaited handbags out of wheat straw or corn husks, bringing home up to 2,000 yuan ($290) a month.

People in Xinhe have been plaiting straw for nearly 400 years, and the skill was listed as a provincial intangible cultural heritage in 2013.

But villagers never expected their traditional skills would be connected to fashion, drawing orders from international brands.

To meet the high standards of foreign companies, Jiang plants wheat and corn in her backyard, and is very picky in selecting the materials.

""We have to choose the middle layer of the corn husk, which can't be too tender or overgrown. The wheat straws need to be shiny,"" she said.

In a workshop of Qingdao Yufengxiang Artware, a straw handicraft company in Xinhe, workers using sewing machines busily plait straw into handbags.

The workers are mainly female farmers from the area in their 50s or 60s who learned straw plaiting from older generations. The company's orders exceed 100,000 units a month on average.

Wang Jianming, its general manager, said that in addition to the 60-plus workers in the workshop, it has outsourced the plaiting to more than 10,000 villagers.

""Up to 90 percent of the processing can be attributed to local farmers,"" he said, adding that the company's output was worth 25 million yuan last year.

Xinhe is now home to more than 90 straw handicraft enterprises. Of the 103 villages in the town, more than 80 have set up straw-plaiting outsourcing stations, with over 20,000 part-time workers.

The output of the straw-plaiting industry was valued at 2.4 billion yuan in 2018.

The finished articles are exported to more than 50 countries and regions, including the United States, Britain, France and Japan. Favored by fashion brands, straw-plaited bags and hats even appear on the catwalks of international fashion weeks.

Zhao Jinli, 40, works for the China branch of a British design company that has long cooperated with British brands.

Based in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, it has been doing business with straw handicraft enterprises in Xinhe for about five years, with annual orders totaling around 6 million yuan.

""Environmental friendliness and craftsmanship are our main considerations in choosing partners in China,"" Zhao said. ""Xinhe straw plaiting has a long history, mature skills and obvious industrial advantages.""

To make the handicrafts more profitable, the town government registered its own brand in 2018.

""We expect to transform the traditional straw-plaiting sector into a fashion industry,"" said Jiang Xun, director of its rural vitalization office.

Xinhua"

"A medical team from Shandong province sets out for Hubei province on Feb 2 to help fight the coronavirus outbreak. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The third batch of 121 medical staff from Shandong province left for central Hubei province on Feb 2 to give a hand in fighting the coronavirus outbreak, according to local officials.

The team consisted of 18 doctors, 100 nurses and three officials from the Shandong Health Commission.

Officials said the medical personnel were selected from 18 top hospitals in the province – including the Shandong Provincial Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Qilu Hospital of Shandong University, Jinan Central Hospital, the Affiliated Hospital of Qingdao University and the Binzhou Medical University Hospital.

The medical personnel all have rich experience in the prevention, control and treatment of infectious diseases and life-threatening cases.

They and a batch of medical supplies and equipment were sent to Wuhan by a chartered plane from Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, went to the airport to see the team off.

Liu Jiayi (middle), Party chief of Shandong province, delivers a speech during the send-off at Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The Shandong medical team gather at the farewell ceremony. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Information technology service enterprises in East China's Shandong province have been contributing to the fight against the novel coronavirus through several modern technologies, such as cloud computing, big data, 5G networks, and more.

Inspur Group established an emergency communication team to ensure the stable operation of cloud data platforms in Huanggang, Xiaogan, and Lichuan in Central China's Hubei province, the center of the virus outbreak in China.

Real-time monitoring products have been launched in the province's designated hospitals for epidemic prevention and control, while the data of the floating population from major areas of the virus outbreak are being analyzed, with the help of the group and telecom operators.

The group also provides free remote communication services for governments, hospitals, schools, and enterprises to support video conferences, online courses, and remote diagnosis.

Official data and announcements issued by health commissions are reported regularly on online public service platforms, letting locals quickly learn about the latest information.

In addition, high-quality mobile medical services are being provided to local residents to help prevent them from the virus epidemic. People with fever can have online consultation with doctors to preliminarily assess whether they are infected or not."

"East China's Shandong province dispatched its first emergency test group to Hubei province, the center of the coronavirus epidemic in China, on Jan 31, after having previously sent two groups of medical workers.

The Shandong Center for Disease Control and Prevention received the order of supporting virus detection in Hubei's laboratories on Jan 29 and then made a quick response.

The emergency test group consists of four experts engaging in disease control and prevention. They were selected from a total of 18 candidates who are all skilled in virus detection. The four experts have abundant experience and are able to quickly get to work once they arrive in Ezhou, Hubei.

The group will help with sample testing, report making, and epidemicmonitoring. They can relive pressure on local medical workers as the number of suspected patients is growing.

In addition, a total of 14 boxes of supplies, including protective suits, surgical masks, gloves, and medical facilities, were sent to meet the needs in Ezhou on the same day."

"Since the outbreak of pneumonia caused by the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and Shandong Provincial People's Government have firmly implemented the major instructions and requirements made by Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, and the decisions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council.

During the holiday, government officials have been on duty, medical staff has worked diligently, and epidemic prevention and control have been well-implemented in the province. Shandong activated Level I Public Health Emergency Response on January 25th. Since then, the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and Shandong Provincial People's Government have taken the health and safety of foreign friends in the province very seriously, held multiple special meetings, and formulated plans and measures. The Foreign Affairs Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government has coordinated foreign affairs resources of the province and promptly published related information to effectively implement prevention and control measures. Foreign friends in Shandong are advised to follow prevention and control measures adopted by governments of all levels in the province. For any request on the epidemic prevention and control, please contact the Foreign Affairs Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government through consulate generals in Shandong and other channels.

Hereby we recommend the following practices to all foreign friends in Shandong:

I. Follow official information release. Visit the official website of Shandong Provincial Health Commission or follow ""sdswsjkw"" (the official WeChat account run by Shandong Provincial Health Commission) for the epidemic updates, the list of designated hospitals in Shandong, and prevention and control guide. You can also call the 24-hour hotline of Shandong Center for Disease Control and Prevention: 0531-88738367 or 0531-88737580.

II. Strengthen prevention and self-protection. Keep good hygiene by washing hands frequently. Wear a mask and dispose of used masks properly according to regulations. Keep proper ventilation and rooms clean. Avoid close contact with any wild animals or birds. Eggs and meat must be thoroughly cooked before consumption.

III. Minimize outdoor activities. Avoid crowded places, parties and group activities. Correctly wear a mask (preferably, a surgical mask) if you have to go and attend. See a doctor with your mask on in designated medical institutions in Shandong in case of fever, cough, chest pain or fatigue.

IV. Strictly follow isolation procedures. If you have lived in, visited or travelled to seriously infected areas, or contacted with people who came back from epidemic areas and have shown respiratory symptoms such as fever and cough, please stay at home to observe your health condition for 14 days starting from the last day of your stay in infected areas or your contact with the above-mentioned people with respiratory symptoms. Please cooperate with government or community personnel or medical staff if they inquire about your condition.

V. Go to a designated hospital in time. Major symptoms of pneumonia caused by the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) include fever, fatigue and cough. Upper respiratory symptoms such as nasal obstruction or running nose are rarely seen. For some patients, the symptoms begin mildly, even without a fever. If you have respiratory symptoms such as fever or cough, please go to the fever clinic of the nearest hospital designated by the municipal health commission with a mask on as soon as possible and do not go to other departments of the hospital.

The Chinese government has confidence and ability in controlling the epidemic. The Foreign Affairs Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government would like to express our deep appreciation to all the foreigners in Shandong for supporting our epidemic prevention and control efforts in different ways. Let us all wish for the best, do our utmost, and join hands in securing a final victory in the battle against the epidemic!

Foreign Affairs Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government

January 30, 2020"

"As the largest vegetable production center in China, eastern Shandong province have delivered huge amounts of the produce to major provinces and cities –including Hubei province, Beijing and Shanghai – in order to ensure supplies amid the fight against the coronavirus.

An expert group from the Shandong Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs recently investigated local greenhouses and helped farmers deal with their problems.

Wang Qinghe, director of the commerce bureau of Lanling county in Linyi in Shandong province, said that around 300 metric tons of vegetables were being sent to the Yangtze River Delta region every day and many vegetables had been donated to support the stricken Wuhan in Hubei province.

Accordingly, the prices of a variety of vegetables are submitted every day and local government cracks down on bidding up the price while the fight continues against coronavirus.

The vegetables are well-packed and examined before delivery. The processes of production and transportation can be checked through the QR codes, guaranteeing the safety.

Officials said green channels have been opened in Shandong to ensure the smooth and fast transportation for fresh vegetables

They said it takes less than 3 minutes for one truck to be processed at the toll station."

"A worker loads the truck with medical supplies in Shandong province on Jan 29. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Since the outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), multiple enterprises in Shandong province have contributed great efforts to support Wuhan city and Hubei province.

Shandong Xinhua Pharmaceutical Co Ltd, the country's largest production base for antipyretic and analgesic drugs, ran its production line at full capacity, with a daily output of more than 20 million tablets. The 160,000 packs of medicine were donated to Wuhan via China Post and will be uniformly distributed by the Wuhan Red Cross to send to local hospitals in urgent need of medicine.

Shandong Weiqiao Pioneering Group has donated 30 million yuan, including 10 million ($1.43 million) to the Wuhan Charity Federation, mainly used for the prevention and treatment work of 2019-nCoV in Wuhan. Meanwhile, production of protective masks has been stepped up to curb the spread of highly contagious pneumonia.

Shandong Yinfeng Investment Group urgently shipped 5,040 doses of immunoglobulin worth more than 3 million yuan to Huanggang, Hubei to battle the virus. Immunoglobulin is one of two drugs in short supply in Huanggang, and is effective in treating severe pneumonia."

"Weifang, China's vegetable capital in Shandong province, has donated 350 tons of high-quality vegetables to Wuhan, the city hardest hit by the epidemic in China, on Jan 28, and will continue to support Wuhan with a daily supply of 600 tons of high-quality and affordable vegetables as needed.

The first batch of 350 tons of vegetables to Wuhan in Central China's Hubei province from Shouguang, a county-level city in Weifang, on Jan 28. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Shouguang municipal government mobilized specialized vegetable markets, agricultural parks and vegetable farmers to pick the freshest vegetables and also carry out quality inspection, packaging and loading overnight upon receiving instructions from superiors on Jan 27.

""We only spent 16 hours on a routine 48-hour job,"" said Qiao Risheng, vice-mayor of Shouguang.

A farmer picks fresh vegetables overnight for the market of Wuhan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

According to Li Xiuxin, director of the bureau of agriculture and rural affairs of Shouguang, the 350 tons of vegetables, with a value of more than 2 million yuan ($288,334), have not only been examined by five towns and streets, but also other third-party units.

The first batch of 350 tons of vegetables is predicted to be supplied to the market in Wuhan on the morning of Jan 29.

The daily turnover of vegetables in Shouguang currently is more than 20,000 tons, and 600 tons of supply in Wuhan will not affect the supply of vegetables in other areas. Shouguang will also make efforts to assist Beijing, Shanghai and other large cities to ensure stable prices."

"Photo taken on Jan 27, 2020 shows suspended buses at a bus terminal in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province. To contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, after suspending inter-provincial passenger bus services in Shandong on Sunday, all inter-city passenger bus services in Shandong are suspended from Monday. (Xinhua/Li Ziheng)

Photo taken on Jan 27, 2020 shows suspended buses at a bus terminal in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province. To contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, after suspending inter-provincial passenger bus services in Shandong on Sunday, all inter-city passenger bus services in Shandong are suspended from Monday. (Xinhua/Li Ziheng)

Photo taken on Jan 27, 2020 shows suspended buses at a bus terminal in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province. To contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, after suspending inter-provincial passenger bus services in Shandong on Sunday, all inter-city passenger bus services in Shandong are suspended from Monday. (Xinhua/Li Ziheng)

Photo taken on Jan 27, 2020 shows the hall of a closed bus terminal in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province. To contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, after suspending inter-provincial passenger bus services in Shandong on Sunday, all inter-city passenger bus services in Shandong are suspended from Monday. (Xinhua/Li Ziheng)

Photo taken on Jan 27, 2020 shows a closed bus terminal in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province. To contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, after suspending inter-provincial passenger bus services in Shandong on Sunday, all inter-city passenger bus services in Shandong are suspended from Monday. (Xinhua/Li Ziheng)

Photo taken on Jan 27, 2020 shows suspended buses at a bus terminal in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province. To contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, after suspending inter-provincial passenger bus services in Shandong on Sunday, all inter-city passenger bus services in Shandong are suspended from Monday. (Xinhua/Li Ziheng)"

"Wang Shimei picks strawberries in a greenhouse in Lianghe village of Wulian county in Rizhao, East China's Shandong province, Jan 23, 2020. An Fengdong and Wang Shimei, a couple in Lianghe village, used to be poverty-stricken. In 2017, the couple received a loan of 130,000 yuan (about $18,742), and started to plant strawberries. At present, the couple gain an annual income over 100,000 yuan ($14,417) and have paid off their loan. They plan to enlarge the plantation and help more households shake off poverty. [Photo/Xinhua]

Wang Shimei picks strawberries in a greenhouse in Lianghe village of Wulian county in Rizhao, East China's Shandong province, Jan 23, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

An Fengdong works in a strawberry field inside a greenhouse in Lianghe village of Wulian county in Rizhao, East China's Shandong province, Jan 23, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

An Fengdong (L) and Wang Shimei pick strawberries inside a greenhouse in Lianghe village of Wulian county in Rizhao, East China's Shandong province, Jan 23, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

An Fengdong (R) and Wang Shimei show strawberries inside a greenhouse in Lianghe village of Wulian county in Rizhao, East China's Shandong province, Jan 23, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

An Fengdong picks strawberries inside a greenhouse in Lianghe village of Wulian county in Rizhao, East China's Shandong province, Jan 23, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

An Fengdong (R) and Wang Shimei pick strawberries inside a greenhouse in Lianghe village of Wulian county in Rizhao, East China's Shandong province, Jan 23, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]"

Taierzhuang Ancient Town, Zaozhuang (台儿庄古城 tái ér zhuāng gǔ chéng) An aerial view of Taierzhuang Ancient Town [Photo tezgc.com] Taierzhuang Ancient Town, dating back to the Qin (221-206 BC) and Han (206 BC-AD 220) dynasties, underwent rapid development of its economy and society due to the diversion of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal during the reign of Emperor Wanli (1574-1620) of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Covering an area of 2 square kilometers, it was named as the world's best town by Emperor Qianlong (1736-95) of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). However, the Battle of Taierzhuang in 1938, which marked the first major Chinese victory of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression (1931-1945), destroyed the place. It was reestablished and restored in 2008. It is the only ancient town along the Grand Canal with well-preserved wharves and revetments. There still exists a 3-kilometer-long section of the canal in the town, which is therefore considered a "living ancient canal" by the World Tourism Organization. The town also keeps 53 World War II relics, the most of their kind in the country. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: Open all day long Ticket Price: 160 yuan ($23.19) Location: Huaxing Road, Taierzhuang district, Zaozhuang city, Shandong Website: http: www.tezgc.com (Chinese) http: www.tezgc.com site tez\_en index.shtml (English) Online Booking: http: www.tezgc.com ydzx1.html Note: 1. Sixty to 69-year-old people, full-time college students, and the disabled can buy half-price tickets with valid identification.2. Chinese, English or small languages’ tour guide services are available in the tourist area from 8 am to 6 pm.3. Multiple entries within three days are allowed with your ticket.4. Schedule your tourist route in advance.5. Buy travel insurance. The gate of Taierzhuang Ancient Town [Photo sdta.cn] The ship-type ancient street in Taierzhuang Ancient Town [Photo tezgc.com]

Yimeng Mountains, Linyi (沂蒙山旅游区 yí méng shān lǚ yóu qū) Yimeng Mountains in Linyi, East China's Shandong province [Photo Xinhua] The Yimeng Mountains Tourist Area in Linyi, located in the central southern area of Shandong province, is composed of three parts, namely the national 5A-level Yishan Mountain Scenic Area, and the 4A-level Guimeng and Yunmeng scenic areas of Mengshan Mountain, covering a total area of 148 square kilometers. Known as a natural oxygen bar, Yimeng Mountains have beautiful natural scenery and rich ecological resources, with the forest coverage reaching more than 95 percent. It has over 300 scenic spots, including waterfalls, rare stones and a plank walkway. The mountains are the cradle of Dongyi culture, from the ancient tribes in Eastern China from the Neolithic Age 8,300 years ago to the Western Zhou Dynasty (c.11th century-771 BC). It has dozens of relics of the neolithic Dawenkou and Longshan cultures. The Great Wall of Qi, which is on the UNESCO World Heritage Site list, is also located in the area. The mountains served as one of the major ceremonial centers of ancient China, with 16 emperors from 10 dynasties holding worship ceremonies and offering sacrifices to Heaven there. Enshrined by such ceremonies, it also attracted believers of both Confucianism and Taoism, men of letters and celebrities whose residence and visits left numerous places of interest. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: 8 am – 5 pm (entry until 4:30 pm) Ticket Price: 150 yuan ($21.75 for a coupon ticket) Location: Linyi city, Shandong Website: http: www.ymslyq.cn (Chinese) Online booking: http: www.ymslyq.cn news 45.html Note: 1. Children under 6 years or under 1.4 meters tall, people over 60 years, active duty soldiers, retired army officers and the disabled can have free entrance with valid identification.2. Chinese, English or Korean tour guide services are available in the tourist area from 8 am to 6 pm.3. Schedule your tourist route in advance.4. Buy travel insurance. The world's largest sculpture of the God of Longevity is located at the Yimeng Mountains Tourist Area in Linyi, East China’s Shandong province. [Photo Xinhua] The plank walkway is built along the cliffs of Yimeng Mountains. [Photo Xinhua]

"The Yellow River flows through nine cities in Shandong province, in which there are various national and provincial parks, including the Mount Tai national scenic spot, the Wen River national wetland park, and the Zulai Mountain and Wen River national water conservancy scenic spot in Tai'an, the Yuanshan national forest park and the Yaojiayu ecological tourism resort in Zibo, and more.

The ecosystem of the Yellow River basin should be protected, and to this end, three different park systems, including national parks, nature reserves, and nature parks should be established in Shandong province.

It is necessary to set up national parks inside of nature reserves. One example of a national park is Mount Tai, a world cultural and natural heritage site with rich vegetation and unique plant and animal species. The mountain integrates different kinds of culture, including ancient-style sacrifice, religion, humanity and architecture.

In 2017, with the approval of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Land and Resources, and the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Mount  Tai was designated as a pilot project for ecological protection and the restoration of mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, and grasses.

It is also important to establish nature reserves in typical natural ecosystems. A nature reserve is a natural ecosystem or a natural concentrated distribution area of rare or endangered animal or plant species.

One example is the Yellow River delta wetland located at the estuary of the Yellow  River, which is one of the most complete and one of the youngest coastal wetland ecosystems in the warm temperate zone.

In recent years, due to a shortage in water resources, a rise in sea levels, and the erosion of coastal wetlands, biodiversity in wetlands has decreased. The Yellow River delta wetland is a national protected area, and it will be incorporated into the national park system, which will help preserve the area.

Nansi Lake, the largest freshwater lake in Shandong, is an important diversion and storage lake for South-to-North water diversion in Shandong province. In 2003, the Shandong Provincial Government approved the establishment of a 1,275-sq-km provincial-level nature reserve to protect wetland ecosystems and rare and endangered birds, which can be incorporated into the national park system to better protect water sources.

Besides, it is a significant step is to establish natural parks in areas with important ecosystems, culture, or landscapes. A natural park is a place with an important natural ecosystem, natural relics, or natural landscape, or a place with ecological, ornamental, cultural, or scientific value. Different types include forest parks, geo-parks, wetland parks, and more.

There are many such parks in the Yellow River basin of Shandong province, including Mount Yuan national forest park in Zibo, and the Wen River national wetland park and Dongming Yellow River wetland park in Heze. Though these parks already exist, they are managed by different departments and have not been integrated into the national park system.

There are many national parks along the Yellow River in Shandong province, including national forest parks, national wetland parks, national scenic spots, national geological parks, national water conservancy scenic spots, and water source protection areas.

To become a part of the national park system, it is necessary to carefully study the requirements of the national ecological security pattern in the Yellow River basin so as to ensure that the national park system can guarantee national and regional ecological security.

Scientific planning should be carried out for the national park system to ensure that water conservation, flood storage, wind and sand fixation, soil conservation, and ecological services can be improved in the Yellow River basin.

The author is deputy secretary of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. The views do not necessarily reflect those of chinadaily.com.cn."

"Sun Yunyi, a master in making colored glaze known as liuli, creates a product at a kiln in Boshan district of Zibo, Shandong province. Photo provided to China Daily

Many may consider glass a mundane material of not much value, but the Boshan district in Zibo, Shandong province, could change one's views through its exquisite glass artwork.

Since the 13th century, colored glaze, known to the Chinese as liuli, has been mass produced in Zibo and other places in China.

On a cold winter day, a liuli artwork workshop at Jinxiang Glass Culture and Arts Co in Boshan is warmed by two brick, mud and metal kilns in which roaring fires melt glass materials. Dozens of craftsmen come to the kilns to dip the tips of blowpipes into molten glass.

Then some craftsmen hurry to their seats to shape the ball before it hardened. Some roll the ball on a thick sheet of steel that lay flat to create a cool exterior layer.

To make good shapes, craftsmen need to dip their blowpipes into the kilns to get molten glass several times.

""Liuli works are a kind of artistic beauty born from fire,"" said Sun Yunyi, a sophisticated liuli artist.

Sun's grandfather and father were also liuli craftsmen. Inspired by this family tradition, he began working on interior painting at Boshan Arts and Liuli Plant in 1983 when he was 16 years old.

""When I was young, every household in Boshan had a kiln in which they made liuli products,"" Sun said.

Made from locally abundant raw materials such as silicon dioxide, calcium fluoride and potassium nitrate, Boshan liuli appear in a rich variety of colors, including yellow, scarlet, purple, black and green.

Craftsmen in Boshan have been experimenting with different additives to produce glass of different types and higher quality.

Sun has been experimenting persistently to restore the techniques used to make yellow liuli, which is called ""chicken fat"" by Boshan locals because of its color and quality.

A liuli product made by Sun Yunyi. Photo provided to China Daily

Chicken-fat liuli products were used by royal families during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). But the chicken-fat liuli crafting techniques were not recorded, and as a result they had been lost for some time and were not regained until the Suns began working on them.

""The techniques were passed down orally from generation to generation, so the way to make good quality products mainly depends on experience,"" Sun said.

With two decades of experimentation, Sun successfully restored the techniques, making him an outstanding liuli artist.

Sun is certified as the national patent holder of the production method of chicken-fat yellow glaze and the relief craft based on the set glaze.

There are six main steps in creating liuli－designing, mixing, blowing, cooling, polishing and carving, according to Sun.

After those steps, Boshan-style liuli artwork is produced through techniques like overlay carving and interior painting.

Carving is an intricate process consisting of a dozen steps, including carding, grinding, patterning, waxing, contouring, engraving and polishing.

Interior painting is a Chinese specialty. With a purpose-built slim pen placed into a pea-sized hole, the artist is able to paint exquisite patterns inside a glass work.

So far, Boshan has over 1,000 craftsmen making liuli artwork, of which 124 are national and provincial-class artists. More than 100 liuli artworks have been collected by museums at home and abroad, including the Baoyun Building of the Palace Museum, Bristol Museum & Art Gallery in England and the National Gallery of Australia.

Boshan liuli is gaining wide recognition on the national and world stages with its special artistic and cultural charms, said Zhang Rong, director of the Palace Museum library.

Thanks to local government support, Boshan has developed into the major trade and distribution base of liuli artwork. Liuli products made in the district have been sold in over 80 countries and regions, generating annual revenue of over 250 million yuan ($36 million), according to the local government."

"Since 1995, Li Rongkai, an experienced lawyer and a seasoned people's mediator, has been committed to providing grassroots legal services, earning him not just a range of titles but also people's respect.

Keen on exploring new service models, Li over the years led a team of 140 legal practitioners to build his own grassroots legal service brand in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, innovatively incorporating legal services, mediation, psychological counseling and legal aid into his service approach.

So far, he and his team have held over 700 law popularization events in communities, schools and factories, donating foodstuff as well as books on legal knowledge to local people.

Moreover, since 2002 he has co-hosted and participated in law-themed local radio and television programs to provide legal advice or mediate disputes. In over 5000 episodes or more than 6000 hours, Li has mediated more than 2000 disputes of various kinds, spreading the spirit of rule of law to tens of millions of people.

In one of those programs he persuaded a murder suspect to turn himself in. In another he resolved a complicated labor dispute that had been unsolved for over 20 years. He has once settled a major dispute with respect to a key national engineering project.

As a visiting professor at the University of Jinan, Li presided over the founding of the first will registration center in Shandong in 2016, which has so far provided free will-keeping services for more than 1,000 people over the age of 60.

He also wrote two books on real cases to better share his experience and knowhow on mediation with other grassroots legal services.

Due to his distinguished contribution to the cause of people's mediation, Li was appointed as legal counsel for both provincial and municipal governments, and also honored by the Ministry of Justice with such titles as national people's mediation expert and the most beautiful legal service provider in the new era."

"East China's Shandong province pledged to provide support for Qingdao and Jinan in their quest to become national central cities, according to the government work report delivered by Governor Gong Zheng on Jan 18 during the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress.

Gong said that the province hopes to develop cities with global influence.

The provincial government will issue guidelines for the integrated development of three major economic circles, with the first being the provincial capital (Jinan) economic circle, the second being the Jiaodong economic circle, and the third being the Southern Shandong economic circle. It will also work to develop functional zones and launch preferential policies to guide the development of various regions.

According to the government work report, the Shandong government will assist Jinan and Qingdao by extending their global transport links, strengthening their internationally competitive industries, and perfecting their urban layout.

Gong said that efforts should be made to develop the Jinan and Qingdao metropolitan areas and improve their overall competitiveness in technical innovation and talent aggregation.

The third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress commences in Jinan on Jan 18. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Governor Gong Zheng delivers the government work report at the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress on Jan 18. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"Inspur Group plans to establish a Computing Valley in East China's Shandong province. [Photo/inspur.com]

Shandong province will offer its full support to the construction of the Computing Valley by Inspur Group, said Governor Gong Zheng.

Gong made the remarks during his government work report at the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress held in Jinan on Jan 18.

Computing is the most fundamental productive force in the era of information and is crucial for state security, economic competitiveness, and the ability to tackle scientific challenges, added Gong.

According to plans, the industrial ecology of the Computing Valley will begin taking shape by 2022.

By 2025, the valley is expected to be highly competitive in the digital industry and be serving as a new hub for the global computing industry, as well as an indicator of digital innovation in China.

Gong expressed hope that the Computing Valley would promote the development of a digital economy, digital government, and digital society in Shandong.

He noted that Shandong has always prioritized the development of new-generation information technology, especially in the computing industry.

Thanks to preferential policies and a sound industrial foundation, revolutionary new IT products have been developed in the province, including the country's first domestically made server and supercomputer.

According to the government work report by Gong, Shandong plans to ramp up efforts to develop and become a national model for the industrial internet.

Headquartered in Jinan, Inspur Group is a leading cloud computing and big data service provider in China with operations in more than 100 countries and regions, including R&D bases and plants in the US, Japan, and Hong Kong.

The third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress commences in Jinan on Jan 18. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"East China's Shandong province posted strong economic growth in 2019 according to the government work report delivered by Governor Gong Zheng on Jan 18 at the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress.

According to the government work report, Shandong's GDP in the past year grew by an estimated 5.5 percent year-on-year, while the province's general public budget revenue increased by 0.6 percent.

Governor Gong Zheng delivers the government work report at the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress on Jan 18. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The per capita disposable income of urban and rural residents increased by 7 percent and 9.1 percent respectively, while the registered urban unemployment rate stood at 3.29 percent at the end of 2019, and 1.38 million new urban jobs were created last year.

Gong said that 2019 was a very significant and extraordinary year for Shandong's development, as it gained approval to build the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone, its city Qingdao was approved to build the China-Shanghai Cooperation Organization Demonstration Zone for Local Economic and Trade Cooperation, and the Jinan Supercomputing Center Science and Technology Park began operations in May 2019.

The third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress commences in Jinan on Jan 18. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The prototype magnetic-levitation train with a maximum speed of 600 kilometers per hour was unveiled in Qingdao on May 23, 2019, filling the gap between aviation and high-speed rail transport in China.

The high-speed maglev transportation system is one of the key projects under the Ministry of Science and Technology's 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20) to promote an advanced rail transit system.

By the end of 2019, Shandong had opened more than 10,000 5G base stations and it was home to 44 national marine ranch demonstration zones.

Last year, Shandong invested 175 billion yuan ($25.2 billion) into the development of transportation infrastructure to spur more transportation infrastructure projects to stimulate economic growth and make traversing the province more convenient.

In 2019 Shandong invested a total of 37.5 billion yuan into railway construction, with the total length of operational railways in the province reaching 6,589 kilometers, including 1,987 kilometers of high-speed railways.

Deputies listen to the work report during the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress on Jan 18. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Shandong is striving to become one of China's top innovation-oriented provinces. More than 2,500 new high-tech companies began operating in Shandong in 2019, bringing the total number to over 11,000. The output value of high-tech industries accounted for 40 percent of the total, an increase of 3 percentage points over 2018.

Shandong has continued to improve the business environment for investors and enterprises, and rolled out a wide array of policies to improve its service."

"East China's Shandong province set a target for its gross domestic product growth -- a more than 6 percent increase in 2020, according to the government work report delivered on Jan 18 at the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress.

""Shandong's general public budget revenue will increase by 1 percent, while the province will create 1.1 million new urban jobs in 2020 and keep the registered urban unemployment rate will under 4.5 percent,"" said Gong Zheng, governor of Shandong.

Investment in fixed assets is targeted to increase by around 5 percent in 2020, while the total retail sales of consumer goods should go up by more than 6.5 percent.

Per-capita disposable income growth is targeted at around 7.5 percent.

Last year, Shandong's foreign trade value reached 2.04 trillion yuan ($296.2 billion), ranking sixth in China and accounting for 6.5 percent of the country's total.

This year Shandong will endeavor to maintain steady growth in foreign trade, and take measures to attract more foreign investment to expand opening-up and boost high-quality development.

Governor Gong Zheng delivers the government work report at the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress on Jan 18. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Deputies listen to the government work report during the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress on Jan 18. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"The third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress opened with Governor Gong Zheng's work report on the morning of Jan 18 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

The session will run for five days and ultimately conclude on Jan 22. Its agenda mainly includes:

The hearing and deliberation of the work report of the Shandong Provincial People's Government;

The examination and approval of the execution of Shandong's 2019 economic and social development plan and the plan for 2020;

The examination and approval of the implementation of Shandong's budget plan for 2019 and its draft budget for 2020;

The hearing and deliberation of the work report of the Standing Committee of the Shandong People's Congress;

The hearing and deliberation of the work report of the Shandong Provincial Higher People's Court;

The hearing and deliberation of the work report of the People's Procuratorate of Shandong Province.

The third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress commences in Jinan on Jan 18. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress starts at 9 am in Jinan, capital of Shandong province, on Jan 18. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Deputies attend the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress in Jinan, Shandong province, on Jan 18. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Deputies listen to the work report during the third session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress on Jan 18. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"East China's Shandong province is striving to become one of China's top innovation-oriented provinces by 2020 in order to contribute more to the development of an innovation-driven country.

According to a provincial conference on science and technology, more than 2,500 new high-tech companies began operating in Shandong in 2019, bringing the total number to over 11,000.

Local authorities said that in 2020, Shandong will continue to implement the strategy of innovation-driven development and promote mass entrepreneurship and innovation.

The province aims to achieve a number of core technological goals, and foster more than 2,000 new high-tech enterprises.

In addition, thirty-two science and technology projects from Shandong won China's top-level award during the recently-concluded annual ceremony of the National Science and Technology Award Conference.

In 2019, the Shandong Provincial Government established a special group to lead the promotion of science and technology and implemented several measures to accelerate its development into an innovation-oriented powerhouse. A special fund of 10 billion yuan ($1.46 billion) was also set up to promote related work.

Last year the province launched several important scientific research platforms, including the Shandong Institute of Industrial Technology, the Shandong Institute of Advanced Technology, and the Shandong Institute of Energy Research to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the high-tech and new energy sectors and promote the high-quality development of the province.

The province also plans to build at least one national laboratory, 10 provincial laboratories, 30 key state laboratories, and 300 key provincial laboratories by 2022."

"A view of the fully c container terminal at the Port of Qingdao in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, June 8, 2018. [Photo/IC]

The foreign trade value of East China's Shandong province reached 2.04 trillion yuan ($296.2 billion) in 2019, an increase of 5.8 percent over 2018.

This is the first time that the province has exceeded a trade value of 2 trillion yuan, according to a news conference held on Jan 15 by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government.

In 2019, Shandong's exports reached 1.11 trillion yuan, up 5.3 percent, while imports totaled 929.06 billion yuan, up 6.4 percent.

According to customs authorities, Shandong's total foreign trade value ranked sixth in China, accounting for 6.5 percent of the country's total, an increase of 0.15 percentage points over 2018.

Qingdao remains the province's leading city in terms of foreign trade. In 2019, the total value of imports and exports in the coastal city hit 592.34 billion yuan, remaining in first place among the province's 16 cities and representing an increase of 11.3 percent, accounting for 29 percent of Shandong's total imports and exports.

Trade between Shandong and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the European Union, South Korea, Japan, and Brazil increased by 15.2 percent, 9.5 percent, 0.9 percent, 2.8 percent, and 19.9 percent, respectively, while imports and exports to the United States dropped by 17.8 percent.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations overtook the United States as Shandong's largest trading market, while the United States fell to fourth place.

The province's imports and exports to Russia, Australia, Angola, India, and Canada rose 11.7 percent, 12.7 percent, 5.8 percent, 13.4 percent, and 7.1 percent, respectively.

Trade between Shandong and countries and regions involved in the Belt and Road Initiative increased by 15.9 percent, reaching a value of 603.09 billion yuan and accounting for 29.5 percent of the province's total. Exports were up 16.3 percent, while imports were up 15.3 percent.

In 2019, Shandong exports of mechanical and electrical products, labor-intensive products, and agricultural products increased by 4.5 percent, 6.1 percent, and 7.3 percent, respectively, accounting for 37.4 percent, 19.5 percent, and 11.1 percent of the province's total exports.

Imports of crude oil, iron ore, and aluminum ore increased by 13.4 percent, 46.8 percent and 14.8 percent, respectively, contributing 4.1, 2.5, and 0.5 percentage points to the growth of imports.

In 2019, Shandong's self-owned brands saw 261.48 billion yuan in exports, up 14.2 percent year on year and accounting for 23.5 percent of Shandong's total, an increase of 1.5 percentage points over 2018."

"The third session of the 12th Shandong Provincial Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) kicked off in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, on Jan 17.

Fu Zhifang, chairman of the CPPCC Shandong Committee, delivered the annual work report of the CPPCC Shandong Committee for 2019 and announced plans for 2020.

The third session of the 12th Shandong Provincial Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference commences in Jinan on Jan 17. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The third session of the 12th Shandong Provincial Committee of the CPPCC starts at 9:00 am in Jinan, capital of Shandong province, on Jan 17. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Full house: Shandong CPPCC members attend the session in Jinan, Shandong province on Jan 17. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Shandong CPPCC members listen to the work report during the session. [Photo/iqilu.com]

Public representatives listen to the work report during the session. [Photo/iqilu.com]

The session is live streamed to increase public engagement. [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"East China's Shandong province recently started its annual intangible cultural heritage month celebration in Jinan, the provincial capital.

The month-long festive cultural extravaganza kicked off with a gala evening at the Shandong Theater on Jan 16, which staged a dazzling show along the Yellow River featuring cultural heritage items.

Cultural heritage performances from the Yellow River Basin are highlighted at the opening ceremony of the Shandong intangible cultural heritage month on Jan 16. [Photo/ccmapp.cn]

Performances, which served up a visual feast for audiences, highlighted unique intangible culture from Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia Hui autonomous region, Inner Mongolia autonomous region, Shaanxi, Shanxi, Sichuan, Henan and Shandong.

The Yellow River, known as China's ""Mother River"" and the cradle of early Chinese civilization, runs through nine provinces and autonomous regions. It empties into the Bohai Sea in Dongying, Shandong province.

The Yellow River Basin sustains a population of 420 million people, or 30.3 percent of the nation's total, and a GDP of 2.39 trillion yuan ($343 billion), or 26.5 percent of the national total, as of the end of 2018.

Performers pose for a group photo at the opening ceremony of the Shandong intangible cultural heritage month, which will last until Feb 24. [Photo/ccmapp.cn]

Lasting until Feb 24, the intangible cultural heritage month, organized by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, is designed to promote the protection and utilization of the province's rich cultural legacies as well as enrich people's lives and boost cultural consumption.

According to Shandong authorities, a total of 659 activities will be held across the province during the year's edition, including an intangible cultural heritage Spring Festival shopping fair, a creative design competition themed on intangible cultural heritage and tourism, and a series of activities involving traditional New Year paintings."

"[Photo/VCG]

JINAN -- East China's Shandong province arrested 17,585 suspects related to mafia-style crimes last year, the provincial government said Tuesday.

Nearly 20 billion yuan (about $2.9 billion) involved was seized, up 575 percent, said Liang Zhanguang, deputy head of the provincial commission for political and legal affairs.

A total of 2,209 criminal gangs belonging to 113 mafia organizations were busted, official statistics showed.

Liang said Shandong stepped up the regulation of illegal activities in the exploitation of mineral resources, taxi transport and market competition, where mafia-style crimes used to be frequent."

"Nearly 700 cultural and art-related activities highlighting Shandong's rich intangible cultural heritage will be held from Jan 17 to Feb 24, the province's fifth intangible cultural heritage month.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism held a news conference on Jan 10 to provide details regarding this year's celebration.

Tourists try their hands at traditional shadow puppetry in Taierzhuang ancient town in Zaozhuang, Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com]

A total of 659 activities will be held across Shandong, including an ICH Spring Festival shopping fair, an ""ICH + tourism"" creative design competition, and a series of activities involving New Year paintings.

Liu Pengxin, an official from the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, said that this year the event hopes to attract more participation among the general public.

The event will also help to boost rural revitalization and targeted poverty alleviation, said Liu.

Folk artists hang newly-made woodblock New Year paintings up to dry in Yangjiabu village in Hanting, Weifang, East China's Shandong province. Yangjiabu village has been a production center of New Year paintings since the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). As a national intangible cultural heritage, the art form is one of China's three traditional New Year folk painting styles, along with Tianjin's Yangliuqing and Suzhou's Taohuawu. [Photo/Xinhua]

He added that during the period, the province will also launch ICH-themed tourism routes and promote related performances, shows and exhibitions at the province's scenic spots, all in a bid to promote the province's unique culture.

Shandong is the first province in China to hold an ""intangible cultural heritage month"". The event has been held since 2016, with more than 3,000 related activities and over 65 million participants in total.

Yang Feng, a practitioner of Rabbit King crafting in Jinan, displays a traditional figurine. The Rabbit King is a traditional toy made from mud for the Mid-Autumn Festival in Jinan. [Photo/Chinanews.com]"

"The founding forum for the Shandong Institute of Energy Research was held on Jan 9 in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province.

Jointly built by the Shandong Provincial Government, Chinese Academy of Sciences and Qingdao municipal government, the institute is another heavyweight scientific research platform launched in Shandong to promote the high-quality development of the energy sector.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, and Bai Chunli, president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, attended the founding forum. Gong Zheng, governor of Shandong province, presided over the event.

The founding forum for the Shandong Institute of Energy Research is held on Jan 9 in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

In his speech, Liu praised the establishment of the institute. He said that the new energy revolution characterized by cleanness, high efficiency, low carbon, and intelligence is currently underway, and that accelerating energy innovation and new energy industry development is the key to future success.

He added that Shandong is a major province in energy production and consumption. The institute will accelerate the transformation of Shandong's energy industry in terms of both quality and efficiency and contribute Shandong's strength to the construction of the national energy innovation system.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, delivers a speech at the founding forum for the Shandong Institute of Energy Research on Jan 9. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Bai noted that energy security and sustainable development is a major national strategy.

He said that it is a farsighted strategic measure for Shandong to build a world-class R&D institution and an innovation and entrepreneurship community in the energy sector.

He also expressed hope that the institute will promote energy revolution and help Shandong transform its old growth drivers into new ones and achieve high-quality economic and social development.

Liu Zhongmin, academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, was appointed president of the Shandong Institute of Energy Research.

Liu Jiayi (right), Party chief of Shandong province, issues an appointment letter to Liu Zhongmin, academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, making him president of the Shandong Institute of Energy Research. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Based on the Qingdao Institute of Bioenergy and Bioprocess Technology and supported by the National Laboratory for Clean Energy, both of which are branches of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the institute will strengthen cooperation with universities, research institutes, and enterprises in the field of energy at home and abroad.

The institute is expected to be completed in 2023 and become an international first-class energy science and technology innovation center and national energy laboratory in 2028."

"The Yellow River Estuary Ecotourism Area in Dongying, Shandong province was recently selected as a national 5A scenic spot, according to an announcement by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

So far, there are 12 5A scenic spots in Shandong.

Located in the delta where the Yellow River, China's mother river, joins the Bohai Sea, the area is renowned as the most complete, most expansive, and youngest wetland ecosystem in the country.

Covering an area of 153,000 hectares, it is a popular tourist destination for viewing landscapes and watching birds.

The wetland's landscapes change throughout the four seasons, with tamarisks turning red and willows greening in spring, rivers rippling in summer, reed catkins flying in autumn, and plants getting frosty in winter.

It is known as the ""bird's paradise"" and the ""international airport for birds"", as it is home to 368 species of bird and serves as a transit station for migrating birds throughout Northeast Asia. During winter, over 6 million birds reside and breed in the zone.

Wild birds soar effortlessly in the sky above the Yellow River Estuary Ecotourism Area in Dongying, Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The Yellow River empties its bright yellow waters into the deep blue Bohai Sea near Dongying. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Covering an area of 153,000 hectares, the Yellow River Estuary Ecotourism Area in Dongying, Shandong province hums with life and activity. [Photo by Ding Hongan/Dongying Weekly]

Hou Minhao contributed to this story."

"East China's Shandong province will open at least 20 heritage parks to the public by 2025 in a bid to strengthen protection and utilization of local cultural relics.

Shandong is one of the cradles of the Chinese civilization. Neolithic cultures, such as the Dawenkou and Longshan cultures, existed in the region between 8,500 and 4,000 years ago.

Shandong, known as Qilu in ancient times, was the home of the Qi and Lu states during the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC) as well as the Warring States Period between 475-221 BC. The province is also the birthplace of Confucius and Mencius.

According to a news conference hosted by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government on Jan 8, there are currently many famous archaeological parks in Shandong, including one in Dawenkou, Tai'an and the Chengziya National Archaeological Park in Jinan.

Wang Tingqi, deputy director of Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, said that Shandong will double down on efforts to protect cultural relics and enhance supervision.

Wang said that Shandong will encourage more public participation in the protection and utilization of cultural relics.

Wang added that the province will implement the ""Museum +"" strategy to promote smart museums, online museums, art galleries, exhibition centers and libraries.

In addition, the province will also provide favorable policies to promote the development of private museums."

"East China's Shandong province recently released a plan to strengthen the protection and utilization of cultural relics in the provicne, in a bid to better preserve the province's cultural heritage.

The plan has identified 16 tasks and 47 policies and measures aimed at striking a balance between the conservation of cultural relics and economic development.

According to the plan, Shandong will establish a system to better protect cultural relics and promote the proper use of these relics so as to bring greater benefits to the people.

As an important cradle of Chinese civilization, Shandong boasts countless cultural treasures, said Wang Tingqi, deputy director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

""We should properly observe the social, cultural, and educational function of cultural relics and the public should be encouraged to actively participate in preserving them.""

Wang said that Shandong will strengthen the protection and improve the utilization of cultural relics in the Shandong section of the Grand Canal, the Great Wall of Qi State in the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC), and the Yellow River basin.

Several demonstration zones will also be established to promote traditional culture and improve cultural research and protection.

Shandong plans to focus on urbanization, rural revitalization, and the Belt and Road Initiative, strengthen the protection of industrial, agricultural, and underwater heritage items, and promote cultural cooperation with other countries.

The province also plans to improve modern systems for cultural industries and markets, explore new mechanisms for cultural production, and develop new types of cultural businesses."

"East China's Shandong province recently held a series of tourism promotion activities in Guangzhou, Beijing, the Yangtze River Delta region, and the provinces of Hebei and Henan.

Shandong province highlighted its tours, which include a nature tour, study tour to Qufu, the hometown of Confucius, a Spring Festival tour, and a tour exploring traditional culture.

It also launched a number of special offers to attract more tourists.

According to the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, the promotional activities led to a total transaction value of 2.78 billion yuan ($400 million).

Shandong, with its long history, unique culture, and stunning natural scenery, welcomes people from home and abroad to join in lavishing praise on the province.

East China's Shandong province hosts a tourism promotion activity in Guangzhou on Jan 6. [Photo/dzwww.com]

The snow-covered Mount Tai is a must-see when in Shandong during winter. Shandong is home to many scenic spots and historical sites. [Photo by Liu Guoqing/WeChat account: SDTXTA]

A display of Shandong specialty dishes. Visitors can also experience magnificent landscapes, enjoy gourmet food and learn about traditional Chinese customs and history in Shandong province. [Photo/VCG]

Students show off poems they made using movable-type during a study tour in Qufu, Shandong province. Study tours exploring Confucianism and traditional culture are gaining popularity in the city. [Photo provided to China Daily]"

"East China's Shandong province plans to drastically increase investment in transportation infrastructure in 2020, according to an announcement at a working conference organized by the Shandong Provincial Transport Department on Jan 7.

Last year, Shandong invested 175 billion yuan ($25.2 billion) into the development of transportation infrastructure, while this year, it plans to invest 184.2 billion yuan in order to spur more transportation infrastructure projects to stimulate economic growth and make traversing the province more convenient.

According to Jiang Cheng, director of the Shandong Provincial Transport Department, in 2019 Shandong invested a total of 37.5 billion yuan into railway construction, with the total length of operational railways in the province reaching 6,589 kilometers, including 1,987 kilometers of high-speed railways.

The first train to operate on the Southern Shandong High-speed Railway (the Rizhao-Qufu section) makes its maiden passenger trip on Nov 26, 2019. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Last year, a total of 112.1 billion yuan was invested into the construction of roads, with the total length of roads in the province reaching 280,000 kilometers, achieving a density of 178.8 kilometers per 100 square kilometers.

A total of 10.6 billion yuan was invested into the construction of port facilities, adding 19 new berths heavier than 10,000 tons and bringing total port transit capacity in the province to 910 million tons.

A container ship docks at a port in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Fangping/for China Daily]

Eleven billion yuan was invested into airport construction. There are currently nine general-purpose airports in the province.

In addition, the total length of urban railways reached 223.7 kilometers.

Jiang said that in 2020, Shandong will spare no effort in promoting the construction of high-speed railways. Five new high-speed rail projects will begin construction this year, while the provincial government will speed up preliminary work on four other high-speed rail projects.

The province will continue to expand its expressway network, adding 23 new roads with a length of 1,026 kilometers and extending about 14 roads.

Major port and airport construction projects will also be carried out this year."

"A traditional opera concert, part of the New Year's gala, was held on Jan 3 at the Shandong Grand Theater in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, to celebrate the New Year.

During the event, Peking Opera masters Li Weikang and Yu Lan, Huangmei Opera singer Cheng Cheng, and up-and-coming youngsters performed classic opera extracts in a variety of styles.

A traditional opera concert is held on Jan 3 at the Shandong Grand Theater in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswenlian]

Classical Peking Opera excerpts from ""Long Feng Cheng Xiang"" (prosperity brought by the dragon and the phoenix) are held at the concert. Peking Opera is one of the most dominant forms of Chinese opera, combining music, vocal performances, miming, dancing, and acrobatics. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswenlian]

""Chang Xiang Zhi"" (a bosom friend), a classic Liuzi Opera, is staged at the concert. Liuzi Opera consists of a combination of folk melodies and liuzi tunes. It is popular in Shandong, Henan, northern Jiangsu, southern Hebei, and northern Anhui. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswenlian

Wuyin Opera is performed during the concert. The opera, with a history of more than 200 years, is popular in the cities of Jinan and Zibo, as well as in neighboring areas in central Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswenlian]

Lyu Opera is performed during the concert. Lyu Opera, one of eight major Chinese operas, features a diverse array of tunes, relatable lyrics, and beautiful melodies. It is classified as a Chinese national intangible cultural heritage item. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswenlian]

Lyu Opera is performed during the concert. Lyu Opera, one of eight major Chinese operas, features a diverse array of tunes, relatable lyrics, and beautiful melodies. It is classified as a Chinese national intangible cultural heritage item. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswenlian]

Huangmei Opera is performed at the concert. Huangmei Opera, a traditional rural folk song and dance originating from Anhui province, is popular in China. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswenlian]

The classic Shandong Bangzi (Wooden Clapper Opera) is performed during the concert. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswenlian]"

"East China's Shandong province has issued guidelines on the implementation of the national government's so-called ""26 measures"", which aim to provide more development opportunities and equal treatment to Taiwan enterprises, according to the Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of Shandong.

In 2018, the mainland unveiled preferential policies known as the ""31 measures"" to provide Taiwan residents living on the mainland the same treatment as mainland citizens.

In November 2019, a new set of policies called the ""26 measures"" were introduced. Formulated by the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office and the National Development and Reform Commission, the measures allow Taiwan-funded companies to take part in the mainland's key industries, such as major technical equipment, 5G and civil aviation.

The companies will also have more equal access to financing, trade relief and import and export facilitation.

According to Shandong authorities, the guidelines clearly define the responsible departments, policy basis, procedures, and consultation windows, so that Taiwan compatriots and Taiwan enterprises can enjoy the convenience and benefits of the ""26 measures"".

""We provide further policy support for Taiwan-invested enterprises to expand investment opportunities in accordance with our industrial development plans,"" said an official from the Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of Shandong.

Official data showed that from January to November 2019, Shandong approved 142 Taiwan-funded projects, up 40 percent year on year, with actual investment from Taiwan amounting to $560 million."

"East China's Shandong province saw robust tourism growth in 2019, being visited a total of 930 million times by people from within and outside of China, up 8.5 percent year on year, sources from the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism said recently.

Tourism revenue totaled 1.17 trillion yuan ($170 billion) last year in Shandong, a year-on-year increase of 12 percent.

Wang Lei, director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, said that the culture and tourism industry has become a powerful engine for boosting development in the province.

Wang said that Shandong has taken full advantage of its scenic spots, cultural venues and cultural enterprises and developed more diverse tourism packages and performances.

Shandong has also improved its infrastructure and services at tourist attractions.

Promotional activities have been organized both at home and abroad to expand.

The province has also been ramping up efforts in developing its nighttime economy, cross-border integration and ice-snow tourism.

Wang added that the province will continue to work with overseas Chinese Cultural Centers and organized a series of Confucius-themed activities to promote Shandong and raise its international profile.

She said that Shandong will launch campaigns promoting infrastructure construction and environmental protection at tourist sites and boost tourism along the Yellow River and Grand Canal."

"Technicians at Weichai Group, a leading company in the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone, carry out quality inspections on a production line. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Shandong Heavy Industry Group, which mainly makes construction and agricultural machinery, generated revenue of more than 390 billion yuan ($55.93 billion) in 2019, according to the company.

Weichai Group, the largest wholly owned subsidiary of Shandong Heavy Industry Group, reported record annual revenue of 261.2 billion yuan.

Weichai, one of the leading heavy trucks and component developers in China, was originally known as Weifang Diesel Engine Factory when it was established in 1946. It has transformed itself into an international company in recent years.

Led by Tan Xuguang, chairman of Weichai Group, the company carried out a series of reforms on ownership structure, cut unnecessary departments and improved management.

Weichai has expanded into many industries via mergers and acquisitions over the past two decades, such as marine engines and forklifts.

It has established the only national-level key laboratory for internal combustion reliability in China, which has given rise to many of the company's most popular products over the past few years.

The company's market share in China has expanded for three consecutive years. The group has also successfully expanded into markets in Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and Europe."

"East China's Shandong province saw trade with Belt and Road countries grow 15.4 percent year-on-year in the first 11 months of 2019, local customs authorities said.

Exports with B&R countries rose 14.1 percent, while imports increased 17 percent, according to statistics from the Qingdao and Jinan Customs.

Shandong's total foreign trade rose 5.4 percent year-on-year to 1.84 trillion yuan during the Jan-Nov period. Exports in November rose 4.3 percent, ending a three-month streak of annual declines.

Shandong's exports to its two largest trading partners, the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, grew 9.4 percent and 13.2 percent, respectively.

Its exports to the Republic of Korea and the United States, however, declined 0.1 percent and 19.2 percent, respectively."

"Residents of Wenshangji town in Chengwu county of Heze, Shandong province, prepare Chinese cabbages that were donated to residents in Xi'an, Shaanxi province on Friday. [Photo by Cheng Hongtao/For chinadaily.com.cn]

A farmer who leads a vegetable cooperative in a village in Heze, Shandong province, donated 50 tons of Chinese cabbage to residents in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, in hopes of adding a dish of fresh vegetables for people required to stay home amid the pandemic.

The first shipment of 20 tons of cabbage arrived in the city on Sunday, said Wang Chunfeng, the donor, who is preparing another shipment with her fellow residents.

Wang founded the Yongsheng fruit and vegetable planting cooperative in April in Yanzhuang village of Wenshangji town in Chengwu county, mainly to grow Chinese cabbage and green radishes.

She will donate 50 tons of cabbage to Xi'an, around half of the total produced from her cooperative this year.

""I was shocked when I read the news that the number of COVID-19 cases in Xi'an is rising. I decided to do something for the city,"" Wang said. ""My family was once poor, and we were helped by kind people. My parents told me to help people who are in need.""

Wang received support from her parents and husband, as well as from fellow residents who came to help her package and load the vegetables. The town government found a truck to transport the vegetable and completed all the necessary donation procedures.

Wang got a phone call from a staff member in Xi'an on Sunday who expressed thanks for the kindness and told her the cabbages will soon be delivered to people in need.

Wang Chunfeng (front) and her fellow residents prepare donated cabbage for shipment to Xi'an, Shaanxi province, on Friday. [Photo by Cheng Hongtao/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Yang Xiuling, a paper-cutting expert from Yuncheng county of Heze, Shandong province, shows some of her work on Sunday. [Photo by Zhang Xiao/For chinadaily.com.cn]

A new high-speed railway section entered service on Sunday in Shandong province, adding the city of Heze to the network.

The 199-kilometer segment connecting Qufu in Jining city with Zhuangzhai town in Heze's Caoxian county is part of the high-speed rail service Rizhao, Shandong and Lankao county in Henan province. It is designed for speeds of 350 km/h, China Railway Jinan Group Co sid.

A passenger at Hezedong Railway Station on Sunday drew a picture of other passengers. [Photo by Zhang Xiao/For chinadaily.com.cn]

The line shortens travel time between Heze and Beijing to three hours, saving at least two hours for passengers, and enhances connectivity of the southern part of Shandong and the plains area of central China. It will promote regional economic and social development, the company said.

""It's impressive that it takes around three hours to get to Beijing from Heze,"" said Yang Xiuling, a paper-cutting expert Heze's Yuncheng county. Yang travels to Beijing frequently to participate in paper-cutting exhibitions.

A high-speed train reaches Hezedong Railway Station on Sunday. [Photo by Zhang Xiao/For chinadaily.com.cn]

She remembers the first time she traveled to Beijing by train in 2008.

""It was so crowded in the carriages that some passengers stood on one foot. It took us six hours to reach Beijing,"" she said.

People celebrate the high-speed railway reaching Heze on Sunday. [Photo by Li Baozhu/For chinadaily.com.cn]

The new railway will boost the development of the peony industry of Heze, where it's an economic pillar, said Sun Wenqi, head of a peony cooperative in the city.

""Fresh peonies are expected to reach more homes by high-speed railway,"" Sun said."

"Irit Ben-Abba Vitale (second from left), Fan Liming (second from right), and other officials unveil the Shandong-Israel Exchange and Cooperation Center on Dec 21. [Photo/sdu.edu.cn]

Israeli Ambassador to China Irit Ben-Abba Vitale and her delegation visited Shandong University (SDU) on Dec 21, and unveiled the Shandong-Israel Exchange and Cooperation Research Center with Fan Liming, president of SDU, and other officials.

Fan welcomed Vitale and her delegation to SDU. She introduced the history, discipline characteristics, and SDU's global cooperation and exchange, and reviewed SDU's cooperation with Israeli universities and research institutions.

The establishment of the research center will further leverage SDU's advantages in research on Israel, and help boost the cooperation in cultural communication, education, and science and technology between China and Israel, Fan said.

As a founding member of the China-Israel 7+7 Research Universities Alliance, SDU has formed close cooperative relationships with Israeli universities including Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv University (TAU), and Bar-Ilan University in the fields of liberal arts, science, engineering and medicine, Fan added.

Vitale expressed her appreciation for the cooperation between SDU and Israeli universities. She said that the embassy will continue to support and expand the cooperation in other fields between SDU and Israeli universities to promote more achievements through exchanges between students and scholars of both sides.

The ambassador and her delegation also visited SDU's key humanities and social sciences research base of the Ministry of Education such as the Center for Judaic and Inter-religious Studies, SDU-TAU Joint Institute for Jewish and Israeli Studies, and the Shandong University Museum.

Professor Fu Youde, director of the Center for Judaic and Inter-religious Studies, and Professor Liu Senlin, dean of the School of Philosophy and Social Development, introduced the discipline characteristics, the research achievements, and the cooperation with Israeli universities through SDU-TAU Joint Institute for Jewish and Israeli Studies.

Professor Fang Hui, director of the museum and dean of the School of History and Culture, introduced the development of SDU's archaeology major, such as the achievements in the joint archaeological excavation and student cultivation that SDU has made with international universities like the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, TAU, and the University of Haifa.

Representatives and officials from the Embassy of Israel in China, the Foreign Affairs Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government and Shandong Provincial Department of Education as well as SDU's Department of International Affairs, the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Philosophy and Social Development, the School of History and Culture, and the Center for Judaic and Inter-religious Studies attended the event."

"A ceremony to celebrate Shandong Port Group Co Ltd's annual cargo throughput exceeding 1.5 billion metric tons was held on Thursday in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong Port Group Co Ltd, located in Qingdao, Shandong province, announced on Thursday its cargo throughput increased 5.8 percent year-on-year to over 1.5 billion metric tons, ranking first in the world.

The group's container throughput grew 8.1 percent year-on-year to more than 34 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) as of Thursday, ranking third worldwide.

Li Fengli, general manager of Shandong Port Group, said the group's revenue is likely to surpass 80 billion yuan ($12.56 billion) this year.

""Shandong Port Group has stepped up efforts developing new routes and ports to ensure a stable supply chain and actively sought transformation to an innovation-driven company,"" Li said.

This year, the group opened 34 routes for ship containers, among which were 25 designed for international trade. Cumulative shipping routes also reached 317, according to the group.

It also built 26 inland ports, developed 72 sea-rail combined transport routes and saw more than 2.5 million TEUs of container throughput by sea-rail combined transport this year.

The group is also on a fast track to high-quality development through developing supply chain finance, modern logistics and 10 other emerging sectors. In the past two years, its emerging sectors saw revenue and profit growth of 92 and 11 percent, respectively."

"Visitors check a scale model of the nuclear power plant in Haiyang, Shandong province. [Photo by NIE DONGLEI/FOR CHINA DAILY]

Green alternative replaces use of 12 local coal-fired water boilers

While heating costs in many cities in northern China have increased slightly this winter due to surging coal prices, Haiyang, Shandong province, has seen the opposite trend thanks to help from nuclear energy.

Residential buildings in Haiyang saw heating prices dip from 22 yuan ($3.45) per square meter to 21 yuan per square meter, as the city has started using heat generated from a nuclear power plant this winter. It thus became the first Chinese city to have carbon-free heating, said Zhang Jinfu, deputy mayor of Haiyang.

The nuclear energy heating project in East China's Shandong is able to provide winter warmth for 4.5 million square meters. This carbon-free alternative can replace the use of 12 local coal-fired water boilers and benefits 200,000 residents in Haiyang, and the move effectively increases heating efficiency while lowering costs, said its operator State Power Investment Corp.

The company launched a demonstration district heating system in Haiyang in November 2019, taking advantage of local nuclear energy facilities, and it has successfully provided nuclear heating services for some 700,000 square meters in the city.

The demonstration project is expected to further expand in Shandong province and benefit more local residents with clean heating that comes with ever-decreasing costs, the company said.

The Shandong government vows to achieve nuclear heating in all qualified regions on the Jiaodong Peninsula, Shandong, in the future, with the area on the peninsula enjoying such carbon-free heating expected to reach 200 million square meters by 2030, according to a plan released by State Power Investment Corp.

Luan Jian, head of Shandong's energy bureau, said the province will step up nuclear development on the peninsula during the 14th Five-Year-Plan period (2021-25) and actively push forward nuclear heating in the region.

The province also aims to have total nuclear installed capacity exceeding 13 million kilowatts by 2030, while focusing on building a 10-megawatt nuclear power base on the peninsula and actively promoting the use of nuclear energy for heating and other purposes.

According to SPIC, the nuclear heating project extracts nonradioactive steam from the secondary circuit of the two Haiyang AP1000 units, which is then fed through a multistage heat exchanger in an on-site heat exchange station.

The heat is then fed to an off-site heat exchange station belonging to a local thermal company, where heated water flows through municipal heating pipes to consumers.

Unit 1 and Unit 2 of the Haiyang Nuclear Power Plant in Shandong have produced more than 60 billion kilowatt-hours so far. Unit 1 of the plant is the world's largest cogeneration unit and has replaced 12 local coal-fired boilers, reducing the coal equivalent of 100,000 tons every heating season.

SPIC said the use of nuclear heating is expected to cut annual emissions of carbon dioxide by 180,000 tons, soot by 691 tons, sulfur dioxide by 1,188 tons and nitrogen oxide by 1,123 tons.

Analysts believe nuclear heating is an effective way to improve China's energy resource structure by utilizing nuclear energy for district heating, and to ease growing pressure on energy supplies.

Han Xiaoping, chief information officer at China Energy Net Consulting, said nuclear heating is an effective way to reduce emissions, as well as a key technological measure to combat pollution.

Heating facilities at a nuclear plant in Shandong province, providing heat for residential areas. [Photo/CHINA DAILY]

With the rapid development of China's nuclear energy sector, it is expected that many more regions in the country will bid farewell to coal-fired heating and welcome a cleaner way of warming up with cheaper costs and higher efficiency, he said.

China is capable of guaranteeing the secure utilization of nuclear heating with its mature technology, he added.

According to Liu Hua, an official with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Haiyang project has improved thermal usage efficiency and the economy of nuclear power.

Liu said he expects strengthening technical cooperation with China in comprehensive utilization of nuclear energy, as well as more sharing of China's successful experience with the international community.

China has emerged as a top player on the global nuclear power generation stage, with an advanced nuclear power industry chain including uranium resources exploration, nuclear fuel supply, engineering design and development, engineering supervision, equipment manufacturing, operational maintenance and disposal of radioactive waste.

The country has always been promoting greener development and prioritizes safety and security of nuclear power plant construction. It has pledged to peak carbon emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

The country's nuclear energy industry has witnessed rapid development over the past three decades. By the end of August, China had 51 nuclear power units in operation, with an installed capacity of 53.26 million kW, industrial data showed.

Wei Hanyang, a power market analyst at research firm BloombergNEF, expects that more domestic technology will be adopted with installations likely nearing 100 gigawatts by the end of 2030, with surging power demand in the country, especially from coastal regions.

Most of the country's nuclear heating projects are based on large-scale nuclear units, while the country's major nuclear power companies are also working on small reactor heating solutions, which are currently under design or undergoing engineering trials.

China National Nuclear Corporation saw its heating demonstration project at the Qinshan Nuclear Power Plant in Zhejiang province enter operation on Dec 3, which uses the remaining thermal power from the Qinshan plant's units to provide safe, zero-carbon heating for residents and public facilities in Haiyan county.

The relevant nuclear heating technology is mature and has been widely used worldwide. Only heat exchange without any medium exchange will be generated during the whole heating process. Users will thus only be provided with fully safe heated water, the company said.

With clean-energy heating being a priority, the National Energy Administration released a five-year plan as early as 2017, highlighting the innovation of clean heating technology and consideration of nuclear heating.

After that, CNNC launched its independently researched and developed Yanlong reactor for district heating in November 2017, which it said is a safe, economical and green reactor product targeting heating demand in northern cities. The reactor, which can be operated at low temperatures and normal pressures, can be built near urban areas due to zero risk of a meltdown and lack of emissions, said the company.

It can be constructed either inland or in coastal areas, making it an especially good fit for northern inland areas, and it has an expected life span of around 60 years.

From January to November, China's nuclear power generation stood at 370.2 billion kWh, 11.9 percent higher compared with the same period of the previous year, a further increase compared with the end of 2020, official figures showed.

While many developed countries, including Switzerland, Sweden and other European nations, have all had nuclear-fueled district heating projects, with heat from nuclear power plants also sent to industrial sites in several countries－in China, the planning and site selection, land and water use, emergency plans for crisis management as well as public safety concerns all make nuclear heating a lengthy process.

Before the technology is implemented on a large scale, mounting public concerns over nuclear safety following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan must be addressed. For nuclear heat to be implemented in inland provinces or other ecologically sensitive areas in the country, more public consultation is necessary, Wei said.

According to Yu Bing, deputy director of the National Energy Administration, nuclear energy heating is expected to become a new option to build a clean, efficient and diversified heating system in northern areas.

Nuclear heating has brought nuclear power into the mainstream public consciousness, and the government should further strengthen the guidance of public opinion and communicate well with the public to reduce their concerns, Yu said."

"Intangible cultural heritage has been playing a vital role in boosting rural revitalization in East China's Shandong province, and the local government has used it to benefit local farmers.

Shandong is rich in cultural resources and boasts an abundance of intangible cultural heritage items. Local statistics show that the province now has more than 1.2 million firms and households engaged in the intangible cultural heritage industry, generating an annual business revenue of 160 billion yuan ($25.13 billion) and creating nearly 4 million jobs.

All of this success is due to the provincial government's efforts to protect intangible cultural heritage items. A special project was launched to encourage low-income people to learn skills related to intangible cultural heritage, which has helped boost their economic development capacity.

The traditional cultural heritage items have also promoted rural revitalization in Shandong. Wheat straw weaving techniques have a history of more than 800 years in Wantou village, Boxing county, Binzhou, and the traditional technique was named a provincial intangible cultural heritage item in 2009.

Boxing county has leveraged its various strengths to promote the integrated development of the internet and traditional techniques. Wantou village is now home to 36 enterprises engaged in the wickerwork and wheat straw weaving business, and their products have been exported to more than 40 countries and regions. There are 51 online stores with annual sales revenue of more than 1 million yuan in the village, and Wantou village has been dubbed as one of China's top 100 Taobao villages.

People admire stone-carving works in Sanzhuang town, Rizhao, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/subaoxw.com]

Intangible cultural heritage plays a vital role in boosting rural revitalization in East China's Shandong province. [Photo/subaoxw.com]

Wickerwork and wheat straw weaving products in Wantou village are exported to more than 40 countries and regions. [Photo/ql1d.com]"

"Chong Yee-lam (right) climbed Taishan Mountain with her friend. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

When 20-year-old Chong Yee-lam of Hong Kong climbed Taishan Mountain in Shandong province for the first time, she stood at the summit for long time, gazing into the distance.

Part of a poem about the mountain came to mind: ""At the top, you can see all mountains in a single glance.""

Chong said, ""I knew the poem before climbing the mountain, but it was the moment when I reached the top and stood there, marveling at the grandeur, that I knew what it meant.""

She added that the poem lingered in her mind for days after she returned to school.

Because of her interest in Chinese history and culture, Chong chose cultural heritage and museology as her major at Shandong University after graduating in 2019 from senior middle school in Hong Kong.

""I learned that Shandong has rich historical and cultural resources. In addition, the archaeology department at Shandong University has a good reputation,"" she said.

Now in her junior year at SDU, Chong has been learning about the rich cultural heritage of Shandong, the home of Confucius. Over the past three years, Chong has visited several cities in Shandong, including Qufu, Qingdao and Dongying.

""Field studies provide a deep and comprehensive understanding of culture,"" she said.

Last month, Chong visited Dongying, where she was impressed by the Sun Tzu Cultural Park and the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve.

""The Art of War by Sun Tzu is well-known throughout the world,"" she said. ""I learned of his life and works at the park and later learned the values he espoused, such as prudence in waging war.""

At the Yellow River Delta reserve, she felt a sense of tranquillity. ""It's probably because of the environment,"" she said.

""The wild animals are not disturbed by human activity.""

On campus, Chong has classes to get hands-on experience with traditional Chinese culture, such as flower arranging and conducting tea ceremonies. She is especially impressed by the procedure for making books the way the ancients did.

""It's not easy to make a book,"" she said. ""We need to go through many steps and sew pages together with needles. That's one reason the ancients cherished books so much.""

Although it was the first time she had left home to live in a city for an extended period, Chong adjusted without difficulty.

""Before coming to Shandong, I visited several cities－Wuhan, Chongqing, Beijing－which helped me understand the culture, habits, customs and people on the Chinese mainland,"" she said, noting the warm atmosphere she has found.

""When I go to a fruit shop, I am frequently greeted by the woman who is the boss. She remembers me.""

When she gets homesick, she makes video calls to family members. And she's on the lookout for Hong Kong food. She found something close, a local snack called tianmo, a kind of porridge.

""Judging from its name, I thought it would be sweet, but it turned out to be salty, which suits my taste,"" she said.

In a year, Chong will graduate from the university. She hopes an opportunity will arise to stay on the mainland to work.

""The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has been creating more opportunities for young people,"" Chong said.

""I believe that if we take advantage of these opportunities, we will be able to realize our dreams in the future."""

"[Video/Dazhong News]

The final stage of the first ""New Era, New Shandong Cuisine"" 2021 Shandong Cuisine Innovation Competition kicked off on Dec 9 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

The final of the 2021 Shandong Cuisine Innovation Competition is held on Dec 9 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The competition, which was launched on Sept 16, is co-held by the Shandong Provincial Publicity Department, the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, the Shandong Base Station of China Media Group, as well as the Shandong Tourist Hotels Association.

In addition to participants from 136 districts and counties in 16 cities in Shandong province, the competition has also attracted the attention and participation of gourmets from more than 40 countries such as Britain, the United States, and Russia.

According to the organizers, 1,099 dishes were submitted to the competition. As of 6 pm on Dec 8, the total number of votes for the participating dishes had reached 53.91 million, setting a new record for voting in China's hotel industry.

The competition has also become the most influential and largest food contest with the most diverse range of participants in China's hotel industry.

The competition has a jury of well-known food experts. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The competition is designed to develop new popular dishes, establish new brands, as well as build a new platform for the inheritance and innovative development of Shandong cuisine.

Participants are encouraged to produce new dishes with local historical and cultural characteristics and locally sourced ingredients, as well as highlight nutrition, health and green concept and artistic aesthetics.

A dish submitted by Heze highlights the elegant and dignified atmosphere of peony flowers, as the city is known of ""peony capital of China"". [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The competition organizing committee selected 200 dishes for the final through an online audition, a city evaluation panel evaluation, and an expert committee selection. The 200 dishes will be evaluated by a panel of food experts.

Following the conclusion of online voting at 11pm on Dec 31, the competition organizing committee will select the ""2021 Top 10 Innovative Shandong Dishes"", ""100 Most Valuable New Shandong Dishes"" and ""2021 My Favorite New Shandong Dishes"".

A dish submitted to the New Era, New Shandong Cuisine competition [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"By Li Bu, Chen Tiebao, China Economic Times & Ji Jingyao, Academy of Macroeconomic Research

Research Report, No.295, 2021 (Total 6360) 2021-10-12

Abstract: The high-quality public service is an inherent requirement to foster a new development paradigm. Some local governments have made positive explorations in providing high-quality public services with various methods. For instance, they build a leisure time education system to reduce the burden on families; provide preventive services such as free vaccine inoculations against COVID-19 pandemic to build up people’s health; promote high-quality and full employment, increase vocational training to enable migrant workers to adapt to the replacement of old growth drivers with new ones and to allow them to subscribe to basic medical insurance through various ways; encourage public participation and make joint efforts to promote the renovation of old residential houses; push ahead with grid governance model, give free rein to mass organizations to ensure public security and effectively improve the efficiency of social governance at grassroots level. In view of the above-mentioned facts, we need to summarize local experience, encourage local governments to set targets in a scientific way, provide high-quality public services, change the old way of making input, improve financial performance, enhance public participation, give full play to the role of people’s suggestions, mass supervision and mutual assistance, and strengthen data collection and scientific evaluation of local explorations to provide more references for making public service policies.

Keywords: high-quality public services, high-quality development, local practice"

"A competition of making innovative dishes within the ambit of the Shandong Cuisine (Lu Cuisine) took place in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province on Nov 30.

The competition is themed ""New Era, New Shandong Cuisine"". It kicked off on Sep 16 and will last until February 2022.

Thirty-two dishes have been submitted with 12 dishes awarded the title of ""five-star dishes"" such as ""Pomegranate Tofu,"" ""Chestnut Chicken,"" ""Wine Jar Crisps,"" ""Lamb Elbow,"" ""Chickpea Flower,"" ""Peach Gum White Fungus Soup,"" and ""Feicheng Peach Knuckle"".

A variety of innovative dishes are being showcased during the 2021 Shandong Cuisine Innovative Competition in Tai’an. [Photo/my0538.com]

""Feicheng Peach Knuckle is a famous dish consisting of black pork and Feicheng peaches, which creates a mixed taste of delicious meat and fruity aroma,"" said Wang Mingdong, a master chef from Taixi Hotel who's competing in the event.

Wang Mingdong, a master chef at the Taixi Hotel introduces his culinary masterpiece called ""Feicheng Peach Elbow"" to the public during the competition. [Photo/my0538.com]

""The event is aiming to inherit and promote the traditional Chinese culinary culture, and the 32 dishes in Tai'an submitted during the competition have been streamed online as well,"" said Zhang Xindong, president of the Shandong Tourist Hotel Association.

Experts will further modify the quality of the 12 ""five-star dishes"" to help them shine in the international arena."

"The company logo of China's Sinopec Corp is displayed at a news conference in Hong Kong, March 26, 2018. [Photo/Agencies]

China Petrochemical Corporation, or Sinopec Group, the country's largest oil refiner, said its liquefied natural gas project in Yantai, Shandong province, started construction on Thursday, which will further ensure gas supplies in the northern and eastern regions of the country.

The first phase of the LNG project's receiving capacity is expected to reach 6.5 million tons per year after it is put into operation in October 2023, and it will play a key role in local energy structure optimization and sustainable economic development, said the company.

The first phase includes an LNG tanker berth, four LNG storage tanks and supporting gasification transport facilities. It is expected to transmit 34 million cubic meters of gas daily after construction, with an LNG storage capacity of 550 million cubic meters.

The project will also further facilitate the country's ambitions of peaking emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2060, it added.

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"A visitor tries smart equipment at an AI innovation and application summit in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, on April 19, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

JINAN -- East China's Shandong province has built 100,000 5G base stations, covering the urban areas of all its county-level areas, local authorities said Sunday.

Shandong has invested 8.37 billion yuan (about $1.3 billion) this year to construct 5G infrastructure and implement 5G applications. The number of its 5G users has reached more than 29 million.

By the end of 2025, Shandong is expected to have more than 250,000 5G base stations, expanding the 5G services to all its villages.

The province has beefed up the use of 5G tech in industries including new media, industrial internet, transport, education, healthcare and tourism over the years."

"Three Yantai attractions were included into the list of Shandong's night culture and tourism consumption clusters on Nov 22.

The three spots are Zhifu Wonderland Historical and Cultural Street, Haichang Fisherman's Wharf, and Penglai Powerlong Square.

The Zhifu Wonderland Historical and Cultural Street has Chaoyang and Suochengli streets.

The Chaoyang Street, which has a history of more than 100 years, is now focused on the promotion of the city's wine culture. It is expected to become a popular tourism destination that integrates recreation and commerce.

The Suochengli Street is themed around folk culture and introduces visitors to intangible cultural heritages including clay sculptures, Jiaodong Dagu, which is a type of ballad singing with drum accompaniment popular in Jiaodong Peninsula area, and guqin, a seven-string traditional Chinese instrument.

The night tour at Haichang Fisherman's Wharf is a highlight. It offers night entertainment, shopping and catering services.

The Penglai Powerlong Square has shopping malls, five-star hotels, commercial streets, and creation cultural workshop. It is the latest and most complete tourism and commercial complex in northern China, integrating tourism, shopping, catering, culture, entertainment, leisure, business and residence.

Zhifu Wonderland Historical and Cultural Street attracts a large number of tourists at night. [Photo/WeChat account: ytwlgw]

Penglai Powerlong Square is lively at night. [Photo/WeChat account: ytwlgw]

Haichang Fisherman's Wharf [Photo/WeChat account: ytwlgw]"

"Yimeng Mountains area in Shandong province [Photo/IC]

The Shandong Provincial People's Government has launched an implementation plan to boost the revitalization of the Yimeng Mountains area, an old revolutionary base in the province.

The plan consists of 25 measures and policies in seven categories.

According to the plan, Shandong will continue to implement the rural revitalization strategy in the area, accelerate agricultural modernization, build beautiful and livable villages, promote the integrated development between urban and rural areas, deepen agricultural and rural reform, as well as consolidate and expand poverty alleviation efforts.

Efforts will be made to replace old growth drivers with new ones, advance innovation-driven development, foster industries with local strengths, accelerate the development of the ""Four News"" economy, as well as further opening up efforts.

Shandong will promote green and low-carbon development in the Yimeng Mountains area, with specific measures to strengthen ecological protection and restoration, as well as to develop the tourism industry with local characteristics.

Shandong will promote cultural revitalization in the area, with specific measures to carry forward and inherit red culture, as well as to strengthen the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics.

The province will improve people's well-being in the area, with measures to strengthen public services, bolster education, as well as improve public health prevention and control capabilities.

Shandong will improve the infrastructure network in the area, with measures to accelerate the building of a comprehensive transportation system, bolster water conservancy construction, improve energy security, and build new types of infrastructure.

The province will improve the policy support system covering finance, land, talent, and other sectors to support the area's development.

The Yimeng Mountains area has long been known as the cradle of the ""Yimeng spirit,"" which was cultivated during China's struggle for liberation in the 1930s and 40s.

During the War of Liberation, more than 1.2 million of the 4.2 million people living in the Yimeng Mountains area made efforts to support the Red Army, with more than 200,000 joining it.

The Yimeng spirit of hard work, self-improvement, selflessness, and dedication has inspired generations of Chinese people ever since, continuing to shine in many ways in the present."

"State Power Investment Corp said its demonstration district heating system, NuanheOne, was put into operation on Tuesday and will cover Haiyang city of Shandong province and benefit 200,000 local residents with clean heating, making Haiyang the country's first zero-carbon city.

The system extracts non-radioactive steam from the secondary circuit of the two Haiyang AP1000 units, which is then fed through a multi-stage heat exchanger in an on-site heat exchange station.

The heat is then fed to an off-site heat exchange station belonging to a local thermal company, where heated water flows through municipal heating pipes to consumers.

Unit 1 and Unit 2 of the Haiyang Nuclear Power Plant in China's Shandong province have produced more than 60 billion kilowatt-hours so far. Unit 1 of Haiyang NPP is the world's largest cogeneration unit and has replaced 12 local coal-fired boilers, reducing a coal equivalent of 100,000 tons each heating season.

According to SPIC, the use of nuclear energy heating is expected to cut emissions of carbon dioxide by 180,000 tons, emissions of soot by 691 tons, emissions of sulfur dioxide by 1,188 tons and emissions of nitrogen oxide by 1,123 tons."

"Technicians check distribution equipment at a hydrogen facility of Sinopec Yanshan Petrochemical Co. [Photo by Hu Qingming/For China Daily]

The largest hydrogen cell supply project in Shandong province finished construction on Wednesday, according to its operator China Petroleum and Chemical Corp, the world's largest refiner by volume also known as Sinopec.

With an annual hydrogen production capacity of 22.5 million tons, the project will be put into operation by the end of December and further lift hydrogen production and supply capacity in Shandong province.

The project is a major hydrogen demonstration project in Shandong for the 14th Five-Year-Plan period, with a total investment of nearly 47 million yuan ($7.35 million). It is expected the annual hydrogen production capacity in Shandong will reach 45 million tons by 2023, which will by then meet all the hydrogen demand in the province.

The company plans to invest 30 billion yuan during the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) period in hydrogen-related business, including hydrogen refueling stations and hydrogen storage facility construction, all of which is believed to achieve a carbon dioxide reduction of more than 10 million tons.

The company also plans to build 1,000 hydrogen refueling stations, 5,000 charging and battery swap stations and 7,000 distributed photovoltaic power generation sites during the 14th Five-Year Plan period. It has already built 21 hydrogen refueling stations in 14 provinces and cities, including Guangdong, Shanghai and Hainan."

"Editor's note: A group of foreign reporters participated in the ""World Media Focusing on the Culture of Shandong"" trip that took them to Qufu, Tai'an, and Jinan from Sept 27 to 30. One of the participants was Dean Gordon Munk, an online influencer from Canada, who has detailed his firsthand experience on the trip here.

In Jinan and looking to further discover Shandong's rich history and culture? Within just a short distance from the Shandong capital of Jinan, there are abundant opportunities to visit the sites and explore the culture of ancient China.

In just over 30 minutes of travel time from Jinan, you can discover Qufu, an ancient city that dates back to Shao Hao, one of the five legendary rulers before recorded history in China. Surrounded by the fresh feeling of trees planted long ago, you can still see his tomb today just northeast of the city, a pyramid shaped structure with square stones.

What Qufu is even better known for is being the birthplace of the world-renowned philosopher Confucius, who is often considered as one of the most influential people in world history and whose philosophy still has strong influence today. He created simple rules for living 2,500 years ago that people still read and follow.

In Qufu, you can visit what is collectively known as the three Confucian sites, which are the Confucius Family Mansion, Confucius Temple, and Confucius Cemetery. This area has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is a must see place for people interested in history, philosophy, and culture.

Dean Gordon Munk displays his transcription of Confucian classics at the Nishan World Center for Confucian Studies in Qufu, East China's Shandong province on Sept 28. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The temple was built to commemorate Confucius in the 6th to 5th centuries BC and gives off a feeling of going back to a time where online media and the distractions of modern life were replaced by deep thought regarding the world around us and how everything fits together. Although it has been destroyed and reconstructed over the years, there are more than 100 buildings to admire.

Just around the temple lies the Confucius Family Mansion where many of life's intricacies were pondered by both Confucius himself and his direct descendants. Covering a total area of about 16 hectares, this historical gem lets you take in the essence of one of history's most influential families. As you walk around the courtyards and halls you can feel the peace and tranquility of deep thought.

Near Confucius Temple and Confucius Family Mansion lies the Confucius Cemetery. Covering about 199 hectares, it is China's largest and best preserved cemetery with over 2,000 years of active use. People able to prove their lineage to Confucius are still buried here today. Here you can see Confucius's own final resting place, as well as that of his son, his grandson, and approximately 100,000 descendants. Often referred to as the Confucius forest, it has over 20,000 trees planted by the Confucius family. At first this gives it more of a forest feel and only on closer inspection do you notice the tombstones throughout.

Just as Confucius said, ""You cannot open a book without learning something,"" I say you can't visit Qufu without learning something about history, Chinese culture, or even yourself.

Just north of Qufu and on your way back to Jinan is the city of Tai'an.

You may have heard of West Lake in Hangzhou but Tai'an has an even bigger lake by the same name. A beautiful place for a daytime visit or even better an evening stroll, what impressed me most about the lake was the fountain show, which has a main fountain that shoots water 200 meters into the air. As the many fountains put on a show choreographed with the music, a video telling ancient stories plays using the water behind it as a screen. Definitely a must see site.

Dean Gordon Munk visits Mount Tai in Tai'an on Sept 28. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Tai'an gets its name from Taishan or Mount Tai, which is widely regarded as the most important of China's five sacred mountains. It has been listed by UNESCO as a World Natural Heritage Site and a World Cultural Heritage Site. One of the reasons it is considered the most important of the five sacred mountains is the long list of emperors who have performed ceremonies at its summit.

The easiest way up the mountain is by taking the cable car that goes most of the way up and then walking the rest of the way. The more adventurous can climb up it in several hours. Regardless of the way you get to the top, a very meaningful moment occurs when watching the sun rise from the top of the mountain. Take a deep breath of that fresh mountain air and enjoy every moment that this cultural and natural scenic spot has to offer.

Make sure to take this chance to follow in the footsteps of many of the great emperors who have gazed down from the top of this magnificent mountain.

Dean Gordon Munk looks at a wooden wheelbarrow at the Shandong Museum on Sept 29 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Jinan not only has the sites to see in the city that it is famous for like Daming Lake, Furong Street, and Baotu Spring, as well as numerous other springs, but also places you can easily get to from Jinan like Qufu and Tai'an. Actually the whole province of Shandong is loaded with interesting things to see and do reflecting its ancient history and modern splendor."

"The ""New Era, New Shandong Cuisine"" 2021 Shandong Cuisine Innovation Competition has attracted much attention from society and industry since its opening on Sept 16, with gourmets and cooks from home and abroad participating.

A bass dish from Weifang, Shandong province. As of Nov 2, the dish topped the polls with 581,527 votes in the competition. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

As of 6:00 pm on Oct 29, 619 dishes had been submitted for the competition. In addition to the 136 districts and counties in 16 cities of Shandong province, the competition has also attracted the attention and participation of gourmands from the United States, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Britain, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, South Korea, Myanmar, Peru, Russia, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam and China's Hong Kong. The total number of votes for participating dishes currently stands at 7.2 million.

""The contest has attracted more and more inquiries and entries from professionals and food lovers at home and abroad, so we have to postpone the submission date by one month,"" said Chen Yongqing, director of the competition organizing committee and Party secretary of Shandong Base Station of China Media Group.

A dish called ""Fresh Orange Cashew Shrimp Balls"" by the Cambridge China Centre. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The competition received its first overseas entry, the ""Fresh Orange Cashew Shrimp Balls"" from the Cambridge China Centre, on Oct 22. The dish has attracted much attention and many votes after it was launched, according to the competition organizers.

""The competition is unprecedented in our industry,"" said He Zhuanglong, vice-chairman of China Tourist Hotel Association and chairman of Shandong Tourist Hotel Association.

Stewed chicken in clear soup from Dongying, Shandong province. The dish came in second with 565,785 votes. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""The scope of the competition, the number of participants, and the promotion and influence of the competition are all unprecedented,"" added He.

Xi Yanchuan, an official from the Shandong Provincial Publicity Department, said that the event will help to promote the innovative development of Shandong cuisine and tell Shandong's stories around the world.

Spiced braised chicken from Yucheng, a county-level city in Dezhou, Shandong province. The dish came in third with 410,947 votes. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Sinopec employees check an oil well at Shengli Oilfield, Shandong province. [Photo provided to China Daily]

The discovery of significant geological shale oil reserves at Shengli Oilfield will further boost oil output in the country while ensuring national energy security, experts said.

China Petroleum and Chemical Corp, also known as Sinopec and the world's largest refiner by volume, said on Wednesday that the company has discovered an initial 458 million tons of geological shale oil reserves at Shandong province's Shengli Oilfield, one of the country's largest conventional oil and gas fields.

Total shale oil resources amount to more than 4 billion tons, according to preliminary calculations.

The oilfield has vowed to realize production capacity for shale oil of up to 1 million tons during the 14th Five-Year-Plan period (2021-25).

Yang Yong, chief expert in development geology at Sinopec Shengli Oilfield, said there is no precedent for successful development of shale oil as thick as this in the world, and that a series of technological challenges need to be overcome. Shale oil is one of the unconventional oils produced from oil shale rock fragments.

Luo Zuoxian, head of intelligence and research at the Sinopec Economics and Development Research Institute, said the discovery will ensure increasing oil and gas output in the long term while contributing to national oil supply security.

""With tremendous shale oil and shale gas resources, China is the second country that has achieved breakthroughs in the sector after the United States,"" Luo said.

""With recent discoveries in Fuling and Changqing, the country is now on a fast path of developing its shale oil with several breakthroughs made in recent years, and it is believed the country's oil majors will focus more on in-depth and unconventional oil and gas exploration in the future.""

China National Petroleum Corp has recently discovered a major shale oilfield in Daqing, Heilongjiang province, with predicted geological reserves of about 1.268 billion tons.

Sinopec said in October that the cumulative output of the Sinopec Fuling shale gas field, the first large-scale commercial field of its type in the country, has exceeded 40 billion cubic meters of gas, setting a record for cumulative production in the country.

The National Bureau of Statistics said China's domestic oil production has been gradually increasing from 189.11 million tons in 2018 to 191.01 million tons in 2019 and 194.92 million tons in 2020."

"Recently the ""New Era, New Shandong Cuisine"" 2021 Shandong Cuisine Innovation Competition received its first overseas entry -- ""Fresh Orange Cashew Shrimp Balls,"" which is an innovative dish created and submitted by the Cambridge China Centre.

The dish has attracted wide attention and many votes after being launched, according to the competition organizers.

The innovative dish of ""Fresh Orange Cashew Shrimp Balls"" is submitted by the Cambridge China Centre. [Photo/China Media Group]

The creation of ""Fresh Orange Cashew Shrimp Balls"" was inspired by the classic sweet and sour carp and braised prawns in Shandong cuisine, highlighting the ""sweet and sour"" taste characteristics that British people enjoy.

The dish retains the original flavor of its food ingredients, which is highlighted in Shandong cuisine, and pays attention to the clever collocation of an egg white ""coat"" when fried.

The sweet and sour flavors of fresh orange, followed by a sprinkle of cashew nuts and black pepper create a solid layer of texture that makes people salivate.

The 2021 Shandong Cuisine Innovation Competition, co-held by the Shandong Provincial Publicity Department, the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, the Shandong Base Station of China Media Group, as well as the Shandong Tourist Hotels Association, launched on Sept 16. It will last until February 2022.

As of 6:00 pm on Oct 29, 619 dishes had entered the competition. In addition to the 136 districts and counties in 16 cities of Shandong province, the competition has also attracted the attention and participation of gourmets from the United States, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Britain, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, South Korea, Myanmar, Peru, Russia, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam and China's Hong Kong. The total number of votes for participating dishes has reached 7.2 million.

The competition is designed to develop new popular dishes, establish new brands, as well as build a new platform for the inheritance and innovative development of Shandong cuisine. Innovative dishes from Shandong and the whole world are welcome. Candidates can present new dishes characterized by innovative concepts or developed on the basis of traditional Shandong cuisine.

As an important component of Chinese culinary arts, Shandong cuisine, which is also known as ""Lu Cai"" in Chinese, boasts a long history and great influence. It is representative of northern China's cooking and its technique has been widely absorbed in northeast China. It is famous for its variety of ingredients and use of different cooking methods.

The competition includes the four stages of open selection, semi-finals, finals, and promotion. Nominations for the ""Top Ten Innovative Dishes in 2021"" and ""My Favorite New Shandong Dish in 2021"" will be determined and announced. Candidates can send videos of the cooking of their innovative dish to sdnews@cri.cn. The duration of each video must not exceed 5 minutes.

CRI contributed to this story."

"An exhibitor showcases seafood material at the 25th China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Oct 28, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

The 25th China Fisheries and Seafood Expo, which kicked off at the Hongdao International Convention and Exhibition Center in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province on Wednesday, has attracted nearly 1,000 enterprises from 19 countries and regions around the globe. The expo also launched a digital B2B trade platform this year to better display the products.

Shrimps and fish dishes are displayed at the 25th China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Oct 28, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

A staff member of an exhibitor cooks salmon at the 25th China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Oct 28, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

A visitor takes photo of products at the 25th China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Oct 28, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

Visitors browse seafood products at the 25th China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Oct 28, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"The ""2021 Dialogue with Shandong - Germany · Shandong Industrial Cooperation and Exchange"" event will kick off on Oct 28 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province, via both online and offline channels, according to officials at a news conference held recently by the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government.

Jointly hosted by the Shandong Provincial People's Government, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, and the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK), the event will include a theme seminar, four industrial exchange activities, a group visit of German enterprises, as well as field investigation and project matchmaking activities.

The theme seminar will take place on Oct 28, with the main venue in Jinan and sub-venues in 16 cities across Shandong. The seminar will include an in-depth discussion of the economic ties between China and Germany. It will also explore industrial platform construction and innovative development measures, introduce Shandong's industrial development strategy and key cooperation projects, as well as share cooperation experiences and facilitate cooperation between the two sides.

More than 20,000 people will attend the seminar in its online and offline venues, including government officials, as well as representatives from companies, chambers of commerce, and industry organizations.

Representatives of more than 50 German enterprises, including over 30 Fortune 500 companies like Siemens, Volkswagen, and Festo, will visit Shandong to conduct business negotiations with local government and companies.

According to customs statistics, Shandong's imports and exports to Germany reached 49.93 billion yuan ($7.8 billion) in the first three quarters of the year, up 18.3 percent year-on-year, accounting for 23.9 percent of Shandong's trade volume with the European Union."

"The fourth edition of the China Opera Festival will open in Shandong province on Oct 13, according to a news conference from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Beijing on Friday.

The repertoire of the festival includes 24 selected works, and 48 shows will be staged in seven cities across Shandong, including Jinan, Qingdao, and Yantai. All presented works are newly created or remakes of classic operas completed after 2018.

As this year marks the centennial of the founding of the Communist Party of China, the upcoming opera festival will feature revolutionary themes to recall the glorious path of the Party over the past 100 years.

Realistic productions also play a major role in the festival. Some works feature medical workers' battle against COVID-19, people's efforts to alleviate poverty in rural areas, and the country's achievement in reform and opening-up.

Additionally, some world-famous classics such as Giuseppe Verdi's La Traviata will also be staged. Symposia and training programs for opera librettists and critics will be organized for the festival as well.

To benefit the public, ticket prices for all opera shows during the festival will be relatively cheap. The average price for each show will be no more than 100 yuan ($15.5).

China Opera Festival has been held every three years since 2011. The previous three editions were held in Fujian, Hubei and Jiangsu provinces."

"A ceremony is held to commemorate the 2,572nd birthday of Confucius in Qufu, Jining, Shandong province, the home province of the great Chinese thinker, Sept 28, 2021. [Photo by Yang Guoqing/for chinadaily.com.cn]

A ceremony was held on Tuesday morning to commemorate the 2,572nd birthday of Confucius in Qufu of Jining city, Shandong province, the home province of the great Chinese thinker.

People can also log on to a cloud platform launched by Jining to pay respects to Confucius.

Confucius temples across China -- including those in Beijing, Shanghai, and the provinces of Zhejiang, Hunan and Sichuan -- also held ceremonies in recent days to remember the sage.

Confucius (551-479 BC) lived in the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC). He was the first Chinese person to set up private schools and enroll students from all walks of life. He is believed to have been born on Sept 28.

His disciples collected many of his sayings and quotations and compiled them into a book known in English as the Analects which has deep influence over Chinese culture and society."

"Poster for the trip ""World Media Focusing on the Culture of Shandong"". [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

The trip ""World Media Focusing on the Culture of Shandong"" kicked off on Sept 27 and will take overseas journalists from countries like Italy, Portugal, Brazil, South Korea and Pakistan on a journey that explores the cultural charm and beauty of Shandong, the home of Confucius.

Organized by the Foreign Affairs Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government and China Daily, the event is designed to display the historical and cultural resources of Shandong province.

Overseas photographers, social media influencers and journalists from more than 10 foreign media outlets such as Russia Today, O Globo, AgenciaLusa, CPEC News, CBS, SBS and Kookmin Ilbo take part in the trip.

The culturally-rich cities of Jining, Tai'an and Jinan will be the three main destinations.

A view of Mount Tai in Tai'an, Shandong province. [Photo by Wang Dequan/for chinadaily.com.cn]

To showcase to participants the full breadth of Qilu culture, an integral part of traditional Chinese culture, the trip will include a memorial ceremony in honor of Confucius, as well as visits to the Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion in Qufu, as well as world cultural and nature heritages like Mount Tai and the Yellow River.

In addition to cultural immersion, the cities will provide a glimpse of Shandong's rapid development and beautiful scenery.

The event will be promoted on various media platforms such as China Daily, the Shandong English global communication platform, the overseas social media accounts of China Museums, Great Tastes of China, China Culture, and Discover Beautiful China.

Foreign mainstream media platforms will also write reports of the event to let more people learn about the rich culture and vitality of Shandong.

Shandong province sits on the lower reaches of the Yellow River and the coast of eastern China, with Jinan as its capital. It serves as a gateway to the New Eurasian Land Bridge and is an important junction in the Belt and Road."

"The fourth Chinese Farmer Harvest Festival and the second China Shandong International Apple Festival opened in Yantai, Shandong province on Sept 23.

The two events are focused on the city's agricultural development. Specialties such as apples, pears and grapes were displayed at the opening ceremony.

The apple industry has become a main driver in promoting the rural economy and helping increase farmers' incomes in Yantai. In 2020, the output value of the apple industry reached 5.26 billion ($813.5 million) yuan.

Yantai has taken a series of measures to promote the high-quality development of the city's apple industry, including the renovation and upgrading of old orchards and establishing an innovation platform.

The brand value of Yantai apples has exceeded 14.5 billion yuan, ranking first among China's fruit brands for the past 12 years. Yantai apples are exported to more than 30 countries and regions across the world.

Apples of various varieties are on display at the second China Shandong International Apple Festival on Sept 23. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Visitors taste Yantai apples at the opening ceremony for the second China Shandong International Apple Festival on Sept 23. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A century-old apple plantation in Penglai district, Yantai [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"The 2021 Shandong Conference on Tourism Development kicked off on Sept 22 in the eastern coastal city of Yantai, Shandong province, with the goal of fueling growth of local cultural and tourism industries.

The conference is designed as a high-level and distinctive tourism event to continuously enhance Shandong's international and domestic appeal.

Officials from the country's provincial departments of cultural and tourism, investors, as well as representatives of international organizations have been invited to participate in the event through offline and online activities.

Li Ganjie, governor of Shandong, delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the 2021 Shandong Conference on Tourism Development. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

In his speech at the opening ceremony, Li Ganjie, governor of Shandong, extended a warm welcome and thanks to all the guests attending the event via both online and offline channels.

He noted that Shandong, which sits on the lower reaches of the Yellow River and the coast of eastern China, is an economic powerhouse with a long history and rich culture.

The province is an important cradle of Chinese civilization and the birthplace of the Confucian culture. It is also home to rich and diverse tourism and cultural resources, said Li.

Shandong has implemented the new development concept of serving the country's efforts to build a new development pattern, as well as promote the integrated development of the cultural and tourism sectors, said the governor.

""We will give full play to the advantage of cultural tourism resources in Shandong, participate in major national strategy and major cultural projects, cultivate tourism routes and products, as well as strengthen product development and brand promotion to boost the high-quality development of regional culture and tourism industries,"" Li said.

""We are willing to strengthen cooperation with partners at home and abroad in infrastructure, cultural creativity, scenic spot construction, industrial development, consumer services, and other fields to share opportunities and create mutually beneficial situations.""

Liu Shijun, secretary-general of the World Tourism Alliance, delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the 2021 Shandong Conference on Tourism Development. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Liu Shijun, secretary-general of the World Tourism Alliance, said in his speech that Shandong has attached great importance to the culture and tourism industries, with a series of measures to boost reform, promote development, as well as brand local industries.

Liu said that the conference will inject new vitality to the development of Shandong's cultural and tourism industries.

At the opening ceremony, the establishment ceremony of China Tourism's new media promotion consortium was held, while the Shandong Provincial People's Government and China Tourism Group signed a strategic cooperation agreement. Yantai also held a cultural tourism promotion activity.

The Shandong Provincial People's Government and China Tourism Group sign a strategic cooperation agreement. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The opening ceremony of the 2021 Shandong Conference on Tourism Development was held in Yantai, Shandong province on Sept 22. The conference will run until Sept 24.

A 70-minute large-scale cultural tourism performance took place after the opening ceremony, showcasing the rich cultural tourism resources in Shandong.

A large-scale stage performance is held at the Binhai Square in Yantai, Shandong province for the 2021Shandong Conference on Tourism Development. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Traditional dances are showcased at the Binhai Square in Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

A high-tech light show is held at the Binhai Square in Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo/dzwww.com]

Yantai illuminates on Sept 22 for the 2021 Shandong Conference on Tourism Development. [Photo/dzwww.com]"

"A farmer shows a cluster of grapes at a grape orchard at Huji town, Huimin county, Shandong province. [Photo by Liu Gang/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers at Huimin county, Shandong province have seen a good harvest of fruits this year. These days, they are busy picking apples, pears and grapes.

As a way to enrich farmers, the county government is supporting farmers to develop the fruit and vegetable industry via measures including upgrading infrastructure, training farmers with fruit growing skills and developing rural tourism using picking fruits to attract visitors.

Farmers are picking pears at Wangxichi village, Huimin county, Shandong province. [Photo by Liu Gang/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers at Huji town, Huimin county, Shandong province are picking grapes at the 13-hectare grape orchard. [Photo by Liu Gang/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers are picking apples at Wangxichi village, Huimin county, Shandong province. [Photo by Liu Gang/for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"With the arrival of autumn, farmers in Jining's Jiaxiang county, East China's Shandong province, are recently busy harvesting and drying hot peppers. [Photo by Fang Jianbing for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Jiaxiang county, Jining city of Shandong province have been busy hot pepper-picking this year. They are collecting and drying up the vegetable, presenting a good view of the autumn harvest.

Growing vegetable is a way to revitalize the rural economy. The county now has over 100 vegetable growing bases, producing a rich variety of crops including cucumber, peppers and lettuce.

A hot pepper growing base in Jiaxiang county, Jining city of Shandong province. [Photo by Fang Jianbing for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The 2nd China International Culture Tourism Expo will be held at Shandong International Convention and Exhibition Center from Sept 16 to 20.

The expo will feature 10 themed exhibition areas covering cultural tourism, ""Handmade in Shandong,"" creative design, rural revitalization, as well as ""the Belt and Road.""

It will also include a stunning array of revolutionary culture and red tourism exhibitions.

Another highlight of this year's expo will showcase the exchanges and cooperation achievements made by provinces along the Yellow River, focusing on the integration and innovation results of the region's cultural tourism industries.

The ""Handmade in Shandong"" exhibition area will include a 600 square meter boutique area to display handmade masterpieces, with various representatives of these provincial favorites taking part in online and offline activities.

Representatives of relevant agencies from 17 countries, including France, Germany, and New Zealand, will participate in the expo.

Professional purchasers will also take part, while a series of cultural and economic promotion activities will be held. In addition, special consumption coupons and special discounts will be available for visitors.

This expo will last for five days, with artistic stage performances, procurement meetings, and Shandong food festival activities taking place every day.

The 2nd China International Cultural Tourism Expo is sponsored by the China Cultural Industry Association and the Shandong Cultural Industry Development Association. It is being undertaken by the Shandong Tourism Industry Association."

"The 2021 Shandong Provincial Tourism Development Conference will be held in Yantai, Shandong province from Sept 22 to 24.

The conference strives to create a high-level and distinctive tourism event to continuously enhance Shandong's international and domestic appeal

Officials from the country's provincial departments of cultural and tourism, investors, as well as representatives of international organizations have been invited to participate in offline and online activities.

The opening ceremony will be held in Yantai Haibin Square on Sept 22.

A large-scale cultural tourism performance will take place after the opening ceremony, showcasing Yantai's culture and tourism resources.

On Sept 23, participants will visit three distinctive cultural tourism projects, such as the Qushan Valley wine health and leisure experience area in Penglai dsitrict, and a wine themed block in Zhifu district .

In addition to the conference, four supporting activities will be organized, including cultural and tourism achievement exhibitions taking place in 16 cities across Shandong province.

Participants will also be able to enjoy special activities, such as night tours and boutique travel routes, to fully experience the charm of Yantai.

A series of preferential policies for the public have also been implemented, such as free admissions to Penglai Pavilion and 10 national scenic spots.

The 2021 International Coastal Leisure Quality Development Forum will also be held in Yantai from Sept 22 to 23.

Representatives of coastal cities, experts, scholars, and other guests will discuss the high-quality development of international coastal leisure industries."

"Shandong province, an economic powerhouse in China's east coastal regions, has placed great emphasis on the marine economy as it has become a new driving force for economic development, local media reported.

In 2020, the total output value of Shandong's marine sector reached 1.32 trillion yuan ($204.99 billion), accounting for 18.03 percent of Shandong's GDP and 16.48 percent of China's marine gross production value.

A US cargo ship docks at the Qingdao Port, Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Shaoyue/For China Daily]

Shandong's marine fishery, marine salt industry, marine biomedicine, marine power and marine transportation industry are ranked first in terms of scale in China.

Shandong is home to 54 national marine ranch demonstration areas, accounting for 40 percent of the country, ranking first in China.

A marine ranch is a sea area within which fishermen use large-scale fishery facilities and systematic management systems to breed marine resources such as fish, shrimp, shellfish and algae.

The province has a leading position in adopting intelligent marine equipment breeding in China. According to official data, by the end of 2020, the comprehensive economic income of Shandong marine ranches had exceeded 250 billion yuan.

The province is also promoting the integration of marine ranches with cultural tourism and breeding aquatics to boost the high-quality development of the marine economy. Intelligent technologies such as 5G communications, artificial intelligence, and internet of things have been applied to marine ranches.

In 2020, the cargo throughput of coastal ports in the province reached 1.69 billion tons, ranking second in China. The Shandong Port Group is connected to more than 700 ports in more than 180 countries and regions in the world.

Shandong has stated in its 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) that the development of its marine economy is an important strategy to fuel local high-quality development. The term ""ocean"" appeared more than 130 times in the new five-year plan.

Shandong will make more efforts to propel sustainable development of its ocean economy. More measures will be implemented to promote land-sea coordination, help major industries improve the modern marine economic structure, fuel technology innovation, and improve marine financial innovation, said local officials."

"The first batch of the Shandong Peninsula South 4 offshore wind power units were connected to the grid and started power generation on Sept 12. [Photo/IC]

The first batch of the Shandong Peninsula South 4 offshore wind power units were connected to the grid and started power generation on Sept 12, making it the first commercial-scale offshore wind project in the coastal province.

The project, comprising 58 wind turbines, plans to achieve full-capacity grid-connected power generation by the end of this year. It will by then come up with 820 million kilowatt hours of clean power that will meet the demand of more than 300,000 households for one year.

This project, with a total installed capacity of more than 300 MW, is the first batch of offshore wind power demonstration projects in East China's Shandong province.

It will reduce the consumption of 253,000 tons of standard coal and carbon dioxide emission reduction of 556,000 tons, as China promotes greener development and pledges to hit peak emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060."

"BEIJING -- China's Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) has ordered the arrest of Zhang Xinqi, former deputy director of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Provincial People's Congress, for suspected bribe-taking.

Zhang's case was transferred to procuratorial authorities for review and prosecution following the conclusion of an investigation by the National Supervisory Commission, the SPP said in a statement on Monday.

Further handling of the case is underway."

"A sign for a Sinopec gas station is seen in Shanghai, on Aug 6, 2021. [Photo/IC]

China Petrochemical Corp, or Sinopec Group, announced that its first gas storage tank in East China's Shandong province, Shengli oilfield Yong-21 gas storage tank, was put into operation and started trial gas injection on Friday.

The facility will further improve the natural gas supply in the region and step up the company's gas storage peak-regulating capacity to ensure the heating season supply.

With a designed capacity of 500 million cubic meters, the Shengli oilfield Yong-21 gas storage tank sees a daily gas supply and peak-regulating capacity of 1.98 million cubic meters that can meet the daily demand of five million households' gas consumption, it said.

The company has been stepping up gas storage facility construction in recent years to enhance its gas storage peak-regulating capacity. It plans to further accelerate gas storage construction in the oil fields in central, northwestern and northeastern parts of the country."

"Sinopec employees charge a vehicle with hydrogen in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

China Petrochemical Corp, or Sinopec Group, has finished construction on the second phase of its Shandong LNG terminal on Tuesday, two months ahead of the winter heating season which starts in mid-October.

The annual handling capacity of Shandong LNG terminal has reached seven million tons, equivalent of 9.6 billion cubic meters of natural gas, the company said.

Gas storage capacity has also been lifted to 594 million cubic meters, a major measure of Sinopec's progress in this regard.

The tanks, each with a capacity of 160,000 cubic meters, were ready for use this month after construction began in November of 2018, it said.

It will also help step up the company's gas storage peak-regulating capacity to ensure the heating season supply.

The state oil and gas major also said it is aiming to double the Qingdao terminal's capacity to 14 million tons annually by end of 2023, making it the largest in the country by then."

"The ""2021 Dialogue with Shandong -- Japan · Shandong Industrial Cooperation and Exchange"" event kicked off on Aug 13 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

The ""2021 Dialogue with Shandong -- Japan · Shandong Industrial Cooperation and Exchange"" event kicks off on Aug 13. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Representatives from government departments, business associations and enterprises in Shandong and Japan attended the event via online and offline channels. The event is designed to explore trends in China-Japan industrial cooperation under the RCEP, create a multi-level, long-term cooperation mechanism, and deepen the regional economic and trade cooperation between China and Japan.

On November 15, 2020, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement was signed, bringing benefits to Shandong in terms of free and convenient trade in goods, wider opening of trade in services and two-way investment expansion.

Japan, a member of the RCEP, is Shandong's fifth largest trading partner. Deepening economic and trade cooperation with Japan is one of Shandong's key opening-up objectives.

During his speech at the event, Li Ganjie, governor of Shandong, said that Shandong is ranked third in terms of economic volume in China.

For this event, Shandong province has identified 136 projects that would feature cooperation with enterprises and investors from Japan, said Li.

He suggested that Shandong and Japan should expand trade cooperation and forge a closer relationship. He also expressed hope that more Japanese enterprises will invest in Shandong.

The event is held via both online and offline channels. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""Shandong has a cluster of Japanese enterprises with a high export ratio. We will continue to explore the Chinese market including Shandong,"" said Nobuhiko Sasaki, CEO and chairman of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), during a video conference.

Masaru Igawahara, consul general of Japan in Qingdao, said that Shandong has great potential for economic development and broad opportunities for cooperation with Japan in the fields of science and technology, agriculture, medical care, nursing, high-end manufacturing and environmental protection.

""Through this exchange meeting, I hope that Japan and Shandong can further deepen understanding, promote exchanges and welcome the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan next year,"" he said.

""As two major economies in the Asia-Pacific region, China and Japan play an important role in maintaining peace and stability in Asia and world economic prosperity,"" said Zhang Shenfeng, vice chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade.

The event is designed to promote industrial cooperation and exchange between Shandong and Japan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The meeting reflects the common aspiration of China and Japan to seize the opportunities provided by the RCEP and deepen trade and investment cooperation, and demonstrates the determination and confidence of China and Japan in building a multi-tiered and regular exchange mechanism amid the pandemic, Zhang added.

Shandong and Japan have 19 pairs of friendship city relations and 21 pairs of friendly cooperative city relations. There are 1,377 Japan-invested enterprises in Shandong that have a combined investment of $11.29 billion and operating income of 123.24 billion yuan ($19.03 billion).

The event, hosted by the Shandong Provincial People's Government, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, and the Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro), will last until Nov 30.

A series of activities will be held via online and offline channels, including themed seminars, project match-making meetings, the Japan (Shandong) Import Commodities Expo and the Shandong Provincial Capital Economic Circle Cooperation Matchmaking Meeting with Japan.

A Japanese participant speaks during a video conference at the event. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Tourists enjoy the sunflower field in Qilipu village of Huaiyin district in Jinan, Shandong province on Aug 14, 2021. [Photo/IC]

More than 60,000 sunflowers are blooming in the fields in Qilipu village of Huaiyin district in Jinan, Shandong province. Currently, those sunflowers are in their full blossoming period, and will stay in that phase until mid- to late August. By planting the sunflowers, the village hopes not only to attract visitors, but also enhance the village's popularity into a rural leisure tourism destination.

Tourists take photos of sunflowers in Qilipu village. [Photo/IC]"

"Facing each other across the sea, East China's Shandong province and Japan enjoy close economic and trade exchanges. Japan is currently Shandong's fifth largest trading partner.

Containers are loaded onto a ship berthed at Qingdao Port, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhang Jingang/for China Daily]

Official statistics show that in the first half of this year, Shandong's import and export trade with Japan totaled 86.83 billion yuan ($13.44 billion), up 21.3 percent year-on-year. Among them, exports reached 65.78 billion yuan, up 16.8 percent, while imports hit 21.05 billion yuan, up 38 percent.

During this period, Shandong approved 58 Japan-funded projects, a year-on-year increase of 23.4 percent. The amount of actually utilized foreign capital from Japan reached $210 million, up 182.7 percent year-on-year.

There are 1,377 Japanese invested enterprises in Shandong, with a total investment of $11.29 billion and an operating income of 123.24 billion yuan.

Lyu Wei, deputy director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Commerce, said that Shandong attaches great importance to economic and trade cooperation with Japan.

Japan's world top 500 companies like Sumitomo, Itochu, Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Marubeni, Panasonic, Komatsu, and Toray, as well as a large number of Japanese small and medium-sized enterprises have invested in Shandong.

Lyu said that the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement has brought about new opportunities for economic and trade cooperation between Shandong and Japan.

Shandong will launch more measures and policies to facilitate cooperation with Japan, added Lyu."

"The Shandong short-track speed skating championship was held at Taishan Ice and Snow Sports Center in Tai'an, East China's Shandong province from July 28 to 30.

More than 130 athletes from seven cities in Shandong participated in the competition, including those from Jinan, Qingdao, Tai'an, Yantai, Zibo, and Linyi.

The event consisted of relay races in the men's and women's 500 meters, 1,000 meters, and 3,000 meters, as well as individual races in the men's and women's 500 meters and 1,000 meters.

Skaters from Tai'an won second place in the 500 meters men's group competition and fifth place in the 1,000 meters men's group competition.

In recent years, Tai'an has made great efforts in promoting ice sports. Taishan Ice and Snow Sports Center, which was put into use last year, has an 1,800-square-meter ice rink. It is the only rink that meets international standards in the city.

The center can undertake domestic and foreign large-scale ice events, including those for short track speed skating and figure skating.

Athletes from different cities in Shandong province are ready for competition at Taishan Ice and Snow Sports Center in Tai'an on July 28. [Photo/VCG]

Skaters compete against each other at the Shandong short-track speed skating championship on July 28. [Photo/VCG]

Two athletes compete at the Shandong short-track speed skating championship on July 28. [Photo/VCG]"

"The Shandong-South Korea cultural exchange week opened in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province, on July 20.

Shandong, which has been deeply focused on cultural exchange, has hosted a series of cultural and trade exchange activities to deepen relations with South Korea, said Wang Xinfu, vice-governor of Shandong.

Today, South Korea has become the second largest source of foreign investment, the fourth largest trading partner and the largest source of foreign tourists for Shandong.

Wang hopes that the week-long event can help further expand pragmatic cooperation between the two sides across various fields.

Officials said that more than 4,500 South Korea-funded companies have invested in Shandong, creating job opportunities and greatly contributing to the province's economic development.

The exchange week event focuses on two parts – cultural exchanges in Jinan and economic and trade exchanges in Qingdao. A modern art exhibition, a tourism photography exhibition, and a cultural lecture will also be held during the week.

The Shandong-South Korea cultural exchange week opens in Jinan, capital of East China’s Shandong province on July 20. [Photo by Liang Ben/chinanews.com]

Wang Xinfu, vice-governor of Shandong, delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the Shandong-South Korea cultural exchange week on July 20. [Photo by Liang Ben/chinanews.com]

An exhibition focusing on modern arts in South Korea is held at Shandong Art Museum. [Photo by Liang Ben/chinanews.com]"

"Firefighters dispatched from Shandong province join forces to transfer stranded residents in Weishi town of Kaifeng city, Henan province, on July 22, 2021. [Photo by Bai Fangshuo/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Five firefighter teams have been dispatched on Wednesday from Jinan, Tai'an, Jining, Dezhou and Liaocheng, five cities in Shandong province, to aid in the rescue work in Kaifeng, a city hit by the heavy rainfall in northern Henan province.

A firefighter from Shandong province holds an infant in his arms and takes the baby out of the flooded area in Weishi town of Kaifeng city, Henan province, on July 22, 2021. [Photo by Song Jianzhou/for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Containers are unloaded at Qingdao Port in Shandong province in March. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

JINAN - China's Shandong province saw its foreign trade with countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative rise 45.5 percent year-on-year to over 423.48 billion yuan ($65.47 billion ) in the first half the year, official statistics have shown.

The province's trade with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) accounted for more than 45 percent of its total trade volume with Belt and Road countries during the period, according to statistics announced at a press conference held by the provincial government.

Exports to Belt and Road countries hit 227.58 billion yuan, up 41.8 percent year-on-year, and imports from these countries grew 50.1 percent to 195.9 billion yuan.

The top commodities exported to Belt and Road countries were mechanical and electrical products, as well as steel."

"[Video/chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong has a friendly relationship with South Korea, and the reason a Korean-funded firm comes to invest it is because of close proximity, similar living standards and natural environment, said Johnny Park, CEO of Atomy China Co Ltd, at the second Qingdao Multinationals Summit.

Atomy China Co started investing in Yantai in 2017. It is planning to establish its production base focusing on healthcare products, daily necessities, and cosmetics."

"Focusing on its geographic advantages, especially the markets of Japan and South Korea, Shandong Port Group will strengthen cooperation with world-renowned shipping companies, logistics enterprises, as well as hub ports to better integrate into the new development pattern, said Li Fengli, general manager of Shandong Port Group during a recent interview at the Second Qingdao Multinationals Summit.

Shandong Port Group has integrated many of the province's major ports, including Qingdao Port, Yantai Port, Rizhao Port, and Bohai Bay Port Group, in order to maximize port resources, eliminate regional competition, as well as speed up the construction of a world-class port economy.

According to a recent official announcement, the company's annual operating income reached 50.19 billion yuan ($7.74 billion) last year, an increase of 6.36 percent year-on-year. Its total profit stood at 6.45 billion yuan, an increase of 13.63 percent year-on-year, while its net profit reached 4.47 billion yuan, up 18.1 percent.

Li noted that Shandong Port Group has consistently worked closely with global multinational companies, such as Maersk, MSC, CMA, as well as other world-renowned shipping and logistics companies, to form a complete supply chain system from overseas to domestic markets.

""Recently, Shandong Port Group carried out crude oil trade cooperation with BP. Through our cooperation with various multinational corporations, we have been gathering elements of trade circulation so that ports can play a stronger hub function,"" said Li.

Li noted that ports are basic facilities, as well as an important support for economic development and foreign trade. He said that Shandong Port Group will intensify efforts to build a comprehensive transport corridor for land-sea linkages and east-west bidirectional passages.

The company will continue to promote a high level of openness globally for transport, as well as facilitate regional economic and social development to boost high-quality economic growth and to foster China's dual-circulation development pattern, Li added."

"The second edition of the Qingdao Multinationals Summit kicked off on Thursday in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

Multinational corporations, especially the Fortune Global 500, have brought new opportunities for Shandong province's economic development and pushed the province's opening-up into a higher level.

Statistics from the Shandong Provincial Department of Commerce showed that the actual use of foreign trade in Shandong hit $8.32 billion in the first five months of this year, an increase of 70.7 percent year-on-year, 30.9 percentage points higher than China's average.

Shandong has made remarkable achievements both in the scale and quality of foreign capital utilization in the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20) period, partly due to the rising numbers of Global 500 companies in the province.

During this period, Shandong's actual utilization of foreign capital totaled $67.56 billion, 1.9 times that of the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-15) period. The actual use of foreign capital in each city in the province surpassed $100 million.

By 2020, 219 Fortune Global 500 companies in Shandong from 23 countries and regions had invested and set up 812 enterprises, covering all the cities in the province and creating jobs for 300,000 people.

Global 500 companies such as SK Holdings, Hyundai, GS Caltex Corporation, Kia Motor and CJ from South Korea, and Itochu, Softbank, Hitochi, Aeon and Sharp from Japan have started businesses in Shandong, lifting the quality and level of Japanese and Korean capital usage in the province.

As a result, the investments from European and American areas increased by 34 percent in the 13th Five-Year Plan period over the 12th Five-Year Plan period, while investments from Japan and South Korean grew by 26.1 percent in the past five years.

Moreover, Fortune Global 500 firms also helped promote the upgrading of industries in the province. Their investments in Shandong have expanded from traditional manufacturing to emerging industries.

Sixteen of the world's top 500 companies set up branches in Shandong for the first time during the 13th Five-Year Plan period and their foreign investment was mainly focused on the fields of next-generation information technology, machinery manufacturing, food production, and new energy. These companies include Johnson Controls, IBM, SoftBank, Bosch and Louis Dreyfus.

Japanese company Itochu has set up two branches for microfinance in Qingdao and Jinan. German company Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nurnberg, also known as MAN, has built three branches for finance, microfinance and auto finance in Jinan, greatly boosting the local service industry.

In addition, investment from the world's top 500 companies also helped industry aggregation. German heavy commercial vehicle maker MAN SE invested in Sinotruk, which led a large number of multinational companies such as Bosch Steering Machinery and Continental Automotive Electronics settling in Jinan to invest in supporting upstream and downstream industries.

The foreign investment increased in Shandong thanks to the province's continuous efforts in creating a favorable business environment and providing more opening-up platforms.

In the past five years, Shandong has hosted a series of international events including the first Qingdao Multinationals Summit, the Conference of Great Business Partners, and the ""Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500"" serial event, which enhanced its international influence. More policies have since been issued, improving services for foreign-invested enterprises.

During the 13th Five-Year Plan period, 2,631 foreign enterprises in Shandong increased their capital and the contracted foreign capital increased by 12.6 percent compared with the 12th Five-Year Plan period."

"The Second Qingdao Multinationals Summit is scheduled to be held from July 15 to 16 in Qingdao, Shandong province.

Gregory Gilligan, chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China (AmCham China), talked about the summit in an interview with China Daily.

Q: This will be the second time that the summit has been held. How do American multinational companies view the summit? What are you looking forward to most at this summit?

A: The summit established a communication platform between multinational companies and the Chinese government, as well as broadened the communication channels between the local government and multinational companies.

The adjustment of the global industrial chain that this year's summit is focusing on is also a problem that many of our member companies are now very concerned about. We look forward to this summit to sort out the role of multinational companies in building a new structure and the opportunities this new structure can provide for member companies.

As an old friend of local people, I also wish that this grand event will bring new development opportunities to Shandong. On behalf of AmCham China and myself, I sincerely wish the summit a complete success.

Q: The relationship between China and the US has become increasgly uncertain due to well-known reasons. How do American multinational companies view their cooperation with China and how do they view economic and trade development trends between the two countries?

A: We have to admit that the current Sino-US relations are in a challenging period, and some of the bilateral frictions will exist for a long time. We need to recognize reality, try to resolve contradictions, and create a favorable environment for the development of Sino-US commerce as much as possible.

The economies of both sides are gradually recovering and coming out of the gloom of the epidemic. Next, the two sides should start with common problems in the fields of public health, climate change, carbon neutrality, and humanities, actively promote exchanges, make up for the ""cognitive jet lag,"" and achieve reciprocal cooperation with mutually beneficial results.

The American Chamber of Commerce in China has always believed that healthy and mutually beneficial commercial relations are the ballast and propeller for Sino-US relations. We will remain committed to serving as a bridge between China and the US in the next hundred years, and to enhancing and strengthening the commercial ties between the two sides.

Q: In the post-epidemic period, uncertainties and unstable factors have increased significantly. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing multinational companies?

A: According to the latest 2021 China Business Climate Survey Report released by AmCham China in March this year, tensions in bilateral relations, rising labor costs, an inconsistent regulatory environment, increasing competitiveness of private Chinese companies and concerns over data security are the top challenges facing our member companies.

Q: As we know, Shandong is a major open coastal province in China. How does the American Chamber of Commerce in China view the development of Shandong? How do American multinational companies view Shandong? Is there any willingness to invest further in Shandong?

A: AmCham China has a long history of cooperation with Shandong. As the third largest economy in China and the 16th largest economy in the world, Shandong has a considerable scale of investment by American companies in China.

In 2018, with the unremitting efforts led by AmCham China and the Shandong Provincial Government, the two sides established a closer cooperation mechanism, with plans to build Shandong into one of the strategic growth pillars for American companies in China. In 2019, AmCham China was invited to become a strategic partner of the First Qingdao Multinationals Summit.

In recent years, Shandong has continued to encourage the introduction of major foreign investment support policies. For example, in order to attract external funds to invest in Shandong's top 10 industries, it introduced incentive policies for major foreign investment projects, which provided incentives to qualified foreign-invested enterprises that have launched new projects or increased investment in the province. In the past two years, a total of 174 million yuan ($26.87 million) has been allocated.

Meanwhile, we have also seen the further improvement of the overall business environment in Shandong after actively integrating into the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership market, such as tariff reductions, improvement of customs procedures and trade facilitation measures, as well as comprehensive intellectual property rights protection."

"An exhibition celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China is underway in Qingdao.

With more than 1,000 photos and 300 sets of precious exhibits, the event displays a timeline of Party history. With the help of digital tools, it caters to the young generation.

From China's first gigantic aircraft carrier－the Liaoning－to the carrier-borne J-15 fighter, and from the fully automated Qingdao Port to the magnetic levitation train, eye-catching models are utilized as a significant tool to showcase Qingdao's industrial modernization and manufacturing capability.

It also provides diverse activities to tell the CPC's history. Pianists from Qingdao Concert Hall play Red songs that depict the revolutionary times and pay homage to the CPC. Tutors prepare short-time lectures. Their passion to reiterate the Party's spirits has also inspired visitors.

The themed exhibition, which will last until Aug 31, is open to Qingdao residents free of charge.

On June 29, Qingdao Grand Theater hosted the performance of a historical extravaganza－Always Follow the Party.

At night, the red flag sculptures on both sides of the opera hall were inlaid with eye-catching signs and slogans. The golden Party emblem was shining at the central position on the screen.

Following the Party history timeline, the performance combined musical drama, dance drama, sitcom, poetry recitation, opera and other art forms.

Making the most of artistic techniques, the program embodied Qingdao's effort to inherit the spirit of May Fourth Movement, an anti-imperialist campaign that stemmed from student demonstrations in Beijing on May 4, 1919 and swept through the country.

More than 1,200 people, including outstanding Party member representatives and residents from all walks of life, watched the performance.

At the end of the event, the entire audience stood up and sang Without the Communist Party of China, There Would Be No New China, concluding the performance to a climax with long-standing applause.

""Qingdao is one of the Chinese regions where the local Party organizations were founded at an early time, and it is also a place with revolutionary tradition and abundant Red resources,"" said Cong Peike, an official from Qingdao's communications department.

In 1923, Deng Enming and Wang Jinmei, participants in the first CPC National Congress and founders of Shandong's local Party organizations, began to publicize Marxism in the city and develop CPC members. In August that year, they founded the first CPC organization there.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, Party organizations at all levels in Qingdao have taken the lead in the city to make contributions to revolutionary education, economic construction and reform, Cong said.

Those celebratory activities are in line with the requirements of the CPC Central Committee and the Shandong provincial Party committee, which is of great significance for the comprehensive construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics and building the city into an international metropolis, Cong added.

In addition to the artistic performances and themed exhibitions, other activities were also held in Qingdao to celebrate the Party's centennial.

While a grand ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the CPC founding took place at Tian'anmen Square in Beijing on July 1, the Qingdao city government organized local residents to watch the event and encouraged them to learn from its spirit.

In accordance with the requirements of the CPC Central Committee and the Shandong provincial Party committee, the city administrations have made full preparations for recommending outstanding Party members, outstanding Party member workers and grassroots Party organizations.

The city's Party committee called for Party history education and encouraged local Party groups at all levels to carry on their missions.

In a campaign of ""doing things for the public"", the local administrations discovered the issues of the greatest concern after broad investigations. They then formulated the city's working plan, implemented 1,074 livelihood projects and issued 631 policies.

After July 1, several departments of the local government jointly held a theoretical seminar to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC and organized a forum for people from all walks of life in Qingdao to celebrate the event.

A group of high-quality literary works, publications and television series were also created during the period.

The book Party History Written for Young Readers recorded the touching stories about the Party and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

With a circulation of 1 million copies, it was funded by the National Publication Foundation and honored as a key publication by the Publicity Department of the CPC in 2020. Communication departments and media organizations at all levels in the city have set up special columns on media platforms and channels.

By using short videos, short animations, illustrations and posters, they produced a number of vivid and easy-to-spread media products. To date, more than 12,000 reports relevant to the theme have been published.

A gala evening called Always Follow the Party is staged in Qingdao in late June to celebrate the centennial of the founding of the Communist Party of China. CHINA DAILY

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"As the province with the highest number of people aged 60 and older, Shandong has developed a series of supportive services to make life for older adults easier and more convenient.

Liang Guangzeng, a resident in Jinan, capital of Shandong, enjoys the services.

The 70-year-old said all the problems he encountered when he recently took a flight from Jinan International Airport have been resolved thanks to a smart system specially developed by the airport.

""I needed to fill out some forms and sign my name before entering the airport, as checks are stringent due to efforts to prevent and control COVID-19. But now, all the information I needed to fill out the forms is read automatically by the smart system after I swipe my ID card,"" he said.

Liang said he no longer needs to look for his health code－a program that includes a person's COVID-19 status－on his phone, which used to take him several minutes.

The health code verification system jointly developed by Jinan airport, the city's health commission and big data bureau is able to read health codes automatically after passengers swipe their ID cards.

""It takes two seconds for each passenger to enter an airport. It's convenient for elderly people, especially those who don't use smartphones,"" said Xu Xiaokun, a senior engineer at the information management department of the Shandong Airport Management Group.

Shandong had more than 21.2 million people aged 60 and older last year, accounting for 20.9 percent of its permanent residents, according to the seventh national population census.

To improve social security, elder care services have been one of the main tasks of the provincial government.

The province has launched preferential policies to ease older people's lives, including free travel on public buses and subways, free tickets to scenic spots and expedited medical treatment.

People aged 60 and older who are either permanent residents of Shandong or coming for a short visit can use public transportation in any provincial city for free as of January.

Further, from June 8 to June 7 next year, residents of Jining who are at least 65 can take two free domestic flights per year from Jining Qufu Airport during non-holiday periods, the city's civil aviation development center said on June 18.

The initiative is part of the city's efforts to care for seniors, said Wang Dongchun, the center's deputy director.

In addition, family members who accompany older passengers qualify for a 10 percent discount.

Shandong is the birthplace of Confucius, and its people are known for their devotion to caring for older adults, said Zhang Liansan, deputy director of the general office of the provincial government.

""The province will continue to make efforts to provide better services for the elderly,"" he said.

Shandong will create multiple ways to provide quality services for seniors and boost the development of the elder healthcare industry, according to the province's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) and 2035 long-term development goals."

"Hydrogen-powered vehicles made by the Qingdao Dexian New Energy Automobile Manufacturing are parked at the Qingdao International Academician Park. CHINA DAILY

Shandong province launched its first hydrogen-powered intercity vehicle network at the end of last month as 170 cold-chain and slag trucks took to the roads.

The vehicles traveled between the eastern city of Qingdao and Linyi city in the west, and are expected to help reduce the province's overall carbon dioxide emissions by 20,000 metric tons a year, according to the operating team at the Qingdao International Academician Park.

Located in Qingdao's Licang district, the QIAP invites high-end talent from around the world to carry out cutting-edge scientific research, including hydrogen-oriented projects and startups, and helps find commercial applications for their research.

One startup incubated at QIAP, the Qingdao Dexian New Energy Automobile Manufacturing, is involved in the manufacture of hydrogen-powered vehicles. According to Cao Bin, the company's general manager, their hydrogen-powered logistics vehicle has a range of up to 450 kilometers and can be filled up in five minutes. ""Hydrogen-powered vehicles are quick to refuel, and their high-density energy source is suitable for long-distance transportation,"" he said.

""They perform better than electric vehicles in terms of charging speed and battery life.""

In order to boost the hydrogen sector, the QIAP has established an innovation center in partnership with renowned domestic universities, including Tongji, Tsinghua, Jilin and Hunan. The aim is to build a top-notch research and development center to encourage the application of advances in science and technology.

Currently, the production of hydrogen fuel, hydrogen-powered battery systems and catalysts can be done on site.

The QIAP is poised to put 2,000 hydrogen-powered vehicles on the road within three years in a bid to develop an e-commerce logistics network that will radiate out 600 kilometers from Linyi, and serve a population of 400 million.

The development of hydrogen-powered vehicles is being undertaken as a scientific and technological demonstration project but ultimately aims to encourage the use of hydrogen in the transportation sector and for industrial and public use.

Such a result would represent a major step toward reducing the province's carbon dioxide emissions.

According to data, Shandong faces a challenge in that regard. It was responsible for a total of 950 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2019, the highest figure among the country's provincial-level areas.

""Shandong is a major center for the chemical industry and already produces 2.6 million tons of hydrogen every year, mostly as a byproduct,"" said Zhao Nannan, an official in charge of new and renewable energy at the province's Energy Administration. She added that the wide-scale use of hydrogen would be an advantage for the province financially.

Zhao said that Shandong has the country's largest photovoltaic power facility and fourth-largest wind power capacity, and accelerated efforts are being made to develop nuclear power, all activities conducive to eco-friendly hydrogen production. The development of the hydrogen sector will help the province considerably as it reshuffles its industrial structure and seeks new avenues of growth, Zhao added."

"A Qilu Eurasian freight train loaded with cross-border e-commerce goods departed from the Qingdao multimodal transportation center on June 25 for Minsk, Belarus, making it the first special cross-border e-commerce train in Shandong province.

A Qilu Eurasian freight train loaded with cross-border e-commerce goods departs from the Qingdao multimodal transportation center on June 25 for Minsk, Belarus. [Photo/VCG]

Operated by Shandong Hi-speed Group, the train carried 100 standard containers of daily necessities, such as small household appliances, household goods, kitchenware, lamps, fishing gear, tents, and umbrellas, worth about $4.3 million.

The train will exit the country via Manzhouli, China's largest land port, and arrive in Minsk, Belarus in 15 to 17 days.

According to Qingdao customs, a single bill of goods worth less than 5,000 yuan ($774.5) and not involved in certification, inspection, and tax can be cleared through the unified cross-border e-commerce export system with simplified procedures.

""A series of preferential measures make it more convenient for small, medium, and micro cross-border e-commerce export enterprises to declare goods through this mode and reduce their customs clearance costs,"" said an official from Qingdao customs.

Qingdao customs has set up a special window to handle customs formalities like declaration and clearance for China-Europe freight trains to improve efficiency and service quality. The customs has special working teams to ensure smooth customs clearance of China-Europe freight trains around the clock.

According to official statistics, the Qingdao multimodal transportation center launched 260 Qilu Eurasian freight trains, carrying 21,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of goods in the first five months of the year, up 83.1 percent and 118.4 percent respectively compared with the same period last year."

"The Ministry of Culture and Tourism released 10 national tourism routes centered on the Yellow River on June 3. Sixteen attractions in Shandong province are featured in the routes.

The routes are focused on natural scenery, historical culture, intangible heritage, the revolutionary history of the Party and rural landscapes along the Yellow River.

Shandong Museum in Jinan, Shandong province [Photo/WeChat account: sdta12301]

The Shandong Museum, Daxinzhuang Relics site, and Dongpingling ancient town in Jinan, the provincial capital, are part of these routes that explore the origins of Chinese civilization.

The three Confucius sites – the Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion in Qufu, a county-level city in Jining city - are part of the route focused on ancient personalities who lived along the Yellow River.

A view of Mountai Tai, one of the most popular attractions in Tai'an. The mountain was recognized as a world natural and cultural heritage site in 1987. [Photo/WeChat account: china-taishan]

Mount Tai in Tai'an city and the three Confucius sites are part of the route that explores the world's natural and cultural heritage site situated along the river.

The Yellow River International Ecological City in Dezhou and Yellow River Ecological Tourism Area in Dongying will allow visitors to take in the picturesque views of the river.

The Yellow River, China's second-longest river, merges into the Bohai Sea in Dongying, Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdta12301]

The kites and Yangjiabu woodcut New Year paintings at Qilu Cultural Ecological Protection Area in Weifang are centered on intangible cultural heritages in the region.

The Jinan Campaign Memorial Hall in Jinan, Kong Fansen Memorial Hall in Liaocheng, and Railway Guerrillas Red Tourism Scenic Area in Zaozhuang are focused on the history of the Communist Party of China.

Dawenkou town in Tai'an, Zhujiayu village in Jinan, and Haoyu village in Zibo are themed on rural revitalization in the Yellow River region."

"A couple try on hanfu dresses at a studio in Caoxian county, Heze, Shandong province. [Photo provided to China Daily]

June is the busiest time of the year for Zhao Ying's hanfu or traditional Chinese clothing business. The mother of two needs to stay up late almost every night to prepare the orders placed via her online shops.

""Inquiries about my products keep popping up on my Taobao shops, even though it's night,"" Zhao said.

Located in Sunzhuang, Daiji town, Caoxian county, Shandong province, Zhao's workshop is a five-minute drive from the village's main road, which is lined with shops involved in hanfu production, ranging from cloth making to pattern printing.

Zhao started to run an online shop for selling hanfu dresses in 2011, when she tried to make a living from home to take care of her son and parents-in-law. Her husband went to the city each day to do temporary jobs.

""When I took my children to a park, I saw a lot of children were dressed in hanfu, which inspired me to make the clothing and sell it online,"" she said.

Her business continues to grow. Her husband returned to help with the business two years after she began.

""Demand for hanfu products began booming in 2019. Sales of hanfu at my workshop reached 3 million yuan ($471,700) in 2019,"" she said.

In May, Zhao was able to earn more than 70,000 yuan on one day selling hanfu. On some days, her daily income exceeded 100,000 yuan, Zhao said.

Like Zhao, hundreds of businesses in Daiji town are working overtime to meet demand for hanfu. The town has been a center for the manufacturing of stylized performance costumes for decades and recently accounted for 70 percent of the total sold nationwide, according to the local government.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, sales of performance costumes slumped last year because people were required to practice social distancing and shunned public gatherings. But demand for hanfu showed no pandemic slump.

In the online sector, sales of hanfu from Caoxian county makes up one-third of the country's total, according to the e-commerce service center of Caoxian. ""Orders for cloth to make hanfu have been increasing substantially in recent years,"" said Chen Jichao, head of an enterprise that sells cloth in Daiji.

His company is selling around 200,000 square meters of cloth a day in May.

""Some cloth is in short supply. Buyers don't bargain on prices. What they care about is when they can get the cloth,"" Chen said.

There are now over 2,000 enterprises working in the hanfu sector in Caoxian, ranging from costume design, cloth production, pattern printing and logistics.

""Caoxian has a complete industry chain for hanfu, which helps reduce production, labor and logistics costs and makes the town competitive,"" said Lan Tao, director of the e-commerce service center of the county.

Zang Lina, a professor of communication studies at Shandong University, said a regional brand that carries Chinese traditional cultural significance is needed."

"The ASEAN-China (Shandong) SME Conference for Cooperation and Development opened on May 28 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

Hosted by the Shandong Provincial People's Government and the ASEAN-China Center, the two-day event is subtitled ""Opportunities and prospects: ASEAN-China SME cooperation and development in the context of RECP"".

The ASEAN-China (Shandong) SME Conference for Cooperation and Development opens on May 28 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A total of 200 representatives, including government officials, ASEAN diplomatic envoys in China, representatives of ASEAN enterprises and economic and trade institutions, physically attended the event.

In addition, five sub-venues have been set up in ASEAN countries, with about 1,200 small and medium-sized enterprises participating online.

After the opening ceremony, the China-ASEAN trade and investment promotion meeting was held, during which the commercial counselors from Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia in China introduced their investment policies, while representatives from Shandong institutes also gave promotional presentations.

The memorandum of understanding between the Dezhou municipal government and the ASEAN-China Center on enhancing two-way exchanges was signed during the event.

Agreements for a total of 19 projects, which will receive more than 27 billion yuan ($4.24 billion) in investment, are signed. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Agreements for a total of 19 projects, which will receive more than 27 billion yuan ($4.24 billion) in investment, were also signed. They involve foreign trade, investment cooperation, financial support, and more.

ASEAN countries have always been important international partners for Shandong. The two sides enjoy a cultural affinity and amity between people. Exchanges between them date back to ancient times and cooperation in economics, trade, culture, and other fields is strengthening.

So far, two ASEAN countries, Thailand and Cambodia, have set up consulates general in Qingdao and Jinan, respectively.

The ASEAN-Shandong (Dezhou) SME Alliance is launched during the event. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

According to official statistics, ASEAN is the largest trading partner and export market for Shandong. In 2020, total imports and exports between Shandong and ASEAN were valued at 300.68 billion yuan, with a year-on-year growth of 24.4 percent. In the first quarter of this year, trade between Shandong and ASEAN was 84.43 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 45.1 percent.

To date, 661 ASEAN enterprises have invested around $18.72 billion in Shandong, while 731 Shandong enterprises have invested $15.64 billion to set up factories in ASEAN countries.

Shandong has established sister city relations with 10 ASEAN cities and cooperative relations with 21 local governments in ASEAN.

The Shandong Research Center on ASEAN is unveiled at the event. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Qingdao Port of Shandong Port Group in February. Automation has played a key role in increasing efficiency and safety at the port. CHINA DAILY

Sandwiched between north and south economies, coastal province is seen as epitome of economic transformation

Editor's note: This year, the Communist Party of China is celebrating the 100th anniversary of its founding. China Daily is publishing a series of stories looking at the tremendous changes that have occurred in provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities under the leadership of the Party. They also include stories of the people and places that have left indelible marks in the Party's path to glory.

Geographically and economically, Shandong province－which is China's third-largest provincial economy, after Guangdong and Jiangsu, and has the most complete industrial structure among all provincial regions－holds a strategic spot between the north and the south of the country as the development gap between the areas widens.

Over the past three years, the province has been making unswerving efforts to carry out the central authorities' directive that local governments bear in mind the nation's plan to form and implement a new development paradigm－dual circulation, through which China is planning to boost domestic circulation while maintaining its opening-up endeavors.

President Xi Jinping has stressed that places with better development foundations can take the lead in exploring the formation of dual circulation. Shandong has taken the initiative to do so by pursuing high-quality development.

The wide application of information technology at the Jinlan logistics market in the Lanshan district of Linyi, Shandong, is a good example of how the progress of technology can help modernize the development of a traditional industry in the city.

Xi paid an inspection visit to the logistics market on Nov 25, 2013, during which he urged operators to strengthen their efforts, advance with the times, explore pluralistic development and modernize the logistics industry.

According to Wang Shiling, president of Lantian Group, operator of the market, the company has invested 86 million yuan ($13.2 million) building the logistics information center of the market that shares data with more than 2,000 cities and towns in the country, maximizing logistical efficiency.

Lanshan has been accelerating the development of its logistics industry since 2019, when Linyi was recognized as a national logistics hub and as the province's Belt and Road comprehensive pilot zone. Linyi is trying to integrate with the new development paradigm, with domestic circulation as the main component featuring mutual reinforcement of both domestic and international dual circulations.

More than 800 trucks leave Linyi each day on average, and the annual sum of its logistics industry's business transactions has increased from 26 billion yuan in 2013 to 73 billion yuan last year.

As the transformation of Linyi's logistics industry indicates, Shandong has achieved initial success in replacing old growth drivers with new ones.

Some researchers say that Shandong is the epitome of China's economic transformation, as it not only has some foundation and developmental strengths that are typical in developed provincial economies in the south, but also faces structural difficulties that have bound the hands and feet of the north. In addition, Shandong not only has the geographical advantages as a coastal province, it has also confronted problems such as underperforming Rust Belt industries and resource exhaustion.

That's why central authorities require the province to constantly increase the quality and the efficiency of its economic growth and explore ways to replace old growth drivers with new ones to benefit the whole country.

The nation's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) has clearly pointed out that Shandong should weed out its backward growth drivers, upgrade its traditional ones and cultivate new ones.

It should also expedite the formation of 10 modern competitive industrial clusters: modern information technology; high-end equipment; new energy and new materials; smart ocean technology; medical care and health; green chemical engineering; modern agriculture; cultural creativity; tourism; and modern finance.

Liu Bing, vice-president of Shandong Technology and Business University, said the 10 sectors comprise the province's leading and competitive industries, emerging industries with great potential and those focusing on people's livelihoods.

The province's core task is to take advantage of the ongoing technological revolution to cultivate new growth, upgrade the industries and build a modern industrial system with the 10 aforementioned industries as its foundation.

Since the province identified the 10 key industries in 2018, tremendous efforts have been made to boost their development. Their proportion in the province's GDP has remained above 50 percent since that time.

Shandong Party chief Liu Jiayi said, ""If we still hold the old steamer ticket featuring the old development model and industrial structure, we will never board the giant ship of high-quality development, and we will be a big encumbrance to the country in growth, energy saving and emissions reduction and regional coordinated development.""

Liu made those remarks at a mobilization meeting the province held in February 2018, during which, as many local civil servants have told the media, Liu sent out an unequivocal message that although Shandong acknowledges the gap between its status quo and high-quality development, it is not resigned to it, and the province has no choice but to fight for improvement.

Over the past three years, the province has shut down more than 110,000 polluting enterprises that cannot meet the province's requirements for high-quality industrial development. The number of chemical industrial parks has decreased from 199 to 84 since 2018."

"With a population of more than 100 million, the eastern province of Shandong is known for its strong manufacturing sector and agriculture. The Port of Qingdao is ranked fifth in the world for handling capacity. The city has China's first national marine laboratory and the Pilot National Lab for Marine Science and Technology (Qingdao). Shandong also has many Red Tourism sites, including the Yimeng Revolution Memorial Hall and the East China Cemetery of Revolutionary Martyrs in Yimeng.

The province is looking to exploit its maritime resources to boost exports and trade and discover new sources of revenue

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong province, has compared the pursuit of high-quality development to a steady uphill trudge, saying that each step must be deliberate because a stop-start style is doomed to failure.

He said the eastern province has no option but to forge ahead in the face of difficulties because it has no opportunities to take a break, feel proud or slacken its efforts, nor any reasons to hesitate or look back.

Zibo city, a chemical industrial hub in the central area, is the epitome of the recent efforts the province has made to pursue quality development.

Jiang Duntao, Zibo's Party secretary, said that over the past three years, the number of chemical industry parks has fallen from 28 to six, while the number of related companies has declined from 1,135 to 524.

In the first half of 2019, Shandong's GDP growth dropped to 5.4 percent, the lowest level for more than 10 years.

However, the ""sacrifice"" has proved worthwhile because not only has pollution been controlled effectively and carbon emissions reduced, but more funds and supportive policies have been routed to 10 key industries in the province.

More importantly, local governments and the people have realized that while shutting down outdated production facilities temporarily affects economic growth, the move echoes current trends and is conducive to sustainable, long-term development.

In the past three years, the number of high-tech enterprises in Shandong has exceeded 14,000, or 3.5 times that in 2015.

Also, the production value of such businesses has accounted for 5.1 percent of the total production value of manufacturing enterprises in the province whose annual revenue is more than 20 million yuan ($3.12 million).

New growth drivers

Zhou Lianhua, director of the Shandong Development and Reform Commission, said the province has explored a path with Shandong characteristics to replace the old growth drivers with new ones while maintaining economic growth.

During the period of the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), consumption of standard grade coal per 10,000 yuan of Shandong's GDP fell from 0.71 metric tons to 0.56 tons.

Moreover, the province contributed 6 percent of national GDP while accounting for just 1.2 percent of the country's total energy consumption.

Last year, despite the novel coronavirus outbreak, the added value of the 10 key industries grew by 6.6 percent year-on-year, and the provincial economy hit 7.3 trillion yuan－similar to that of the Netherlands－a rise of 3.6 percent from 2019.

Moreover, four of the 10 key industries－information technology, high-end chemical engineering, high-end equipment manufacturing, and new energy and new materials－saw annual net profits rise by 75.4 percent, 32 percent, 25.8 percent and 29.9 percent respectively last year.

Fei Hongping, a researcher of industrial and technological economies with the National Development and Reform Commission, said Shandong is promoting the development of its 10 competitive industrial clusters by cultivating entire industry chains and a rules-based business environment consisting of companies, institutes, financial bodies and other service agencies, rather than simply supporting several leading companies.

""This is an obvious characteristic of the path Shandong has explored to replace its old growth drivers with new ones,"" Fei said.

Shandong still has a long way to go to realize high-quality development, though.

Its work report for this year said the provincial economy remains unbalanced because the contribution of the new economy is still low and innovation has not yet become a robust growth driver. In addition, some institutional obstacles are still preventing the market from playing a decisive role in distribution of resources.

The provincial government has vowed to roll out more supportive policies to attract talent and prompt funding to flow into innovation and green businesses.

Fei said governments and businesses in the province need to further open their minds and there should be a thorough reform of the distribution system for land, talent and funds.

Last year, Shandong's foreign trade volume exceeded 2.2 trillion yuan. During the period of the 13th Five-Year Plan, its foreign trade grew by an average of 8.1 percent per annum.

In addition, the proportion of Shandong's foreign trade in the national total rose from 6.1 percent in 2015 to 6.8 percent last year, when overseas investment in the province was $17 billion. Meanwhile, its share in such investment nationally rose from 6.9 percent in 2015 to 12.2 percent last year.

Foreign investment

The provincial government said that during the period of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25), Shandong will expand opening-up and try to drive foreign investment growth above the national average to become a magnet for foreign investment.

The provincial commerce department said it will try to make breakthroughs in intergovernmental and business cooperation with Japan and the Republic of Korea.

This activity will focus on areas such as high-end equipment, information technology, new energy cars, biomedicine, industrial design and financial services. Also, China-Japan-ROK economic and trade cooperation demonstration zones will be developed in the province.

Shandong will also take advantage of its free trade pilot zones to explore new reforms. It will deepen cooperation with members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in fields such as energy, resources, infrastructural facilities and production capacity, while building new international cooperation platforms for the Belt and Road Initiative and becoming a ""gateway to the ocean"" for SCO members.

It will also build international industrial and trade parks to facilitate cooperation and will launch more air and ocean routes to Japan and the ROK, while more freight trains will travel to central Asia and Europe.

It will also implement a six-hour customs clearance policy under the framework of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and strengthen coordination of ports, customs and logistics companies to form an efficient trade service system for Japan and the ROK.

The moves are part of Shandong's plan to become a ""golden passage"" connecting Japan and the ROK in the east, Central Asia and Europe in the west and Southeast Asia in the south.

In the next five years, Shandong will try to expand its cross-border e-commerce market sales and offshore trade.

The province aims to attract investment from the world's top 500 companies－so far, 219 of them have invested there. It is also encouraging multinational corporations to move their headquarters to the province to build economic growth through them.

The province has pledged to implement a pre-investment establishment national treatment system and a negative list administration system for foreign investment. It will also further expand market access for foreign investment in finance, telecommunications, education, medical care and culture.

It also plans to improve promotion of and services for foreign investors while protecting the legal rights and interests of foreign businesses in accordance with the law."

"People enjoy the scenery of azalea blossoms at Azalea Festival in Rizhao, East China's Shandong province, April 24, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

The number of permanent residents in Shandong province continued to grow steadily over the last decade, and its labor force is abundant, data from the census show.

The total population of Shandong exceeded 101.52 million last year after growing by an average annual rate of 0.58 percent for a decade — slightly lower than the average annual growth of 0.63 percent in the decade ending in 2010, the Shandong Bureau of Statistics said at a news conference on Friday, citing data from the seventh national census conducted last year.

The province's population increased by 5.73 million in the past 10 years, the census found.

Last year, the province's population of people between birth and 14 years of age exceeded 19 million, accounting for about 18.8 percent of the province's total population, an increase of slightly more than 3 percentage points in proportion to the total population from 10 years ago.

""The proportion shared by the population aged between zero and 14 in Shandong's total population shows the shift to the two-child policy in China has achieved positive results in our province,"" said Xin Shuren, head of the Shandong Bureau of Statistics.

The province's total population of working age people between 16 and 59 exceeded 60 million last year, ranking second in China and suggesting the province has an abundant workforce, Xin said.

Shandong had 21.22 million residents aged 60 or older last year, accounting for 20.9 percent of its permanent residents.

The proportion of Shandong's elderly population is 2.2 percentage points higher than the average proportion of aging population in China."

"A staff member works on semi-solid lithium products at a new energy company in Shandong province, on May 19, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

The Taierzhuang district of Zaozhuang city, East China's Shandong province, has promoted industrial transformation and upgrading to high-end, green, and intelligent features since the start of this year.

The district launched 10 technological transformation projects in the first four months of the year, and established two digital manufacturing plants, with industrial enterprises reaching an output value of 3.23 billion yuan ($501.6 million) through to April, up 28.6 percent on a yearly basis.

An industrial robot produces lithium battery at a technology company in Shandong province, on May 19, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

A worker checks production of semi-solid lithium batteries at a new energy company in Shandong province, on May 19, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

An industrial robot produces lithium battery at a technology company in Shandong province, on May 19, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

A worker cleans brakes in a manufacturing plant of a brake system company in Shandong province, on May 19,

An employee works on brakes at a manufacturing plant in Shandong province, on May 19, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"People try on hanfu at a studio at Daiji town, Caoxian county, Shandong province. [Provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

With Children's Day around the corner, Zhao Ying, who is in her 30s, has entered the busiest time of the year for her business making hanfu — Chinese traditional costumes — mainly for children. During the whole month of May, the mother of two children needs to stay up late almost every night to prepare orders placed in her online shops.

""Inquiries about my products keep popping out on my Taobao shops, even though it's night,"" Zhao said.

Located in Sunzhuang village of Daiji town, Caoxian county, Shandong province, Zhao's workshop is a five-minute drive from the village's main road, which is lined with shops involved in costume production, ranging from cloth production to pattern printing.

A cloth production factory in Daiji town. [Provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

In May, the best month for business, Zho is able to earn more than 70,000 yuan ($10,900) a day selling hanfu. On some days, her daily income can exceed 100,000 yuan, Zhao said.

Like Zhao, hundreds of businesses in Daiji town are working overtime to meet the demand for hanfu. The town has been a center for the manufacture of performance costumes for decades and account for 70 percent of the total sold in the country, according to the town government.

Zhao Ying shows hanfu made at her workshop in Daiji town, Caoxian county, Shandong province. [Provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, sales of the performance costumes slumped last year, but demand is growing substantially now.

In the online sector, hanfu from Caoxian are responsible for one-third of the country's total, according to the e-commerce service center of Caoxian."

"Genghai No 1, off the coast of Yantai, is a large-scale fish farm that makes use of artificial intelligence, 5G and big data to achieve fish breeding, marine biology and research. [Photo/China Daily]

Shandong and Henan provinces recently signed an ecological protection compensation agreement. According to the agreement, as reported by Xinhua News Agency, if the quality of water in the Henan section of the Yellow River improves by one level from category-III over the course of one year, Shandong, which lies in the lower reaches of the Yellow River, will pay Henan 60 million yuan ($9.32 million) as a reward, and if the water quality worsens by a level, Henan will pay 60 million yuan to Shandong as compensation.

Also, Shandong will pay Henan 1 million yuan for every 1 percentage point decrease in the annual key pollutant index at Liuzhuang, which is on the Henan side of the Shandong-Henan border, and Henan will pay Shandong 1 million yuan in compensation for every 1 percentage point increase in annual pollutant index, with a ceiling of 40 million yuan.

The 100 million-yuan agreement shows the two provinces' determination to work together to improve the Yellow River's water quality. For the two provinces, 100 million yuan is not a staggering amount, yet it shows their commitment to improve their ecological governance.

The deal will help explore and develop better ways to promote the sharing of responsibilities and benefits in ecological protection. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012, the authorities have prioritized the construction of eco-friendly environments, leading to the introduction of ecological protection plans for the Yangtze and Yellow rivers.

The need to provide ecological safeguards for some rivers across provinces is behind this trans-provincial ecological compensation agreement. The pilot Xin'an River ecological compensation project (in Anhui and Zhejiang provinces) launched in 2012 was the first of its kind in China to promote ecological protection of a river's upper and lower reaches, and it has helped improve the water quality of the Xin'an River.

To protect the water conservation area of the Chaobai River Basin in the upper reaches of the Miyun Reservoir in Beijing, Beijing and Hebei province have established a watershed ecological compensation mechanism based on cost-sharing, benefit-sharing and cooperative governance.

The first inter-provincial ecological compensation agreement for the Yellow River Valley between Shandong and Henan, which defines specific compensation standards, will enable people to recognize the operation mode of inter-provincial ecological compensation and the necessity of trans-regional governance of rivers."

"A technology demonstration project to produce water and heat without consuming energy or producing carbon is put into operation in Haiyang, East China's Shandong province on May 11. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A technology demonstration project designed to simultaneously produce and supply heat and water, built by the State Power Investment Corp Shandong Nuclear Power and Tsinghua University, went online in Haiyang, East China's Shandong province on May 11.

By extracting steam from the Haiyang Nuclear Power Unit, the technology drives the hydrothermal co-production unit to directly turn seawater into high-quality fresh water with a temperature of 95 C, realizing the simultaneous production of heat and water for the first time.

The project represents a significant advance in that it produces no carbon and requires no additional source of energy to desalinate the water."

"Visitors browse vegetables at an exhibition center in Shouguang, Shandong province. LIANG BEN/FOR CHINA DAILY

Advanced growing technologies put Shouguang on the global food map

Growers in Shouguang, Shandong province, are penetrating more overseas markets with high-quality products.

Li Xinsheng, director of the Zhendu fruit and vegetable cooperative in Dongzhenguan village of Shouguang city, said having attained certification as a vegetable production base for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is key for the cooperative to expand its market reach.

Issued last April by the bureau of agriculture and rural affairs of Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province－and Weifang, which administers Shouguang－the certification says the cooperative's production base covers an area of 213 hectares in the village. It also lists the three vegetable varieties that the production base can supply as being peppers, tomatoes and cucumbers.

The cooperative sold around 2,000 metric tons of color peppers last year to the GBA, said Li, who is also Party secretary of the village.

""With over two decades of development, color peppers have become a business card of our village, gaining stable markets for us,"" he said.

The village, home to 586 families, now produces 20,000 tons of color peppers every year, with 60 percent sold to overseas markets including Russia, Kazakhstan and Singapore. More than 350 families are engaged in the color pepper industry in the village.

Although both sides of a main road at the village are lined up by greenhouses, Li said villagers are looking for space to build more greenhouses.

""Betting on increased demand for color peppers, they have been building greenhouses in neighboring villages,"" he said, adding that some families are expanding their greenhouses to produce more color peppers.

Back in 1998, villagers were reluctant to grow color peppers when Li was elected as Party secretary of the village.

But with greenhouse technology first being widely adopted in Shouguang in the 1980s, villages in the city started growing vegetables year round, making Shouguang China's ""vegetable city"" and attracting multinational agricultural companies to the city.

Li got to know about color peppers for the first time from an Israeli company that set up a demonstration base for cultivating tomatoes and color peppers in Shouguang.

""Color peppers were a foreign product. Whether they would be accepted in China, nobody knew at the time,"" he said.

Li and another four families started to grow the vegetables as an experiment. The results showed color peppers were not generally accepted in China at the time.

""We waited all day long at a market in Shouguang, but nobody was interested in our product,"" Li said.

Their color peppers were finally bought by a vegetable business runner who said he would transport them to the northeast to have a try.

""He came back to us days later and told us he would buy all the color peppers we grow,"" said Li, adding that the color peppers were probably sold to Russia via border markets.

""In the first year after growing color peppers, our income increased 30 percent more than from growing cucumbers,"" Li added.

Three years later, over 100 families in the village started to grow color peppers.

The color pepper sector saw rapid development after the village established a cooperative in 2008 to promote standardized production in the whole sector chain including growing, packaging and marketing.

""If we had not consistently upheld safety standards for our agricultural produce, we would not have been able to tap the Greater Bay Area markets in such a short time,"" Li said.

The Party committee of the village divided families that registered in the cooperative into several groups and gave a number to each greenhouse. Each member of the Party committee is responsible for some greenhouse production oversight such as whether farmers use authorized pesticides.

In addition to buying equipment to test pesticides on their own, officials from the Customs and agricultural and rural affairs authorities come to our village every half year to get samples from our greenhouses and bring them back to their labs for testing, said Li, adding that the color peppers grown in the village have never tested positive for pesticide residue.

If any farmer is found to be using prohibited pesticides, he will be prohibited from growing color peppers for three years, according to the cooperative regulations.

To ensure high-quality development of the vegetable industry, the Shouguang government promotes standardized production across the city in the vegetable production sector from the aspects of vegetable growing environments, seeds and seedlings selection, growing skills, fertilizers and water use, disease and pest control as well as harvesting and packaging.

The city now has 40,000 hectares to grow vegetables, yielding over 4.5 million tons of related produce, according to the city government.

An official checks color peppers in a greenhouse in Shouguang, Shandong province. ZHAO RUIXUE/CHINA DAILY

""Standardized production has definitely enhanced the competitiveness of our vegetable industry,"" Li said.

Many villagers are upgrading their greenhouses to more modern varieties.

Li Yihai, 55, spent 700,000 yuan ($108,675.57) in 2019 expanding his greenhouse in the village to one that now stretches for 300 meters.

""Most of the facilities in my greenhouse are smart. It's easier for me to control the growing environment of the color peppers, such as humidity, temperature and soil quality,"" he said.

To keep the soil healthy, Li Yihai is using a kind of enzyme widely used in the village.

Last year, he earned 400,000 yuan from the greenhouse.

""The color peppers we grow are rich in healthy microelements and in good shape, thus enjoying a solid market reputation,"" he added.

Carrots grown in the city's Peixi village have been sold to more than 20 countries and regions.

Li Xinghua, general manager of a food company located in the village, has accumulated rich experience growing carrots that are welcome in global markets.

""The carrots must look good with smooth skin and good color,"" he said.

Li bought a machine to sort seeds and an expensive GPS system for planting.

""In this way, carrots can grow with good intervals with a higher output,"" he added.

Li Xinghua's company has also developed growing bases in Fujian and Shaanxi provinces and in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region to meet global demand for carrots all year round.

With standardized production implemented, the vegetable industry in Shouguang is entering a high-quality development track in both overseas and domestic markets, said Zhao Xuchun, Party secretary of Shouguang."

"Kites fly in the sky during a kite festival in Weihai, East China's Shandong province. [Provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A kite festival took wing at a beach in coastal Weihai, Shandong province, over the five-day Labor Day holiday, attracting hundreds of people whose kites came in all shapes and sizes — whales, octopuses, dinosaurs, bears, Disney characters and more — flying high over the shoreline."

"The Shandong Tour for China-Japan-Korea Cooperation and Development kicked off in Jinan, capital of Shandong province on April 25. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Shandong Tour for China-Japan-Korea Cooperation and Development kicked off in Jinan, capital of Shandong province on April 25.

The event is aimed at enhancing mutually beneficial cooperation and pursuing common development among the three countries.

Hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Shandong Provincial People's Government, the event was held online and offline and featured a series of themed activities such as a dialogue meeting, a meeting on local government cooperation, and business talks for enterprises from the three countries.

""China, Japan and South Korea are close to each other in terms of geographical location and cultural background, and the three are friendly neighbors and important partners. Shandong is one of the provinces that is close to Japan and South Korea, and enjoys natural geographical location advantages,"" said Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

Lin added that the event offers an important bridge for Japan and South Korea enterprises to connect with Shandong and deepen cooperation among industries from the three areas, as well as promote the high-quality development of Shandong.

Statistics show that in 2020, more than 60,000 enterprises from Japan and South Korea settled in China, and China's foreign trade with both countries exceeded $600 billion despite the global COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 452 cities in the three countries established friendship city ties last year.

Lin said that the industrial, supply and value chains of the three are deeply integrated, and they have broad common interests and tremendous potential for cooperation. Based on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), China will join hands with Japan and South Korea to accelerate the construction of the world's largest free trade zone, and deepen mutually beneficial cooperation in areas including technology research and development, high-end manufacturing, energy conservation and environment protection, 5G, artificial intelligence, and digital industrialization.

Kim Kyung Han, consul general of Korea in Qingdao, said that the joint cooperation among the three countries are very important, and they should work together to open up new vistas for the development in the post-COVID era.

Masaru Igawahara, consul general of Japan in Qingdao, noted that Shandong has a large population and is an economic powerhouse, and boasts an attractive market and great potential for economic development.

There are currently 5,860 companies from Japan and South Korea investing in Shandong, with investments totaling $33.44 billion. Shandong will ramp up efforts to create a world-class business environment for investors that is market-oriented, law-based and internationalized, according to the province's official."

"The National Fuel Cell Technology Innovation Center, which will be led and contracted by Weichai Power, was launched on April 16 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

The inauguration of the National Fuel Cell Technology Innovation Center is held on April 16 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: weifangfabu]

Approved by the Ministry of Science and Technology, the National Fuel Cell Technology Innovation Center is the first of its kind in China.

Focusing on the research and development and application of cutting-edge technologies and key generic technologies, the center will serve the strategic needs of the national fuel cell industry. It will aim to become an international first-class fuel cell technology innovation center that will enhance the core competitiveness of China's fuel cell and related industries.

The center will also contribute to Shandong's efforts to foster a strong hydrogen energy industry. The province has in recent years implemented a slew of measures and policies to boost its hydrogen energy economy and utilize clean fuel sources to facilitate the province's transition to a low-carbon energy mix.

Weichai Power is a leading Chinese powertrain manufacturer based in Weifang, Shandong province. The company has been ramping up efforts to extend its fuel cell industrial chain and improve the core competitiveness of its fuel cell powertrain system.

The company's new energy industrial park in the Weifang high-tech zone has a complete industrial chain covering cells, engines, engine control systems, powertrains and automotive production.

It has also established a new energy innovation center in Weifang that is supported by more than 1,000 engineers."

"Sweet potatoes cultivated in a greenhouse in Shouguang, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

New vegetable varieties, new achievements, new technologies and new ideas

in the vegetable industry and related sectors from around the world are on display at the 22nd China (Shouguang) International Vegetable Sci-Tech Fair, which kicked off on Tuesday in Shouguang, a major vegetable production base in Shandong province.

Themed ""Green, Science and Technology, Future"", the fair has a main exhibition area of 450,000 square meters. More than 4,000 vegetable varieties from home and abroad are on display via online and offline channels.

New planting technologies featuring soilless cultivation are also being showcased.

The 2021 China (Shouguang) International Vegetable Seed Industry Expo kicked off on the same day to promote exchanges in the field of seed research and development.

In recent years, organizations and companies in Shouguang have developed 140 new vegetable varieties, the city government said.

The vegetable fair and seed expo will both run until May 30.

Peppers grown in a modern greenhouse in Shouguang, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

Soilless cultivation of tomatoes is demonstrated in Shouguang, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

A China-Europe freight train made of pumpkins and other vegetables is on display at the 22nd China (Shouguang) International Vegetable Sci-Tech Fair. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

Giant pumpkins grow in a greenhouse in Shouguang, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

A large tomato vine cultivated in a greenhouse in Shouguang, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Containers are transported at a port in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Jan 12, 2021. [Photo/IC]

The province of Shandong in East China is set to host a business promotional event in Jinan, Tai'an and Jining from April 24 to 26. The event is aimed at boosting ties with Japan and South Korea, both of which are the province's major trade partners and major sources of foreign investment.

Hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Shandong Provincial People's Government, the event will be held both online and offline.

According to the organizers, nearly 500 guests will attend the event via offline channels. These guests will comprise senior executives of Japanese and Korean enterprises in China, officers-in-charge of Japan and South Korean government representative offices in China, as well as representatives of economic and trade institutions, media outlets, and Japanese and Korean embassies and consulates in China.

Representatives from Shandong government departments, key industrial parks, companies, universities and think tanks will also take part in the event offline.

The event, which will be broadcasted via live streaming platforms, will have two sub-venues in Japan and South Korea that will see the online participation of nearly 1,000 enterprises.

Shandong serves as a bridgehead for China's cooperation with Japan and South Korea. It is also one of the Chinese provinces with the closest and most convenient exchanges with the two countries.

The trade volume between Shandong and South Korea accounts for nearly one-tenth of the country's total with South Korea, while Shandong's trade with Japan accounts for more than 7 percent of the trade volume between China and Japan.

According to official statistics, there are 5,626 enterprises in Shandong funded by Japanese and South Korean investments amounting to $31.85 billion. These companies employ over 300,000 people.

Shandong has been speeding up the construction of national platforms such as the Comprehensive Pilot Zone for the Transformation of Old and New Growth Drivers, the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone and the China-Shanghai Cooperation Organization cooperation demonstration zone, which will bring about numerous opportunities for deepening business ties with South Korea and Japan."

"Three sci-tech projects developed by Yantai companies were included in the list of top 10 scientific and technological achievements in Shandong province.

The list released on April 15 was based on an evaluation by the Shandong Science and Technology Statistical Analysis Research Center, related universities, and media outlets.

The three projects are sea-based launch platform for carrier rockets in Yantai, the ADI whole industrial chain of high-end polyurethane raw material developed by Wanhua Chemical, and the new drug independently developed by Yantai-based RemeGen which has been proven to be effective in treating systemic lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and autoimmune diseases.

File photos taken on Nov 25, 2020 shows visitors in front of a model of the sea-based launch platform for carrier rockets at the Yantai International Expo Center. [Photo/VCG]

Yantai-based biotech innovator RemeGen makes its debut on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange on Nov 9, 2020. [Photo/ytcutv.com]

A plant of Wanhua Chemical. Its main business focuses on the R&D, production and sales of functional materials, acrylic acid, and polyurethane (PU). [Photo/qlwb.com]"

"More than 1,500 kites were flying high in the sky at the International Kite Festival in Weifang, Shandong province, on Sunday — with more than 500 kite enthusiasts and 118 teams from across the country.

Initiated in 1984, the annual event has become known around the world. Because of the pandemic, overseas teams showed off their kites via video channels at the opening ceremony.

""This year we created a 172-meter-long kite in the shape of Chinese traditional dragon. It consists of two parts: the 100-meter part, carrying our wishes of celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, and the 72-meter part, celebrating the founding of new China,"" kite enthusiast Wang Yongxun said.

This year's festival will run until May 5.

Video by Zhao Ruixue and Wang Yingzi."

"Liu Jiakun, Party secretary of Jiujianpeng, checks the growth of honeysuckle. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Linyi, Shandong province, one of the country's old revolutionary bases, has revitalized development in its rural areas.

Linyi has long been known as the cradle of the ""Yimeng spirit"" cultivated during China's struggle for liberation in the 1930s and 40s.

During the 12 years of revolutionary war (1938-49), more than 1.2 million of the total 4.2 million population living in the Yimeng Mountain area made efforts to support the Red army. More than 200,000 of those in the area joined the army to fight.

Their spirit of hard work, self-improvement, selflessness and dedication was named for Yimeng Mountain. Ever since, the ""Yimeng spirit"" has inspired generations of Chinese people and even today continues to shine in many ways, including the local people's fight against poverty.

In Linyi, a total of 451,000 people were lifted out of poverty during the 13th Five Year Plan period (2016-20). The average annual net income of local people increased from 2,566 yuan ($393) in 2016 to 7,481 yuan in 2020.

Jiujianpeng village in Pingyi county, with its harsh natural environment, was once one of Shandong's poorest, but over the decades it has seen great changes in both its natural living environment and people's livelihoods.

Liu Jiakun, Party secretary of Jiujianpeng, said the village has formed a development pattern based on the growth of tourism, agriculture and medicine.

""We started the water treatment and afforestation in 1984 to turn our village into a better place with electricity, running water and roads,"" Liu said.

Currently, all households in the village have access to infrastructure, including paved roads and other facilities, such as standardized toilets for tourists and dozens of parking lots. In addition, more than 120 street lamps have sprouted in the village.

Tourist attractions such as folk culture exhibition halls, sightseeing platforms and campsites have been built to attract tourists. The annual number of tourists visiting Jiujianpeng has now reached nearly 300,000, generating more than 26 million yuan per year.

The village has given full play to Pingyi county's rich honeysuckle resources, and the county now styles itself as the hometown of honeysuckle flowers in China.

""A whole industrial chain featuring honeysuckle flowers has taken shape in the village, covering aspects from the breeding of high-quality honeysuckle species to the research and development of relevant traditional Chinese medicines and food,"" Liu said.

The village has invested 300 million yuan to renovate and standardize Shandong New Continent Pharmaceutical Co in Pingyi, the first to undergo such changes in the county. The company's production value this year is expected to exceed 100 million yuan."

Tengzhou Museum山东省滕州市博物馆 Address: Longquan Square, Tasi Middle Road, Tengzhou city, Shandong provinceOpening hours: 9:00 am-4:30 pm (entry until 4:00 pm)Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)General admission: Free The exhibition hall of the Tengzhou Museum in East China’s Shandong province [Photo tengzhoumuseum.com] Covering 20,487 square meters, the Tengzhou Museum in East China’s Shandong province is a comprehensive and multi-functional modern museum integrating history, art, and culture in a grand building designed in the styles of the Han (206 BC-AD 220) and the Tang (618-907) dynasties. The permanent exhibition at the museum introduces the historical development of Tengzhou from the Beixin Culture（5400-4400 BC）of the Neolithic Age to the Civil War (1946-49) period. The museum also takes full advantage of its cultural relics to build special exhibition halls with their own characteristics to fully demonstrate the profound culture of Tengzhou. Opened to the public in 2020, the new building of the Tengzhou Museum has become a city landmark, publicizing the history and culture of Tengzhou, exuding its ancient charm and promoting development of all its economic and social undertakings. The collections of the Tengzhou Museum now number 82,072, and feature the Beixin Culture, bronze wares of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties (c.16th century -256 BC), and jades from the Neolithic Age to the Xia Dynasty (c.21st century-16th century BC), the Shang Dynasty (c.16th century-11th century BC), and the Zhou Dynasty (c.11th century-256 BC). The museum is renowned for its bronze wares with beautiful motifs and rich inscriptions and has the largest collection of bronze wares in Shandong province. In 2005, it was rated as one of the top 10 provincial museums. Bronze wares dating back to the Shang and Zhou Dynasties (c.16th century -256 BC) are displayed at the Tengzhou Museum. [Photo tengzhoumuseum.com]

"A high-speed train moves past fields of flowers in a section of the Qingdao-Yancheng railway. [Lyv Hengwei/For chinadaily.com.cn]

As it runs through scenic spots in the Qingdao West Coast New Area of Shandong province — which is carpeted in the abundant blossoming flowers of spring — the Qingdao-Yancheng railway is boosting its reputation for giving passengers excellent views of spring scenery.

Launched at the end of 2018, the Qingdao-Yancheng railway is shortening the journey between Qingdao and the Yangtze River Delta region.

Authorities said it's expected that passengers will need just three hours to get from Qingdao West Railway Station to the delta region, as the country's railway network develops in the near future."

Zibo Ceramics Museum淄博市陶瓷博物馆 Address: Zibo Cultural Center, 320 Huaguang Road, Zhandian district, Zibo city, Shandong provinceOpening hours: 9:00 -17:00 (entry until 16:30)Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)General admission: free Exterior of Zibo Ceramics Museum in East China’s Shandong province [Photo zbstcbwg.cn] Established in 2002 and opened to the public in 2011, Zibo Ceramics Museum in East China’s Shandong province is a young and energetic facility. It is a national 4A-level tourist attraction, an intangible cultural heritage museum in Shandong, and a base for science and patriotic education. Covering an exhibition area of 20,000 square meters, the museum has a collection of more than 160,000 precious ancient and modern ceramics, as well as glass works from home and abroad, presenting their development through advanced technologies. Ceramic teaware for state banquets exhibited in Zibo Ceramics Museum. [Photo zbstcbwg.cn] After the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, Zibo innovatively developed five types of high-quality porcelain, which were well-received in the ceramics field. In the 1960s, the blue-and-white teaware produced in Zibo city was chosen to be used in the Great Hall of the People. Since then, Zibo ceramics rose to fame and have become national ceramics for state banquets and international conferences. A permanent exhibition at the museum is dedicated to showcasing these legendary ceramics. Other permanent exhibitions at Zibo Ceramics Museum highlight ceramic cultural relics from the Neolithic Age (about 10,000 years ago) to the Republic of China (1912-49); glass works dating from the Western Zhou Dynasty (c.11th century-771 BC) to the early 20th century; contemporary masterpieces of ceramics and glass; daily-use ceramic products and ceramic works of art; architectural ceramics, garden ceramics, high-technology ceramics, and modern glasses; as well as modern ceramics and glass works from more than 20 foreign countries. A masterpiece of glass work from the permanent collection of Zibo Ceramics Museum [Photo zbstcbwg.cn]

Linyi Museum临沂市博物馆 Address: 10 Lanling Road, Lanshan district, Linyi city, Shandong provinceOpening hours: 9:00 am -5:00 pm (entry until 4:00 pm)Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)General admission: Free A distant view of the Linyi Museum in East China’s Shandong province [Photo museum.linyi.cn] Covering 20,806 square meters and opened to the public in 2012, the Linyi Museum in East China’s Shandong province looks like four piled books, which symbolizes the profound history and culture of Linyi. Housing a collection of more than 30,000 cultural relics, including 2,132 precious ones, the museum is most celebrated for its unearthed cultural relics from the Neolithic Age and the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) as well as Han Dynasty pictorial bricks with local characteristics and research value. Additionally, a large number of various and well-preserved knife coins that circulated in the ancient State of Qi are collected by the museum. Covering an exhibition area of 10,000 square meters, Linyi Museum has nine permanent exhibitions. The exhibition of local relics mainly highlights the city’s historical and cultural development. The permanent exhibition The Epics on the Stone: Han Dynasty Stone Relief in Linyi Museum [Photo museum.linyi.cn] The Epics on the Stone: Han Dynasty Stone Relief displays more than 100 Han Dynasty pictorial bricks with local characteristics to vividly depict people’s daily life and folk customs, reflecting the high level of material and spiritual civilization of the Han Dynasty. The exhibition Statues and Other Stone Inscription Artworks showcases a great number of statues and monuments, stone pillars inscribed with the Buddha's name or Buddhist scriptures, and steles of the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911), most of which have important historical and research value. Art of Mud and Fire: Prehistoric Pottery introduces the development of prehistoric pottery, the firing and decoration techniques involved, and the pottery’s structure and painted colors. The exhibition also displays an array of unearthed pottery from the Dawenkou Culture period ( about 6,300 to 4,500 years ago) and the Longshan Culture period ( 2500 BC-2000 BC), as well as eggshell pottery. Linyi’s history and culture is shown in a permanent exhibition at Linyi Museum. [Photo museum.linyi.cn] What’s more, the exhibition Appreciation of Chinese Arts: Calligraphy & Painting focuses on the richness and elegant artistic charms of traditional Chinese culture through precious calligraphy and paintings by ancient and contemporary masters. The exhibition Ancient Currency: The Primary Coin showcases the money of ancient China, and helps visitors understand the history and prosperity of Linyi in bygone days. The exhibition of ancient bronze mirrors, with 100 examples, describes the historical development of the craft in ancient China, reflecting the transformation of social and cultural life at that time. The exhibition themed on the Yimeng Red Culture presents China's revolutionary undertakings during the first half of the 20th century through the display of historical items, pictures, and literary works.

"Rescuers work at an explosion site of a gold mine in Qixia city, East China's Shandong province, after two blasts trapped 22 workers underground, Jan 25, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

Shandong province is encouraging the public to report production safety risks, including dangerous practices that might be illegal.

A guideline released recently by the province is part of an effort to reduce the occurrence of risky situations.

Any person or unit reporting hidden risks or practices will be eligible for a reward up to 500,000 yuan ($76,651) once their report is verified, according to the guideline.

The guideline listed details about the types of situations that should be reported, who will handle the reports and the level of reward available. ""Shandong has had serious production safety issues, and several accidents have occurred since the beginning of this year,"" said Qin Chuanbin, Party secretary of the Provincial Emergency Department at a news conference on Tuesday.

To change the situation, the province has updated its reward incentives to accompany a campaign that's being carried out across the province emphasizing safety checks, he said.

Twenty-two sectors are being targeted for their high risks and safety problems, including mining, transportation, operations using dangerous chemicals, explosives or special equipment, and construction. The list provides the major channels for accepting safety reports.

Explosions in January at a gold mine that was under construction in Qixia killed 10 miners. One remains unaccounted for. Eleven were rescued after being trapped underground for two weeks.

The province launched its campaign in the middle of February to encourage people to thoroughly check production safety, management and equipment maintenance, among other things."

"The province of Shandong in East China will host a high-profile event to further enhance exchange and cooperation with Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, according to a news conference held on March 18 by the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government.

The event focusing on boosting cooperation with Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan is set to open on March 23 via online channels, said Shandong officials at a news conference held on March 18. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The event will be held via both online and offline channels, with the main venue set in Jinan, the provincial capital. The province's 16 cities will serve as sub-venues.

More than 1,000 representatives from government departments, business organizations and industry leaders in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan will attend the event through online channels.

According to Shandong officials, a batch of projects, mainly involving equipment manufacturing, new generation information technology, medical care, new energy and new materials, and modern agriculture, will be signed at the event.

China's Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan are important sources of external investment and trading partners of Shandong province, said officials.

Last year, despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, Shandong posted steady growth in trade with Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

Shandong's actual investment from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan hit $13.68 billion, up 22.4 percent year-on-year, accounting for 77.5 percent of the province's total, while its imports and exports trade with the three regions reached 87.19 billion yuan ($13.4 billion), up 39 percent year-on-year, accounting for 4 percent of the province's total."

"The province of Shandong has launched a slew of measures to facilitate the preservation and development of traditional Chinese medicine and achieve breakthroughs in core technologies in key areas, local media reported.

These measures will take effect on April 1, 2021.

According to the local authorities, Shandong, as one of the important cradles of TCM, boasts rich resources of traditional Chinese medicine and has a competitive TCM industry.

A hospital staff fills prescriptions of traditional Chinese medicine for patients. [Photo/VCG]

The province is an important production base of radix glehniae, honeysuckle, rose, red-rooted salvia, scutellaria baicalensis and other traditional Chinese medicinal materials. Its planting area of honeysuckle accounts for more than 60 percent of the country's total.

Official statistics show that the plating area of traditional Chinese medicinal materials in Shandong measures about 2,567 square kilometers. The province is home to 202 TCM production enterprises and 30 wholesale enterprises specializing in TCM decoction pieces, with 2,132 varieties of TCM available.

The 30 measures to boost the development of the TCM industry will be valid for five years in Shandong. These measures are related to standardized production, quality management, innovation and other aspects.

Shandong will promote the large-scale cultivation and standardized production of traditional Chinese medicinal materials to improve quality and foster local brands.

Industry associations and enterprises in Shandong are encouraged to make standards for Chinese herbal medicine cultivation and breeding to facilitate the high-quality development of related industries.

Targeted measures will be launched to expand production, as well as facilitate storage and circulation of TCM decoction pieces in the province.

The province will also continue to strengthen the supervision of TCM, reform the management of pharmaceutical preparations in medical institutions, strengthen the construction of technical support system, and accelerate the improvement of its ability in TCM testing, personnel training, and scientific research."

Jining Museum济宁市博物馆（朱复戡艺术馆） Addresses: Old site: 38 Guhuai Road, Jining city, Shandong provinceNew site: Jining Cultural Center, Jining city, Shandong provinceOpening hours: New site:8:30 am-6:00 pm (May to September) (entry until 5:00 pm)8:30 am-5:30 pm (October to April) (entry until 4:30 pm)Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)Old site:9:00 am-5:30 pm (May to September) (entry until 5:00 pm)9:00 am-5:00 pm (October to April) (entry until 4:30 pm)Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)General admission: Free Exterior of the new Jining Museum in East China’s Shandong province [Photo jiningmuseum.com] Established in 1985 and covering 20,460 square meters, the Jining Museum in East China’s Shandong province is installed in the Iron Pagoda Temple, a magnificent architectural complex dating to AD 560. The museum was designated a national foremost protected cultural heritage site in 1988. The old site of the museum houses a collection of nearly 10,000 cultural relics and works of art covering bronze wares, pottery, ceramics, jades, and calligraphy and paintings. Highlights include the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) steles and pictorial bricks, bronze wares of the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC), carving tools, attire of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), and porcelains of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties (1271-1911). In addition to its three permanent exhibitions, visitors and art lovers can not only look at exhibits in the room of the steles of the Han Dynasty, the room of the Han Dynasty pictorial bricks, and the Zhu Fukan Art Museum but also take pictures. Covering some 27,238 square meters, the new Jining Museum opened to the public in 2019. This modern museum was designed by a world-renowned Swiss architect, Mario Botta, who adopted geometry to highlight the architectural features of the museum and the connotations of history and culture. Through the ever-changing interior space effects caused by rays of the sun, the museum offers a harmonious atmosphere ideal for classical artwork precipitated by history. Housing a collection of 160,000 precious cultural relics, the new Jining Museum also takes full advantage of Jining’s excellent historical and cultural resources to perform its social and educational functions. It has permanent exhibitions focused on history and civilization, stone carving art, the Grand Canal, and local cultural landscapes. One gallery is exclusively dedicated to digital interpretation that illustrates the beauty of Jining. A permanent exhibition of stone carving art in the new Jining Museum [Photo jiningmuseum.com]

Qi Heritage Museum齐文化博物院 Address: 308 Linzi Boulevard, Linzi district, Zibo city, Shandong provinceOpening hours: 9:00 -17:00 (entry until 16:30)Closed Mondays (except for national holidays)General admission: FreeEmail: Izqwhbwy@zb.shandong.cn Covering a total area of 152,000 square meters and constructed in 2015, the Qi Heritage Museum in East China’s Shandong province is actually composed of five museums, namely the Qi Culture Museum, the Football Museum, the Dongsun Warring States Tomb Museum, the Ancient Chariot Museum of China, and the Folk Museum Cluster. Exterior of the Qi Culture Museum, a component of the Qi Heritage Museum in Zibo, Shangdong province [Photo qiheritagemuseum.com] The Qi Culture Museum showcases special cultural relics featuring works of art and relics from the intangible cultural heritage of the ancient State of Qi (1044-221BC), which ruled most of today’s Shandong province with its capital set in Linzi. As a world-class football park with a high standard, the Football Museum epitomizes Chinese Cuju (a type of football game originating in ancient China) the cultural of sports, and world football history and constitutes a three-dimensional encyclopedia of football culture. A burial article unearthed from the tomb of the King of Qi from the collection of the Qi Heritage Museum [Photo qiheritagemuseum.com] The Dongsun Warring States Tomb Museum was built based on the original site of the Warring States tomb discovered in Dongsun village in Linzi city. Although pillaged many times, the burial pits of chariots and horses was relatively well preserved upon excavation. It was preliminarily identified as a large tomb of a Qi State nobleman during the Warring States Period (475-221 BC) and so was named the Dongsun Warring States Tomb. Entrance of the Dongsun Warring States Tomb Museum [Photo qiheritagemuseum.com] In order to better display the burial system and folk customs of the aristocrats of the State of Qi during the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770-256 BC), the local department of cultural heritage decided to excavate and clean up the tomb and build a museum to protect and display this original site. Consisting of 16 folk art museums and an antique market, the Folk Museum Cluster is the largest public folk art museum complex in China open to the public. The Qi Heritage Museum, together with the Taigong Botanical Garden, is a cultural complex where natural scenery and cultural landscapes complement each other. Meanwhile, the museum plays a leading role in promoting Qi culture and tourism in the surrounding area as it covers historical heritage sites and tourist attractions.

"The Shandong Department of Emergency Management holds a virtual meeting over safety of non-coal mines in Shandong province on Feb 17, 2021. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong launched a province-wide campaign on Wednesday checking the safety of non-coal mines, including gold mines and mines under construction, according to an emergency meeting held by the Shandong Department of Emergency Management on Wednesday.

The campaign will last until the end of March.

All the non-coal mines in the province will be checked and reviewed on their production safety. A mine can only resume production after reviews show it meets the criterion on safe production.

Those that still fail to meet the criterion after being required to rectify within a time limit will be shut down.

Assessment on production safety in all mines, including coal mines, will also be conducted across the province. The assessment will be carried out in a comprehensive manner including production, management, equipment maintenance and operation.

A blaze at a gold mine on Wednesday morning in Zhaoyuan, Shandong province, left 6 workers dead."

"Six people died in a fire-related accident early Wednesday morning as workers conducted equipment maintenance at a gold mine in Zhaoyuan, a county-level city in Yantai of East China's Shandong province, according to Zhaoyuan's information office.

Four workers were saved and lifted out of the mine following the accident, which occurred at about 6 am. They are in stable condition and in a hospital for medical observation.

Liu Jiayi, Party chief of Shandong, arrived at the rescue site at noon and urged the rescuers to spare no effort and use every measure to search for the missing trapped workers.

The Ministry of Emergency Management sent a team to the site to guide rescue work. Nearly 200 rescuers, including fire workers and mine rescuers, joined the effort.

The gold mine, located at Xiadian town, started production in 1990, according to information on the Zhaoyuan government website.

Investigation into the accident is underway."

"JINAN - Seven people were killed in a fire in Yucheng city, East China's Shandong province, the city's government information office said on Tuesday.

The fire broke out at 6:14 am on Tuesday in a bakery in the city's Gejin community. The deceased are the bakery owner and the owner's family, according to the office.

Further investigation is underway."

"Shandong's top officials highlighted the need to seize opportunities arising from the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement and explore new areas for international trade and commerce during the fifth session of the 13th Shandong Provincial People's Congress.

According to this year's Shandong provincial government work report, the province will build an RCEP pilot zone for local economic and trade cooperation in 2021 and launch an RCEP cooperation forum for small and medium-sized enterprises.

A freighter docks at the Port of Qingdao in East China's Shandong province. The port opened new routes to two RCEP-related destinations on Jan 19. ZHANG JINGANG/FOR CHINA DAILY

Shandong authorities have said that the province will strive to open up more to the outside world, achieve practical results, and steadily expand into international markets.

""Over the next five years, Shandong will continue to strengthen cooperation with countries and regions involved in the Belt and Road Initiative and expand local economic and trade cooperation with RCEP members,"" said a Shandong senior official.

The RCEP agreement, which involves all 10 member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and five of its major trading partners -- China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand, was officially signed on Nov 15, 2020, creating the free trade area with the largest population, largest economic and trade scale, and strongest development potential in the world.

Shandong customs data show that in 2020, Shandong's imports and exports to RCEP member countries were valued at 774.3 billion yuan ($119.71 billion), accounting for 35.2 percent of its total foreign trade.

Last year, Shandong's foreign trade was valued at 2.2 trillion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 7.5 percent. Its actual utilized foreign capital was valued at $17.65 billion, up 20.1 percent.

The province's cross-border e-commerce and market procurement imports and exports increased by 366.2 percent and 84.5 percent, respectively.

The Qilu Eurasian freight train made 1,506 trips, up 43 percent year on year.

Zhang Yibing, deputy director of Jinan customs, said that the situation of the current global pandemic is still uncertain, and the recovery potential of foreign supplies requires further observation.

Zhang added that Shandong customs will speed up preparations for the RCEP agreement to benefit more foreign trade enterprises in the province."

"Twenty-three people have been detained for illegally dumping toxic chemical waste that killed four people in Zhucheng, Shandong province, on Sunday, CCTV news reported on Wednesday.

The victims were killed by toxic gas produced by the chemical waste.

Thirty-eight people were affected by the toxic chemical waste, including the four who died. Three people were still in critical condition on Wednesday.

An initial investigation found the suspects rented an abandoned yard in Zhucheng to store liquid chemical waste they stealthily shipped in from elsewhere, Meng Xiangtao, vice-mayor of Zhucheng, told China Central Television.

The suspects then secretly discharged the waste late at night through a pipe that they buried underground, he said.

Li Zhaohua, a resident living near the yard, told CCTV there was a pungent smell.

""Not long after I came back home, I got a fever. Then I checked into hospital,"" Li said.

The main symptoms caused by the waste included headache, dizziness, nausea and cough, said Zhang Yi, head of the Zhucheng People's Hospital, adding the people in critical condition were in comas when they arrived at the hospital.

Pipes used for distributing water on both sides of the streets around the yard have been completely cleaned up, local authorities said, and chemical waste, cans used for storing the waste and polluted soil had been properly dealt with.

Life returned to normal for residents near the yard on Monday after experts from the Shandong Provincial Department of Ecology and Environment conducted an environmental assessment and confirmed there were no further risks.

zhaoruixue@chinadaily.com.cn"

"Zhang Zhichao and his mother, Ma Yuping, leave court on Jan 13, 2020 in Zibo, Shandong province, after he was found not guilty in a retrial of a rape case that had sent him to prison at age 16. [Photo by Wang Hanbing/For China Daily]

Zhang Zhichao, a man from Shandong province who had his name cleared after being wrongfully detained for more than 14 years, received state compensation of about 3.32 million yuan ($512,472) on Tuesday from a local court.

The Linyi Intermediate People's Court posted the compensation decision via its WeChat account, saying the amount was decided after several negotiations with Zhang and his lawyers, with consideration of the duration that Zhang was wrongly detained, his mental damage and also local average living standards.

The court did not specify how much was meant to respectively cover Zhang's wrongful detention and mental anguish .

Zhang's case began in January 2005, when a girl went missing. Her body was later found in a restroom at a high school in the province's Linshu county. Zhang, then 16, was named as the suspect and detained by local police.

In March 2006, he was convicted of rape and sentenced to life in prison by the intermediate court. Another man, Wang Guangchao, who was Zhang's classmate and identified as having helped Zhang cover up the offense, was sentenced to three years with a three-year reprieve.

Zhang said he was tortured during the police interrogations.

After his mother's frequent appeals, the Supreme People's Court, China's top court, demanded the Shandong High People's court rehear the case at the end of 2017.

In January 2020, Zhang was found not guilty by the high court, as the evidence in the case was not sufficient to prove his conviction."

"Officials mourn for the dead in gold mine explosions at a news conference in Yantai, Shandong province, on Monday. Ten people were confirmed dead two weeks after the accident trapped 22.Eleven were saved, with one still missing. WANG KAI/XINHUA

Ten workers trapped underground after an explosion on Jan 10 at a gold mine under construction in Qixia, Shandong province, have been confirmed to have died, a news conference in the city was told on Monday.

Ten bodies have been found and lifted out since Sunday, including the body of one worker who was confirmed dead on Wednesday, after rescuers cleared a way through debris blocking the shaft.

Police are conducting DNA tests on the bodies to verify their identities, Chen Fei, mayor of Yantai, which administers Qixia, said at the news conference.

Eleven workers were lifted to safety on Sunday. They are now undergoing treatment recommended by experts from areas including critical care, psychology, nutrition and cardiovascular health, said Qin Chengyong, leader of the medical rescue and treatment team.

""The 11 workers are in stable physical and psychological condition with no life-threatening risks,"" Qin said.

Rescuers are still searching for the last remaining worker. They have searched the space above the No 6 section, which is 698 meters from the mine entrance.

Search work below the No 6 section faces huge difficulties because there is a huge amount of water there, Chen said.

""We won't stop searching until we find the last worker,"" he said.

The location where nine of the deceased workers were found showed they died in a second explosion while trying to climb to a safe place after the first explosion, said Chen Yumin, team leader of the rescue team.

The first explosion, which occurred at around 1:15 pm on Jan 10, created a strong tremor and shattered the windows of a room at the entrance to the mine. Thick smoke flowed out of the mine following the explosion. The second explosion occurred at around 2:45 pm.

The explosions damaged the communications system, leaving rescuers in the dark initially on whether any of the trapped workers had survived."

"Eleven miners were lifted to safety by 3:18 pm on Sunday, 14 days after an explosion trapped 22 miners underground at a gold mine at Qixia, East China's Shandong province, according to rescue headquarters.

Seven miners walked to ambulances on their own with the support of rescuers after being lifted to the surface. The other two were carried into ambulances by rescuers due to injuries.

Rescuers are lifting a miner to the surface on Sunday, two weeks after an explosion took place at a gold mine at Qixia, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The first trapped miner was lifted to the surface around 11 am Sunday, 14 days after an explosion trapped 22 miners underground at a gold mine at Qixia, Shandong province, according to CCTV news.

The miner was found at the No 4 section of the mine while rescuers were clearing the debris heaped at the shaft previously used by miners to enter and exit the mine.

The miner was sent to a hospital immediately after being lifted to the surface because he felt weak.

So far, rescuers have established contact with only 10 of the miners, who are in good physical and psychological condition. Another is believed to be dead.

Rescue headquarters at the site said that they have sent food, clothes, and other supplies to the 10 miners through a channel.

Rescuers are still racing against the clock to dig into the blocked mine shaft in an effort to set up an escape route for the trapped workers.

Some of the workers have helped the rescuers search for the 11 missing miners using laser pointers and loudspeakers, but have received no response.

Rescuers have continued to lower life detectors and nutrient solutions into other sections of the mine to locate the missing miners, but still have not encountered any signs of life."

"A miner is rescued on Sunday after being trapped underground for two weeks due to an explosion at a gold mine in Qixia, Shandong province. Eleven miners were rescued, and the body of a dead miner also was brought up. The search continued for 10 other miners. CHEN HAO/XINHUA

Latest: 10 trapped miners in Shandong found dead

Ten workers trapped underground after an explosion took place on Jan 10 at a gold mine under construction in Qixia, Yantai city, Shandong province, were confirmed dead, according to a news conference held in the city on Monday.

Rescuers have retrieved the bodies of 10 miners and are still searching for the last remaining worker.

""We will not stop searching for the missing miner,"" said Chen Fei, mayor of Yantai, adding that the rescue work is extremely difficult as the underground water is very deep.

Eleven workers were lifted to safety on Sunday and are receiving appropriate medical treatment, and DNA tests are being conducted to confirm the identities of the deceased.

The blast occurred at around 1:15 pm on Jan 10, accompanied by thick smoke and strong tremors. At around 2:45 pm, a second explosion was heard in the shaft which caused severe damage to the underground facilities and greater difficulties for clearing work, according to Chen Yumin, who is leading the rescue team.

""The bodies of nine miners were retrieved from about 420 meters to 500 meters underground, indicating they were killed by the second blast as they tried to escape following the first explosion,"" said Chen. The 10th victim was found at a different location.

A trapped miner is lifted from a gold mine in Qixia city, East China's Shandong province, on Jan 24, 2021. Eleven miners were rescued on Sunday after being trapped underground for two weeks due to a blast in a gold mine in east China's Shandong province. Twenty-two miners have been trapped about 600 meters underground since the mine blast on Jan 10 in Qixia, under the city of Yantai, in Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

11 miners lifted to safety on Sunday

The 11 miners were lifted to the surface after rescuers cleared a way through the main shaft, which had been used by miners to enter and exit the mine.

Once on the surface, nine miners walked to ambulances with help. The other two were carried to ambulances because of their injuries.

""Let my family know that I am alive,"" one miner said.

Another put his hands together in a gesture of thanks to the rescuers.

""All of the miners lifted to the surface were blindfolded to avoid a shock from the bright sunlight,"" said Chen Yumin, a rescue team leader.

The first miner was brought to the surface around 11 am. He had been trapped at the No 4 section of the mine, which is 546 meters underground, and was found as rescuers were clearing the shaft. The miner, said to be extremely weak, was rushed to a hospital.

Rescuers found it very difficult during the past two weeks to clear the shaft, which was heavily damaged and blocked by debris including cables and steel wires from the explosion.

""We predicted that it could take at least another 15 days to clear the shaft due to the heavy obstacles thrown together in the shaft,"" Xiao Wenru, chief engineer of the Ministry of Emergency Management's mine rescue center, said on Sunday.

""But a big cavity appeared after rescuers cleared some obstacles this morning, then clearing work proceeded at high speed,"" he said.

After bringing out the miner trapped at the No 4 section, rescuers proceeded to the No 5 section and brought out all 10 miners trapped there. The 10 miners were found to be alive a week ago after rescuers drilled a hole to search for them.

On Saturday, more than 600 rescue and related personnel from 17 teams, as well as a fire-rescue squad, were on site."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The total output of Shandong's farming, forestry, animal husbandry, and fishing industries exceeded 1 trillion yuan (about $154.8 billion) for the first time in 2020, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

Last year, the total value of Shandong's agricultural output was 1.02 trillion yuan.

Since 1990, Shandong's agricultural output has led China. Its fresh water and arable land resources only account for about 1 percent and 6 percent of China's total, but its output of grain, meat, fruits, vegetables, aquatic products, and peanuts account for 8 percent, 9 percent, 10 percent, 11 percent, 13 percent, and 16 percent of China's total, respectively.

The agricultural powerhouse has been ramping up efforts to increase the efficiency and quality of its agricultural sector, as well as accelerate its modernization and supply-side structural reforms.

In 2019, Shandong's contribution rate of agricultural science and technology progress was 64.56 percent, 5 percentage points higher than China's average level.

An aerial photo shows wheat harvest season in Shandong province. [Photo/iqilu.com

In 2020, Shandong's total grain output was 54.47 million tons, an increase of 898,000 tons over the previous year and the highest in China.

Greenhouse vegetable planting technology from Shouguang, Shandong province, which has more than 100 patented technologies, has gone through seven iterations and been promoted in more than 20 provinces and municipalities across the country.

Shouguang is China's largest vegetable production base and vegetable distribution and price-setting center. Every minute, more than 8,000 kilograms of vegetables from Shouguang are sold at home and abroad.

The province is also working to improve its marine ranches. It is currently home to 79,000 hectares of marine ranches, generating more than 250 billion yuan in income in 2020."

"Rescuers started drilling a new channel 71 centimeters in diameter on Wednesday at the Hushan gold mine in East China's Shandong province, where an explosion on Jan 10 trapped 22 workers underground.

The channel will be used to lift out the trapped workers, officials at rescue headquarters said. Meanwhile, rescuers are working around-the-clock to clear the major shaft that was previously used by workers to enter and exit the mine.

A medical rescue team sent down some Laba porridge to trapped workers through a drilled channel on Wednesday for the Laba Festival, a traditional Chinese festival that precedes Chinese Lunar New Year.

Eleven of the miners were found Sunday through a channel drilled through the same day. They talked with rescuers on Monday after a wired telephone was sent down through the channel.

The discussion revealed that 11 miners were stuck in one section of the mine and one person in another, while the whereabouts of the other 10 workers are still unknown."

"Machines work around the clock to drill holes from the surface to the trapped miners, hoping to provide alternative routes to get them out. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/for China Daily]

JINAN -- One trapped worker is in a coma after sustaining severe head injury in a gold mine blast in East China's Shandong province, local authorities said Tuesday.

The physical conditions of eight trapped miners have improved after they received nutritious supplies, while two experienced mild discomfort, said the rescue and medical team after a phone conversation with them around 6 pm Tuesday.

The fourth batch of the nutrient solution was delivered to the miners Tuesday morning, in addition to millet congee, thermometers and blankets. Counselors have been in place to boost the miners' confidence, said Song Xicheng, a member of the rescue and medical team at the site.

Twenty-two miners have been trapped underground following a mine blast at 2 pm on Jan 10 in Qixia under Yantai city.

Eleven of the miners were found Sunday through a drilled channel. They had a phone conversation with rescuers on Monday after a wired telephone was installed underground through the channel.

The conversation revealed that 11 miners were stuck in one section of the gold mine and one person in another, while the whereabouts of the other ten workers are still unknown."

"Consumers buy vegetables at a market in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

JINAN - China's Shandong province saw record exports of agricultural produce in 2020, local authorities have said.

Shandong's exports of agricultural produce grew 1.9 percent year-on-year to a record annual high of more than 125.7 billion yuan ($19.4 billion) in 2020, accounting for 23.9 percent of the country's total exports of such goods.

The province has been China's biggest exporter of agricultural produce for 22 consecutive years, Zhang Yibing, deputy director of Jinan Customs, told a press conference on Monday.

Its exports of such goods to countries along the Belt and Road increased by 13.9 percent year-on-year.

Shandong's high-quality agricultural development and diversified international markets contributed to its record exports, said Zhang."

"Rescuers work at the explosion site of a gold mine in Qixia city, East China's Shandong province, Jan 17, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

A rescue shaft has reached the point where nine miners are assumed to be trapped following an explosion a week ago at a mine in East China's Shandong province, according to rescue teams.

Rescuers knocked on the drill rod and heard sounds in response on Sunday and are further identifying life signs, according to People's Daily. They also dropped food through the hole.

Machinery is drilling another five shafts, including one 71 centimeters in diameter, in search of alternative routes to the trapped miners.

The explosion occurred at 2 pm on Jan 10 at the Hushan mine in Qixia, under the administration of Yantai city.

A total of 22 workers were trapped at two workfaces more than 600 meters from the mine opening.

Drill work is being slowed by the complicated geological structure, according to the rescue command base.

Rescuers keep adding more rescue forces to save the trapped miners, according to the rescue command base.

A total of 439 people on 14 rescue teams are working around-the-clock in shifts at the site.

Rescuers have dropped some food, including peanuts, through the shaft, which miners used to go down to the workfaces, according to Dazhong Daily, the province's official newspaper.

The shaft has been blocked by debris, including cables, metal and steel wires, creating huge difficulties to clearing the shaft.

""There are some cracks among the debris heaped in the shaft, so we dropped some peanuts,"" Sun Yingxiang, a rescuer was quoted as saying by Dazhong Daily.

Rescuers have cleared debris in the shaft to a depth of 350 meters by Saturday noon, said Sun.

Li Ganjie, governor of Shandong, came to the rescue site on Saturday to urge rescuers to spare no efforts and seize every minute to save the trapped workers.

Rescuers try to contact with the trapped workers at the explosion site of a gold mine in Qixia city, East China's Shandong province, Jan 17, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

Aerial photo taken on Jan 17, 2021 shows rescuers drilling a hole at the explosion site of a gold mine in Qixia city, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

Rescuers drill a hole at the explosion site of a gold mine in Qixia city, East China's Shandong province, Jan 17, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"Rescue workers continue their efforts to free 22 miners trapped underground after an explosion ripped through a gold mine in Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Yao Xiuxia, Party secretary of Qixia city in Shandong province and city mayor Zhu Tao were removed from their posts on Friday due to their major roles in the late reporting of an explosion at a gold mine at the city, according to Dazhong Daily, the province's official newspaper.

The explosion occurred at 2 pm on Sunday at the Hushan mine in Qixia, under the administration of Yantai city. But it was not until 8 pm the next day－30 hours later－that it was reported to Qixia's emergency department.

The two will also be held accountable according to the results of an investigation.

Thirty-eight people and a large amount of equipment were added to the rescue effort by noon on Friday to save 22 gold miners trapped after an explosion underground in Yantai, Shandong province, according to the rescue command base.

The workers were trapped more than 600 meters from the mine opening, rescuers said. A total of 431 rescuers and hundreds of pieces of machinery are on the site.

Machinery is at work around the clock drilling six holes in search of alternative routes to the trapped miners. One holes had reached a depth of 526 meters as of noon on Friday.

Rescuers encountered mechanical difficulties while clearing debris in the shaft at a depth of 340 meters, according to the rescue base. The shaft is so narrow that no more than three people at a time can work on clearing debris, which has slowed the work. Rescuers are using hydraulic cutters to sever cables and wires, and oxy-acetylene torches to cut metal objects.

Drill crews have encountered difficulties such as drill bits stuck in rock cracks as they go deeper."

"JINAN -- Over 600,000 households living in old residential communities in East China's Shandong province will benefit from a renovation program in 2021, according to a housing work conference held in provincial capital Jinan Thursday.

The province will also renovate 123,000 houses in shantytowns in 2021.

The renovations will be based on the wishes and opinions of residents as far as possible, said Wang Yuzhi, head of Housing and Urban-Rural Development Department of Shandong Province.

Wang added that departments will strengthen coordination with suppliers of water, electricity and heating, and providers of communication services to work out the renovation plans while making specific policies in keeping with local conditions.

Shandong will also start construction of 1,540 public rental houses and grant rental subsidies to more than 39,000 households in 2021."

"Medical staff wait to collect swab samples from residents for COVID-19 test in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, Oct 14, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

The imported COVID-19 case from the UK reported in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, is highly homologous with the recent strain of the novel coronavirus variant in the UK, according to a report published on Tuesday on the official WeChat account of the Health Commission of Shandong Province.

The result is based on whole gene sequencing analysis completed by the Shandong Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the report said.

This is the first imported case in Shandong caused by the variant of the novel coronavirus."

"[Photo/IC]

Some cities in Shandong province including Jinan, Qingdao, Yantai and Rizhao have started offering COVID-19 vaccine appointments for people who need to go abroad to work or study, according to the official WeChat account of the cities' health authority.

Appointments for vaccination at designated clinics have started since Dec 24, targeting people aged between 18 and 59 who need to work or study abroad.

People who apply for an appointment are required to present materials including their identification card, passport and visa.

They will take two shots within an interval of two to four weeks. The vaccination is conducted in accordance with voluntary principles."

"JINAN -- A total of 217,158 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered to key groups with higher risks of infection in East China's Shandong province, authorities said on Monday.

As of Sunday, no serious side effects have been reported among vaccine recipients, said the provincial health commission.

Related personnel in port cities are prioritized for inoculation.

China in mid-December officially launched a vaccination program for the winter-spring period targeting several key groups. These groups include those engaged in the handling of imported cold-chain products, customs officers, medical workers, and people working in public transport and fresh produce markets.

""I used to be worried about being infected with the virus as I'm in the cold-chain business. The vaccination has comforted me,"" said Xia Dongdong, a cold-chain food processing worker at a food company called Tanrun based in Tancheng county in the city of Linyi.

""I've had no adverse reactions,"" he said.

According to the commission, frontline customs inspectors involved in the import of frozen goods and loading and transporting personnel working at ports have received their first vaccine doses."

"Jiang Qiulian leaves the court in Qingdao, Shandong province, with a copy of the court's ruling on Jan 10. HE YI/FOR CHINA DAILY

A ruling in which the mother of a Chinese female student killed in Japan in 2016 was awarded compensation in a lawsuit against her daughter's former roommate was upheld by an intermediate court in Shandong province on Friday.

In January, the Chengyang District People's Court in Shandong ruled that Jiang Qiulian, the mother of Jiang Ge, should be paid 696,000 ($100,022) by Liu Nuanxi in compensation, after it ruled Liu played a role in Jiang Ge's death.

The compensation mainly consists of 496,000 yuan for Jiang Qiulian's financial losses and 200,000 yuan for her mental anguish over the death of her daughter, the original verdict added.

Liu disagreed with the result and appealed to the Qingdao Intermediate People's Court in Shangdong.

After the second trial of the case in November, the intermediate court said on Friday that the verdict made by the lower court was correct, with clear identification of facts, correct application of the law and legitimate procedures. So it rejected Liu's appeal, keeping the original ruling and compensation.

On Nov 3, 2016, Jiang Ge, 24, was stabbed to death in the hallway outside her apartment in Tokyo by Chen Shifeng, Liu's ex-boyfriend. Liu had moved in with Jiang, as both of them came from Shandong and were friends, after breaking up with Chen.

Earlier on that day of the stabbing, Liu had quarreled with Chen. Armed with a knife, he later hid in the apartment building and waited for the women to return from an evening out.

When they came back, Chen confronted them. The three begun arguing and Chen chased the women to their apartment.

Liu walked in first and locked the door behind her, so Jiang could not enter. Chen stabbed Jiang in the neck multiple times before escaping from the scene. Jiang died after arriving at a nearby hospital.

In 2017, a Tokyo court found Chen guilty of killing Jiang and sentenced him to 20 years in prison. Jiang Qiulian was unsatisfied with that, adding Chen should have been given a death penalty.

Additionally, she said that Liu also needed to share responsibility for her daughter's death as she had locked the door when Jiang Ge was attacked outside. Furthermore, she expressed her sadness about improper information Liu had posted about her daughter on Sina Weibo, Chinese Twitter-like platform.

In 2019, Jiang Qiulian filed the lawsuit, asking for more than 2 million yuan in compensation for her financial losses and mental damage.

After hearing the case, the district court supported the mother, ruling that Liu was at fault in the accident and should bear the civil punishment, because she had not informed Jiang Ge of the potential danger posed by Chen, who had intimidated Liu before, nor had she taken Jiang's safety into account since she locked her out of the residence.

It also said Jiang Ge deserves the praise and the compensation, as she offered emergency aid to Liu. But Liu, as Jiang's friend and the one receiving the aid, did not express gratitude, nor perform the duty that guaranteed the safety of the aid provider.

The intermediate court lauded the explanations and education on the rule of law in the original verdict on Friday, saying ""the judiciary should protect the life right, because it's an individual's most important personality right.""

It called for the two parties in the case to respect with each other and increase communication to avoid further harms caused by the tragedy-related disputes."

"The Party secretaries of Shandong and Shanxi provinces have recently been adjusted, according to Xinhua News Agency on Thursday.

Lin Wu, former Party secretary of Shanxi province, has been appointed by the Communist Party of China Central Committee to replace Li Ganjie in Shandong province.

Chen Xi, head of the Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee, announced the decision at a meeting attended by provincial cadres on Thursday.

Li, born in November 1964, was elected as a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in October.

Lin was born in February 1962 in Fujian province.

He once served at posts in Hunan province, including as general manager of the Xiangtan Iron and Steel Group, director of the Hunan provincial economic and trade commission, mayor and Party chief of Hunan's Loudi city, and in August 2015, he became a member of the Standing Committee of CPC Hunan Provincial Committee.

From January 2016 to May 2018, Lin served as a member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Jilin Provincial Committee, as head of the Organization Department of the CPC Jilin Provincial Committee, and as executive vice-governor of Jilin.

He started to work in Shanxi province in May 2018 as vice-governor and became governor of Shanxi in January 2020. He was appointed Party chief of Shanxi in May 2021.

The CPC Central Committee also decided that Lan Fo'an, former governor of Shanxi province, will take over as Party secretary of Shanxi province.

Lan was born in June 1962 in Guangdong province. He previously served as the director of the Guangdong provincial audit office and as Party chief of Guangdong's Shaoguan city.

In January 2016, he was elected vice-governor of Guangdong.

From March 2017 to April 2021, Lan served as a member of the Standing Committee of CPC Hainan provincial committee, and as secretary of the discipline inspection commission of the Hainan CPC Hainan Provincial Committee. He became the deputy secretary of the CPC Shanxi Provincial Committee and Shanxi's governor in June 2021."

"Since this year, Linyi County, Shandong Province, has meticulously built a civilized practice brand of ""Neighbor Public Welfare"" with the neighbor as the media, to make the masses take center stage, and volunteers ""offer door-to-door services"", ""deliver policies"" and ""deliver theories"". The ""national co-building of civilized practice and public sharing of development achievements"" is becoming the consensus of the whole county.

These days, Linyi County's ""Neighbor"" preaching activity has been carried out at the New Era Civilization Practice Square of Sanshili Village, Xinglong Town. Under the big locust tree, the ""neighbor lecturer"" Xu Tongxin gave a lecture from the honeysuckle industry that helps the masses to become rich to rural revitalization, from the spirit of the 20th National Congress to common prosperity and sharing. The preaching site was full of interactions, creating a warm atmosphere. In the ""Neighbor"" preaching activity around 751 people, the topics that aroused interests of the masses were talked more and carefully, and the topics that were difficult for the masses to understand, but important were explained according to the local conditions. The people around, things around, and reasons around were used to interpret the general principles, so that the Party's innovation theory can not only be available to ordinary people"", but also ""develop and grow"".

The masses not only have the final say, but also can ""do what they want"". Free haircuts, red buying agency... In Linyi County, through building the ""Neighbor Public Welfare"" civilized practice volunteer service brand, establishing the ""Neighbor"" volunteer service team, and helping each other between neighbors, a beautiful city with a sense of happiness was coming.

In Linyi, there are 150,363 volunteers and 1,988 volunteer service teams. They are family members, neighbors and colleagues at ordinary times. Once they wear the ""red vests"", they are traffic volunteers who remind people to wear helmets and masks at the crossroads at morning and evening rush hours, epidemic prevention and control volunteers who ""knock at the doors and windows"" of buildings and at streets in the community, and scientific popularization volunteers who publicize knowledge of drowning prevention at the road ditches and roadsides.

""Neighbor Public Welfare"" activity adheres to the goal of 'people first, co-building and sharing', which reflects the feelings of serving the people in civilized practice, and also the development concept of the new era of co-building, sharing and win-win results. The implementation of a series of civilized practice activities will surely gather a powerful force for promoting high-quality economic and social development"", said Sun Baohua, Member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Linyi County Committee and Head of the Publicity Department."

"Lin Wu has been appointed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to take over as Party secretary in Shandong province, according to Xinhua News Agency on Thursday.

Lin, former Party secretary of Shanxi province, will replace Li Ganjie in Shandong. The CPC Central Committee decided that Li will no longer serve as Shandong's Party chief, or as a member of the Standing Committee and the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee.

Li, born in November 1964, was elected as a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in October.

Lin was born in February 1962 in Fujian. He became governor of Shanxi in January 2020 and then Party chief in May 2021.

Lan Foan will replace Lin as Party chief in Shanxi. Born in June 1962 in Guangdong province, he was appointed governor of Shanxi in June 2021."

"BEIJING -- Lin Wu has been appointed secretary, standing committee member and member of the Communist Party of China Shandong Provincial Committee, according to a decision of the CPC Central Committee.

Li Ganjie no longer concurrently holds the posts, and Lin no longer serves as secretary, standing committee member and member of the CPC Shanxi Provincial Committee, read the decision.

Lan Fo'an has been appointed secretary of the CPC Shanxi Provincial Committee, it said."

"In Zaozhuang city of Shandong province, some testing sites have been working as temporary fever clinics since Sunday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Some COVID-19 testing sites in cities of Shandong province have been upgraded to temporary fever clinics to provide more convenient services as local governments optimize their responses to the coronavirus pandemic.

In Taierzhuang district of Zaozhuang, some testing sites have also been working as temporary fever clinics since Sunday. Signs remind residents that they can get convenient medical services at a particular location.

The pain killer ibuprofen is available at 1.44 yuan ($0.21) for 10 tablets.

Shandong's Health Commission released a notice on Sunday calling for medical service providers in both urban and rural areas to coordinate resources to cover residents' medical needs.

In Zaozhuang city of Shandong province, some testing sites have been working as temporary fever clinics since Sunday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Measures suggested by the commission included upgrading the testing booths to fever clinics and building a diagnosis and treatment medical service base that a resident can reach within 15 minutes.

Chengwu county of Heze has upgraded 56 testing stations into fever treatment service stations to provide diagnosis and medicine. Each station has one doctor and one nurse on duty, and keeps some medicines in stock. The medicines available will be adjusted and replenished based on demand.

The service stations are being set up to better provide medical services to residents, as more people are expected to return home with the approach of the Lunar New Year holiday, said Ping Yuhua, head of Chengwu County People's Hospital, on iqilu.com.

At a temporary fever clinic in the Huaiyin district of Jinan, it takes a resident around 10 minutes to see a doctor and get proper medicine.

The testing site had already delivered some basics, making the upgrade easier than building a new fever clinic, said Lyu Qiang of the community medical service center on Middle Dahuaishu Street in Huaiyin district.

""We spent a day and a half upgrading a testing booth to a fever clinic,"" Lyu said.

The temporary street fever clinic has a doctor and a pharmacist. In addition, it has been integrated into the city's medical insurance system."

"JINAN -- Enterprises from East China's economic powerhouse Shandong province will seek business opportunities in overseas trips planned from mid-December to mid-January next year, according to local authorities.

The trips are part of a trade campaign set up by Shandong's commerce department and will see the participants, mainly small and medium-sized enterprises, visit various countries and regions, including Japan, Vietnam and the European Union.

This year, the department has also taken the lead in a project to facilitate the overseas footprint of local businesses by helping them participate in exhibitions.

In the past two months, over 100 enterprises have benefitted from the project through attending overseas exhibitions.

""In the past three years, we had few opportunities to communicate with customers face to face, so a timely visit to Japan is very important,"" said Xie Kai, deputy general manager of Dishang Group Co Ltd, who has just returned from an exhibition in Japan that he attended with the department's support.

In the future, Shandong will increase policy support, build an all-weather cross-border trade platform, and promote the stability and quality of the province's foreign trade, said Liu Xinyu, an official with the provincial commerce department."

"The second China-Africa Future Leaders' Dialogue was held on Nov 25 via online channels. The event was jointly organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Shandong People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

The second China-Africa Future Leaders' Dialogue is held on Nov 25. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Nearly 300 representatives from the governing units of the China African People's Friendship Association and youth representatives from both sides attended the event online.

Tang Zhouyan, vice-chairman of the Shandong Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, introduced the achievements of practical cooperation between Shandong and Africa in various fields, and said that under the promotion of various friendly forces between China and Africa, Shandong's economic and trade cooperation with Africa has been increasingly strengthened, and Shandong's medical assistance and mutual educational cooperation have yielded positive results.

Tang added that for a brighter future, China and Africa should foster new forces, expand new opportunities for cooperation and deepen friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation at the sub-national level, in sister cities, among young people and in emerging industries.

Jiang Jiang, vice-president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, reviewed the history of China-Africa friendly exchanges by recounting historical events such as Chinese medical team assistance in Africa, the Tazara Railway and African countries' support for restoring China's lawful seat in the United Nations.

Jiang expressed hope that the young people of China and Africa will carry the baton of China-Africa friendship, further strengthen exchanges and cooperation, enhance mutual understanding and join hands to contribute their bright futures to building a China-Africa community with a shared future in the new era.

The China-Africa Future Leaders' Dialogue aims to build a new platform for the young people of China and Africa to have open and equal dialogues, work together, exchange ideas, synergize actions and create a shared future. [Photo provided to chinadialy.com.cn]"

"On November 9, in the Wheat Straw Patchwork Exhibition Hall of Mengsi Town Cultural Center, Linyi County, lifelike wheat straw patchwork was hung on the wall, amazing the visitors.

Wheat straw patchwork is a municipal intangible cultural heritage project. To give new vitality to the intangible cultural heritage, Linyi County guides the inheritors of intangible cultural heritage to fully explore the cultural connotation of wheat straw patchwork based on the market and creativity, realizing the organic integration of traditional culture and modern society. In Mengsi Town, a wheat straw patchwork exhibition hall, a research and study base for intangible cultural heritage, a DIY handmade classroom, a live broadcast room and other functional rooms have been set up, and a skill inheritance team for wheat straw patchwork has been formed for research and operation, forming an industrial chain integrating research and study, processing and sales.

Linyi has 35 intangible cultural heritage projects at all levels. Based on this, the ""Shandong Handmade Products"" Linyi project library has been set up thorough searching throughout the county to include 50 excellent handmade projects such as carving, weaving, etc. Among them, the cultural industry clusters such as wheat straw patchwork, wood carving, gourd carving, gourd pyrography will be cultivated as key projects.

In order to further exert the brand effect of ""Shandong Handmade Products"", based on local cultural resources, the integration of county and township of Linyi County is constantly improved, the industrial benefits are initially emerging, and the ""Shandong Handmade Products"" Linyi brand is gradually forming."

"A large soccer ball goes on display at the fifth China International Import Expo in Shanghai, to promote the upcoming FIFA World Cup in Qatar. [Photo by Xue Xinyi/chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong province in East China will hold a series of foreign exchange and promotions activities – dubbed ""Visits to the origin of soccer culture"" – during the upcoming FIFA World Cup in Qatar, according to a statement released at a news conference in the provincial capital of Jinan city on Nov 16.

The city of Zibo in Shandong was recognized as the birthplace of the international game when the ancient Chinese game of cuju, which has been traced back to the Linzi district of Zibo, was in 2004 acknowledged by FIFA as the earliest form of soccer.

With the golden opportunity presented by the World Cup, the province's local authorities plan to promote cuju and Shandong culture globally. The foreign exchanges and promotions activities will be held in person and online, both at home and abroad.

At the FIFA Fan Festival – taking place on Nov 20 to Dec 18 in Doha, capital of Qatar – exhibitions and shows about cuju will be staged. A China-Qatar teenager cuju-themed exchange will also take place.

In addition, Zibo will hold promotions events for cuju from Nov 24, including cuju performances and exhibitions.

Furthermore, Shandong will launch videos and a series of promotional materials with the theme of the origins of soccer – via mainstream media and on the platforms of cooperating institutions from all over the world.

Folks wearing traditional Han apparel play a spirited game of cuju in Zibo. [Photo/WeChat account: wangxin--zibo]

Prized exhibits go on show at the Linzi Football Museum. Another two exhibitions on Qatar's culture and tourism and the World Cup will be staged in the museum from Nov 24. [Photo/WeChat ID: zibowenhualvyou]"

"China's largest nuclear heating project starts operations in Haiyang, a county-level city of Yantai, Shandong province, on Nov 15, 2022. [Photo/CCTV]

China's largest nuclear heating project started operations on Tuesday night to provide heat for households, as China has been expanding nuclear heating, illustrating its intentions to decarbonize the sector.

The project will serve an area of 5 million square meters and provide clean heating for 200,000 residents in Haiyang, a county-level city of Yantai, Shandong province, said Shandong Nuclear Power Co, a subsidiary of State Power Investment Corp and also the plant's operator.

As the largest nuclear heating project in the country, it accounts for 92.8 percent of the country's total nuclear heating capacity, said the State-owned enterprise.

Nuclear heating has been a major pursuit around the world as nuclear power delivers nonstop output, said Wei Hanyang, a power market analyst at BloombergNEF.

China seeks to gradually reduce coal use in the heating sector, but natural gas as a replacement still produces carbon emissions. This makes nuclear power an effective option for meeting its decarbonization ambitions in the country, he said.

The Haiyang project is the second nuclear heating project that was put into operation for winter heating in China this year. Hongyanhe Nuclear Power Plant in Liaoning province, the first commercial nuclear heating project in Northeast China, was put into operation earlier this month.

It covers a heating area of 242,400 square meters and replaces the 12 coal-fired small boilers in Hongyanhe town in Liaoning's Dalian, said its operator China General Nuclear Power Corp.

""Nuclear heating was used by more than 200,000 residents in Haiyang for 143 days during the previous winter and the company plans to expand the heating area to the entire Jiaodong peninsula,"" said Liu Yongde, chief engineer of State Power Investment Corp.

The first phase of the company's nuclear heating project in 2019 provided carbon-free heating to 700,000 square meters of area, followed by the second phase, which increased the area to 5 million square meters in 2021.

The third phase of the Haiyang nuclear energy heating project in Shandong currently under construction is expected to start providing clean heating by 2023.

The heating area will cover 30 million square meters by then, benefiting around 1 million residents with clean heating and replacing more than 900,000 metric tons of coal consumption and 1.65 million tons of carbon emissions, said the company."

"The World Estuarine Cities Conference for Cooperation and Development is held in Dongying, a coastal city of East China's Shandong province, on Nov 10. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The World Estuarine Cities Conference for Cooperation and Development was held in Dongying, a coastal city of East China's Shandong province, on Nov 10.

The conference, hosted by organizers including the Shandong Provincial People's Government and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, aimed to help estuarine cities around the world learn from each other about best practices in ecological protection and high-quality development.

Diplomatic envoys, representatives of international organizations and government officials attended the event via both online and offline channels.

""Estuaries are the rainforests of our ocean,"" said Susan Gardner, director of the Ecosystems Division of the United Nations Environment Programme via a video address. ""Their protection, restoration and sustainable management is crucial to attain our sustainable development goals.""

Attendees at the World Estuarine Cities Conference for Cooperation and Development. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Located in the lower reaches of the Yellow River, Shandong is making efforts to ""lead the way in promoting ecological protection and high-quality development of the Yellow River Basin"", said Li Ganjie, Party secretary of Shandong.

The conference is of great importance for estuarine cities in further protecting wetland ecological protection, fostering closer friendships, deepening cultural exchanges and strengthening industrial and economic cooperation in broader areas, Li added.

""Estuarine city"" refers to a city developed on a coastal zone where the river and the ocean meet, closely linking the diversified ecosystems of rivers, land and oceans with human social and economic activities, according to the Report on the Development of World Estuarine Cities (2022) released by the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research at the conference. The report studies typical development cases of estuary cities such as Rotterdam, Quebec, Shanghai and Dongying.

The Dongying Initiative on Cooperation and Development of World Estuarine Cities was also released at the conference, calling for estuarine cities to ""work together in establishing a new partnership of win-win cooperation, improving people's well-being, building a better homeland, and contributing to the building of a community with a shared future for mankind""."

"A farmer poses for a photo with his award-winning 2.44-meter-high scallions in Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong province, Oct 31, 2022. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in the Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong province, have begun to harvest scallions recently. Zhangqiu boasts a long history of growing scallions, which are known for being tall, sweet and crisp. Scallions that stand 2.44 meters high were recognized as the tallest of this year in the district on Monday.

Farmers harvest scallions in Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers organize harvested scallions in Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Zhang Liangang, a delegate to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), speaks during an interview at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, Oct 22, 2022. PHOTO/XINHUA

Shandong Port Group Co Ltd, a State-owned port operator, has broken the world record of automatic terminal handling efficiency for the ninth time by using its self-developed new generation of a terminal intelligent control system, said a delegate to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

Relying on independent innovation, Shandong Port Group has built an automated terminal with the world's fastest loading and unloading speed. There are no workers needed on the dock and all the equipment can be operated automatically, said Zhang Liangang, a senior expert of the Qingdao-headquartered group, after the closing session of the 20th National Congress of the CPC in Beijing on Saturday.

""Because of the extreme complexity to build an automated terminal control system, the group's research teams have held more than 3,000 seminars to make detailed plans for this project. Many of them even discussed the technical issues in the middle of the night,"" he said, adding the company has not only achieved its goals, but its system is also more advanced and smarter than its foreign rivals.

""We will continue to follow the path led by independent innovation, focus on key issues, gather wisdom, make breakthroughs, and make greater contributions to build China into a strong transportation and maritime country,"" he added."

"Bai Yugang, head of the publicity department of the Shandong Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China, speaks during a group interview on the sidelines of the ongoing 20th CPC National Congress, Oct 19, 2022. [Photo/Xinhua]

Shandong province, where the Yellow River flows into the Bohai Sea after zigzagging through nine provincial regions, has taken up the mission of boosting ecological conservation and high-quality development of the Yellow River Basin, said a top official from the province at a news conference in Beijing on Wednesday afternoon.

To put it simply, Shandong shoulders the mission and responsibility to ensure the safety and peace of the Yellow River, to protect the river's water amount and quality, to guarantee the Livelihood and development of people living along the river basin, and to inherit and promote the Yellow River-nurtured culture, said Bai Yugang, head of the publicity department of the Shandong Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China.

Shandong has been adapting to a new development philosophy, enhancing innovation-driven development and promoting the ecological conservation of the Yellow River Basin, Bai said at a media conference Wednesday afternoon, which was held during the ongoing 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

Bai talked about the ""systematic treatment"" of the basin, which features the restoration and conservation of water, air and soil.

Great efforts have been made toward restoring the wetland at the Yellow River Delta, and the wetland area at the delta has reached 1,130 square kilometers, a 20 percent growth over the past years, Bai said.

""Whether the ecological environment is good or not, birds know the best,"" said Bai. ""The number of bird species at the delta has doubled to reach 371 from 187. The delta is now the largest breeding place for oriental storks, showcasing the achievements in ecological conservation and environment improvement"".

In addition, the province has stepped up efforts in promoting green, low-carbon and high-quality development with new development concepts, making people live a better life, telling stories nurtured by the Yellow River in better ways and promoting the cooperation with other provincial regions along the river.

A total of 600,000 residents in Shandong have been relocated to new communities from the Yellow River's floodplain, an area frequently threatened by rising water, which lowered crop yields and necessitated expensive repairs of houses.

At the conference, Bai said Shandong will continue to make all-around solid efforts on promoting ecological conservation and high-quality development of the Yellow River Basin."

"A photo shows whooper swans at Rongcheng Swan National Nature Reserve in Weihai, Shandong province. [Photos by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Whooper swans are arriving at Rongcheng Swan National Nature Reserve in Weihai, Shandong province — from Siberia and other places — to spend the winter.

With its favorable geographical location and wetlands, Rongcheng is an important stop for migratory waterfowl, with more than 10,000 birds staying at the site annually.

The swans stay for around five months at the bay in Rongcheng, making it one of the largest wintering grounds for whooper swans in the world."

"Gao Shuzhen, Party chief of Sanjianxi village in the Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong province, shares stories about the village's development with pupils. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

With neat rows of apartments, and clean, wide roads, Sanjianxi village in the Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong province, has no reminders that the village was once a mess, a place where residents lived in poverty.

Sanjianxi had long been hampered by poor soil quality. Through the cultivation of corn and wheat, each household was able to make no more than 2,000 yuan ($278) per year.

But a transformation began when Gao Shuzhen was elected as Party chief of the village in 2004. Over the past 17 years, she has been working to build an efficient branch of the Communist Party of China to help residents make better use of their land.

So far, an agricultural project, ecological livestock-breeding areas, tourism projects and an industrial park have been developed, providing jobs for more than 80 percent of the local workforce.

A center serves residents in Sanjianxi village in the Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Now all households in the village have risen out of poverty.

""Great changes have taken place in China's rural areas, and we are no longer poor,"" Gao said, adding that the Party branch of the village played an important role in the developments.

""The Party branches at the village level have the ability to create platforms from which residents can earn a better life and ensure they have faith and belief in their future,"" she said.

Gao is a delegate to the 20th National Congress of the CPC."

"Shandong builds a Boshan National Cultural Export Base at the CIIE. [Photo/CIIE Bureau]

Editor's Note: The fifth China International Import Expo will open in less than a month. In October, several participants of the CIIE will tell their stories themed around ""great opportunity"" to showcase the positive changes the expo has made to the world and how it has helped build a community with a shared future for mankind over the past five years.

As the manager of a project involving supporting the development of time-honored brands in Shandong province, I have organized many such brands to attend the CIIE over the past few years. The expo has promoted the innovative growth of these companies and Shandong's culture.

At the second CIIE in 2019, a 4,000-square-meter exhibition area for intangible cultural heritage items and Chinese time-honored brands was launched. We set up a booth at the exhibition for the first time and have since been expanding its scale and undertaking more innovations.

We built an ancient Chinese-style booth that looked like the Temple of Confucius and the Dai Temple, two attractions in Shandong, during the third CIIE. A 3-metric-ton stone sculpture, sourced from the Mount Tai, and robot tour guides developed by a Shandong company were also displayed.

In 2021, we designed the Boshan National Cultural Export Base in the Chinese art exhibition style. Four varieties of ceramic artworks, including those with paintings, carvings, and glazes, as well as five colored glass-making techniques including inner painting and thermal forming, were showcased at the base.

Shandong was also the first province that established a permanent pavilion for time-honored and intangible cultural heritage-related companies in the CIIE. Based on the pavilion, we have rolled out a series of measures to explore markets in Shanghai and the Yangtze River Delta region.

A provincial-level inheritor of peach wood carving, an intangible cultural heritage, said the CIIE has significantly bolstered local industrial growth. Peach wood processing has become a major industry in Feicheng, a county-level city in Tai'an, Shandong, where the inheritor's shop is located. More than 10,000 people are working in the industry and over 70 percent of the products are sold in overseas markets.

Yefengsu, another time-honored brand that specializes in making Shandong specialties such as pancakes, signed a 5 million yuan ($696,064.9) deal with a subsidiary of Lagardere Group at the second CIIE. The company has since expanded into South Korea and Japan.

Many companies told me they would have brought more products to the expo if they knew there are so many business opportunities available.

Shandong's achievements at the CIIE have attracted a great deal of attention from media. During the fourth edition alone, more than 100 news stories about our time-honored brands were published and viewed by 60 million people. According to the Report on Media Coverage and Influence of the Fourth CIIE, the time-honored brand exhibition held by Shandong was the second most trending topic among all the expo's cultural activities in China.

The author is the director of trade in services and business development at the Shandong Provincial Department of Commerce."

"Workers pick gerbera jamesonii at a flower base in Juxian county, Shandong province, Oct 11, 2022. [Photo/Xinhua]

Juxian county of Rizhao city in Shandong province has made efforts to promote their modern agriculture to expand the fresh cut flower industry.

Currently, the annual output value of the county's fresh cut flower industry reached 500 million yuan ($69.7 million), which has become a leading industry with local characteristics to promote rural vitalization.

A worker arranges roses at a flower base in Juxian county, Shandong province, Oct 11, 2022. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"A photo shows harvesters working in the corn field in Dalijia village, Rongcheng city, Shandong province, on Oct 11, 2022. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Dalijia village of Shangzhuang township in Rongcheng, a county-level city of Weihai, Shandong province, have begun harvesting their corn.

Rongcheng has been developing high-standard farmland that can withstand both drought and flooding. It has built supporting infrastructure, including facilities to dry and store grain, which helps farmers collect more."

"Shandong province in East China has been ramping up efforts to promote rural vitalization in the past decade, local media reported.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012, Shandong has been working to promote robust agriculture, beautiful landscapes and prosperous farmers in rural areas.

Shandong province works to promote robust agriculture, beautiful landscapes and prosperous farmers in rural areas. [Photo/Dazhong News]

Thanks to the province's unremitting efforts, fruitful results have been made in rural vitalization. Total grain output in Shandong has remained above 50 million tons for eight consecutive years. Its total output value of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery exceed 1 trillion yuan ($139.8 billion) in 2020 and continued to grow rapidly, and the per capita disposable income of rural residents in the province exceeded 20,000 yuan for the first time in 2021.

Shandong, a major agricultural province, has been working hard to safeguard national food security. By the end of 2021, a total of 4.52 million hectares of high-quality farmland had been developed in Shandong.

So far, about 386,667 hectares of saline-alkali farmland has been transformed in Shandong and the province has establishes 11 innovation platforms for the comprehensive utilization of saline-alkali land. The province has cultivated 200 new crop varieties resistant to salt and alkali.

Shandong has also highlighted industrial support for promoting rural vitalization, and has accelerated the construction of a modern agricultural industrial system, with Yantai apples, Shouguang vegetables and other clusters moving closer to the 100 billion yuan level.

The lush green rural landscapes in Shandong province [Photo/Dazhong News]"

"Suochengli Historical and Cultural Block in Yantai, East China's Shandong province [Photo/WeChat account: ytwlgw]

Authorities in East China's Shandong province have been making efforts to bolster the development of its culture and tourism sector since the beginning of this year.

For example, the provincial government has offered guidance to local governments regarding the issuance of special funds that will accelerate the construction of major projects related to culture and tourism.

To date, local governments in Shandong have issued 7.47 billion yuan ($1.05 billion) worth of bonds for 82 culture and tourism projects, official statistics show.

For instance, the Yantai government has invested 12.3 billion yuan in the building of a large-scale cultural tourism complex that consists of Kongtong Island, Yantai Mountain scenic spot, Zhifu Bay, and the Chaoyang and Suochengli historical cultural blocks.

Authorities have in the past two years also been focusing on cultivating market entities.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism in June released a plan to build 100 industry-leading enterprises, 300 major enterprises and 600 growth enterprises by 2025.

Authorities have also made efforts to attract investment to advance the development of high-end tourism industry clusters.

The province is currently home to 14 tourism industry clusters that generated a combined revenue of 260 billion yuan in the January-August period.

In addition, authorities have rolled out a series of measures this year to encourage enterprises to pursue innovation. The measures include fiscal stimulus, tax cuts and fee reductions, and financial support.

As of July 15, provincial financial institutions had issued 886 million yuan of loans to 76 enterprises and 784 self-employed individuals."

"Attendees at the opening ceremony for 2022 China (Qufu) International Confucius Cultural Festival and the eighth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations held in Qufu, Jining on Sept 27 [Photo/Dazhong Daily]

The opening ceremony for 2022 China (Qufu) International Confucius Cultural Festival and the eighth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations was held in Qufu, a county-level city in Jining, Shandong province on Sept 27, attracting more than 600 professors, experts and foreign envoys across the world to attend online and offline.

The Confucius thoughts, created by Chinese great thinker Kongzi 2,573 years ago, contributed greatly to the development of Chinese civilization and world civilizations, said Hu Heping, minister of Culture and Tourism of China, in a video during the ceremony. He added that the annual Nishan forum has played an important role in promoting Confucianism with a series of culture activities.

This year's forum, under the theme of ""Diversity of Human Civilizations and Common Values of Mankind"", focused on global common topics such as the protection of human cultural heritage, innovation and development of culture and exchanges of human civilization.

From the perspective of Confucianism, China would like to propose Chinese wisdom and solutions to build a community with shared future for mankind, Hu added.

Li Ganjie, Party secretary of Shandong, said in his speech that the fine Chinese culture and tradition provides rich content for the Chinese version of modernization.

As the home province of Confucius and an important source of Chinese traditional culture, Shandong will work hard to promote the creative development of fine traditional Chinese culture, create a highland for exchanges between civilizations and explore ways for culture inheritance to make contributions for promoting the common values of mankind, Li added.

""I subscribe to the world famous cultural giant Confucius whose birthplace the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations is named after and who believes in the equality and education of all people,"" Solomon Islands' Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare said in a video at the ceremony, adding that the spirit of Nishan civilization is alive and active between Solomon Islands and China.

The eighth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations, which will last until Sept 28, features more than 40 activities, including keynote speeches, high-level dialogues and interviews with ministers and diplomats. The Nishan World Intellectual Businessmen Culture Forum was also launched for the first time."

"More than 600 handicrafts are on show at the Exhibition of Chinese Handicrafts — Shandong Handicrafts held at Nishan Sacred Land in Qufu, a county-level city of Jining, Shandong province.

It is a major cultural event of the 2022 China (Qufu) International Confucius Cultural Festival and the Eighth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations held from Monday to Wednesday.

At the exhibition, craftsmanship is celebrated through collaboration between traditional and modern designers and artists.

Traditional handicraft skills from Shandong, such as woodcut New Year paintings, gourd pyrography, dough modeling, fruit pit carving, paper-cutting and Lu embroidery show their unique charm and beauty.

Video by Liu Chuan"

"Farmers in Liudu town of Xintai, a county-level city of Tai'an, Shandong province, harvest hawthorn fruit this week. [Photo by Chen Yang/For chinadaily.com.cn]

In the golden days of autumn, farmers across Shandong province are welcoming this year's bumper harvest.

Farmers in Liudu town of Xintai, a county-level city under Tai'an, are harvesting hawthorn fruit this week. The town has more than 1,530 hectares growing hawthorn, which produces 10 million kilograms of fruit and provides a good way to increase farmers' incomes, according to the local government.

In Buliu town of Rongcheng, a county-level city of Weihai in Shandong province, farmers harvest sweet potatoes. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

In Buliu town of Rongcheng, a county-level city of Weihai, farmers are harvesting sweet potatoes. The town has established a cooperative to develop the sweet potato sector, ranging from cultivating seedlings, planting, processing and marketing. This development route has created jobs for local farmers and expanded the market for the local agricultural products. It has increased income for both local governments and farmers."

"Fruit pit carving is a Chinese folk handicraft in which pits of green olives, peaches, apricots, prunes, walnuts and other foods are intricately carved to make works of art. The Weifang fruit pit carving craft in Weifang, a city located in East China's Shandong province, was listed as a national-level intangible cultural heritage in 2008.

A famous essay by Wei Xueyi (1596-1625) vividly records a well-crafted pit carving depicting a boat that consists of eight cabin windows and five people onboard, each striking different poses. Fine examples of these carved-pit boats can still be found in museums in China.

Fruit pit carving has existed in China for more than 600 years, and is categorized as a traditional Chinese microscopic carving art form. The art of microscopic carving has existed in China for thousands of years, and can be traced back to the Xia (c.21st century-16th century BC), Shang (c.16th century-11th century BC) and Zhou (c.11th century-256 BC) dynasties.

The delicate fruit pit carving skill is also a carrier of traditional culture, which is why it continues to be further inherited and developed.

The Weifang fruit pit carving craft in Weifang, a city in East China's Shandong province, is a Chinese folk handicraft, which was listed as a national-level intangible cultural heritage in 2008. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"Containers are unloaded from a ship at a port of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

JINAN -- East China's Shandong province saw its foreign trade reach 2.18 trillion yuan (about $315 billion) in the first eight months of this year, up 18.2 percent year-on-year, local customs said.

In August, the province's imports and exports rose 15.2 percent from the same period last year to 292.08 billion yuan. Of the total, exports grew 16.6 percent to 181.18 billion yuan while imports rose 13.1 percent to 110.9 billion yuan during this month.

The province's general trade maintained a stable rise. Mechanical and electrical products, labor-intensive products and agricultural items all maintained relatively rapid growth during the period, according to the customs."

"A fisherman sorts his catch at a port in Weihai, Shandong province, on Tuesday. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Fishermen were busy sorting their catch at a port in Weihai, Shandong province, on Tuesday. About 17,000 fishing boats set sail from ports in Shandong on Sept 1, after the recent four-month fishing moratorium in the Bohai Sea and Yellow Sea ended.

Fish are sorted at a port in Weihai, Shandong province, on Tuesday. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Fishing boats head out to sea in Weihai, Shandong province. The four-month fishing moratorium in the Bohai Sea and Yellow Sea ended on Thursday. [Photos by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

About 17,000 fishing boats set sail from ports in Shandong province on Thursday with high hopes for a good catch, as the recent four-month fishing moratorium in the Bohai Sea and Yellow Sea ended on Thursday.

The summer fishing moratorium is part of China's effort to promote sustainable fishery development and improve the marine ecology.

Fishing boats sail from a port in Lanshan, Shandong province, after a recent fishing moratorium ended on Thursday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Digital economy booms in Shandong. [Photo/VCG]

The digital economy has been booming in Shandong province, which has injected new vitality into regional economic recovery and sustainable development, Dazhong Daily reported.

In the first half of this year, the province's software business revenue reached 414.41 billion yuan ($59.92 billion), up 17.8 percent year-on-year, ranking fourth in the country. Revenue from electronic information manufacturing and the telecom business hit 243.03 billion yuan and 44.05 billion yuan, respectively, up 16 percent and 11.7 percent.

Shandong has issued a series of policies and measures to promote the development of the digital economy. It has accelerated the digital transformation of its traditional industries, and accelerated innovation in multiple application scenarios such as social governance, public services, production and livelihoods.

From January to July, 10,198 technical renovation projects worth more than 5 million yuan were implemented in Shandong, with investment in technical renovation increasing by 11.2 percent.

There are more than 350 smart agriculture application bases in Shandong, which have 801 Taobao villages, ranking third in China.

In the first half of this year, online retail sales in Shandong reached 287.3 billion yuan, up 18.7 percent, 15.6 percentage points higher than the national level.

Focusing on technological innovation in the digital economy, it has cultivated 26 innovation laboratories for big data development, 67 industrial innovation centers, 29 innovation service institutions and 76 innovation talent bases. A total of 3,468 high-tech enterprises in the digital economy have been fostered in the province."

"The province of Shandong is one of the important cradles of Chinese civilization. It is where Confucianism originated and is the birthplace of Confucius. The Yellow River enters the ocean here where Mount Tai, the foremost of the “Five Great Mountains,” looms high. Shandong is also home to Lu Cuisine, one of China’s Traditional Eight Culinary Cuisines.

Shandong has a meandering coastline that stretches over 3,000 km, linking the coastal cities like a string of pearls. Shandong’s beach resort cities are popular summertime destinations for domestic travel; a wide array of novel experiences await visitors, where the mountains meet the sea.

Today’s edition of “China Travel Course” will take you for a stroll in a few of Shandong’s beach resort cities. Slow down the pace and cycle along the coast, take in the romantic panorama and treat yourselves to the delightful delicacies. Enjoy a taste of the pleasant, leisurely life.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Qingdao: A Fairy-Tale City of Mountains and Sea

Nestled among the mountains and the sea, with its red tiles, green trees, emerald ocean and blue skies, Qingdao is like a city out of a fairy tale. Qingdao’s coastline starts with Tuan Island in the west and continues eastward to Shilaoren Beach – the name translates as “old stone man,” after an outcropping of rocks that resemble a bowed elder. You could hop on a bike at Zhanqiao Pier and ride in the gentle sea breeze with the open water at your side and clear skies overhead. Feel free to explore the bathing beach or experience the exhilarating freedom of sailing out to sea. The fishing villages at the foot of the mountain always welcome travelers for a taste of the famous Laoshan Green Tea. Come sit down for a brew, shed your worries and drain away the heat in this quiet, undisturbed corner of the world.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Roaming around Qingdao’s Old Town district, you’d be greeted with an array of red tiles and verdant trees, complementing one another in a colorful tapestry. Here, classic European and modern architectures blend effortlessly. Be it the band of German-style buildings near Zhongshan Road, the crisscrossing alleys around Ocean University of China’s Yushan Campus, or the western-style mansions at Badaguan, every part of the district is imbued with rich history and culture. You could easily spend a couple of days getting lost in the Old Town charms.

There are many cultural discoveries to be made here. Should you decide to visit Qingdao in July or August, you would be just in time for the Qingdao International Beer Festival. It’s a great chance to have a merry round of drinks with friends, as well as for taking a look at the fun displays at the Beer, Wine Culture and Shell Museums. The Qingdao Museum is of course a must-see: the towering Northern Wei (386 to 534 A.D.) Buddhist statues on display will definitely leave a lasting impression.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Qingdao is a city brimming with creativity and dynamism, a “City of Music” with sparkling artistic vibes. Summer concerts are held almost back-to-back, igniting joy and glee on the sun-kissed beaches. A listed UNESCO “City of Film,” Qingdao is where The Wandering Earth and other chinese science fiction movies were filmed.

Young ones will also find Qingdao to be a place of incredible fun. Children can experience ancient Chinese culture with modern technology at Qingdao Fantawild Dreamworld, or go animal watching at the Qingdao Polar Ocean World, while the adults can take some time off for leisure and shopping.

Be sure not to miss Qingdao’s seafood specialties, such as boiled mackerel dumplings, spicy stir-fried clams and seaweed clear noodles. These delights for the palate will be the ones you’ll never forget.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Weihai: The Perfect Seaside Cycling Experience

Cycling is one of the best ways to enjoy the ocean scenery. The spectacular view stretches along the 10-kilometer-long Huanhai Road Cycling Route from Crescent Bay to Grape Terrace. Both the longer and shorter versions of the route offer mesmerizing coastal scenery with marvelous waterside cliffs.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Visit Weihai’s native islets to enrich your trip further. Countless seagulls and egrets migrate to Sea Donkey Island (its shape resembles a thin donkey lying on the sea) from April to August every year in a great communal gathering. Or head to Jiming Island for a peaceful retreat: with tranquil fishing docks and tall trees, it’s a place where hearts can roam free.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

If you prefer fine sand, Rushan Silver Beach would be just the place for you. Walking on sands as fine as silk, a stroll on Silver Beach is as romantic as it gets.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Weifang: The City of Kites

Weifang is renowned throughout the world as the “City of Kites”. The Weifang World Kite Museum is replete with all sorts of kites and kite-making information. Keen visitors could try their hands at kite-making in the workshop; ready-made kite products are also available. Notably, the annual Weifang International Kite Festival is held here every late April.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

The ancient city of Qingzhou is a rare specimen of a Ming (1368 to 1644 A.D.) and Qing (1644 to 1911 A.D.) Dynasty city preserved in its entirety. There are more than 120 ancient streets and many traditional residences, as well as a range of intangible cultural experiences open to visitor participation.

The museum has a rich collection of treasures with great artistic value, such as the Buddhist statues excavated from the Longxing Temple ruins.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Weifang’s Yunmen Mountain is a national geopark containing stone cave relief statues from the Sui (581 to 618 A.D.) and Tang (618 to 907 A.D.) dynasties. The cliff inscription bearing the Chinese character that stands for longevity, Shou, carved during the Jiajing Reign of the Ming dynasty (1368 to 1644 A.D.) is particularly eye-catching

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Yantai: The City of Wine

Flanked by seas and mountains, the city of Yantai has beautiful natural scenery and a rich selection of cultural sights, making it a charming destination for sightseeing and vacationing. It is also recognized internationally as a “vine and wine city”. Here, travelers can visit the wine museum, tour vineyards and taste different varieties of wine.

Penglai Pavilion is a must-visit for those coming to Yantai. In Chinese legends, this is where immortals and deities reside, and it is known as “paradise on earth.” Located on top of Danya Mountain, the Penglai Pavilion still retains its original appearance from the Northern Song dynasty (960 to 1127 A.D.) to this day.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

Yantai Mountain Park, surrounded by the sea on three of its four sides, has great ocean and mountain views. The lighthouse on the mountain peak is one of Yantai’s iconic structures. Climbing up to the observatory deck of the lighthouse, one can take in all the sights of the city along with the seaside panorama.

Changdao County is home to some of China’s most beautiful oceanic islets, the Changshan Islands. The scenery of Jiuzhang Cliff in the Northern Island is tough to beat, with precipices looming over 400 meters tall and raging waves splashing against the shore.

[Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

For gourmets, the locals staunchly recommend Changdao’s seafood paired with Yantai’s wine. As night falls, the enticing aroma of grilled seafood from food stalls fills the air, and the streets overflow with delight as people enjoy the great food and atmosphere.

Of course, don’t forget about the other “pearls” scattered on the coastline such as Zhifu Island, Yangma Island and Kongtong Island, for they can be the cherry on top of a perfect itinerary.

Find out more about Shandong travel destinations and follow the “Friendly Shandong, Welcoming Home of Confucius” course on the “China Travel Course” website https://course.chinaculture.org."

"The Yellow River Basin Pilot Free Trade Zone Alliance was unveiled on Aug 23 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province, as part of Shandong's efforts to promote regional cooperation and coordinated development in the Yellow River Basin.

The Yellow River Basin Pilot Free Trade Zone Alliance is launched in Jinan, Shandong province on Aug 23. [Photo/Dazhong News]

During the launch ceremony, the alliance issued service items for promoting enterprise development, a general mechanism for integrated administrative examination and approval services, a cooperative mechanism for integrated intellectual property protection and integrated logistics and transportation services.

Starting in Qinghai province, the 5,464-kilometer Yellow River, which is the second-longest river in China, runs through seven provinces and two autonomous regions: Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Henan and Shandong provinces, and the Ningxia Hui and Inner Mongolia autonomous regions.

The Yellow River basin is an important ecological barrier and is strategically significant for China's national development and modernization.

A view of the Yellow River in Shandong province [Photo/Jinan Daily]

The alliance, initiated by Shandong, includes 12 free trade zone areas in Shandong, Henan, Sichuan and Shaanxi provinces and 15 functional economic zones in Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia.

Establishing the alliance and creating experimental fields for institutional innovation will inject new impetus into the construction of pilot free trade zones along the Yellow River and drive the formation of a large integrated market, according to Shandong officials.

The alliance also plans to promote the connectivity of major infrastructure development and open platforms in an orderly manner, gradually build large-scale and distinctive cross-regional industrial clusters, and explore new ways for national experimentation, opening-up, and building a new development pattern.

Shandong boasts a vibrant marine economy. [Photo/IC]

According to the Shandong Provincial Department of Commerce, the alliance is part of Shandong's efforts to implement the national strategy for ecological protection and high-quality development of the Yellow River Basin.

Shandong is the only coastal province among the nine provinces and regions in the Yellow River Basin. The Yellow River empties into the Bohai Sea in Dongying city, Shandong.

Shandong has a sea area of 159,500 square kilometers, which is equivalent to its land area, and it has a coastline of one-sixth of the country's total.

Shandong is also the only province in the Yellow River Basin with seaport resources. It boasts the most convenient passage to the sea and serves as the bridgehead of the new Eurasian Land Bridge. It has three large ports with a throughput of over 400 million metric tons, which is crucial in promoting land-sea cooperation and internal and external communication."

"At the beginning of the year, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement took effect and has deepened exhanges and cooperation between Shandong and ASEAN countries, which have blossomed and produced positive outcomes as a result of the strengthening of the China-ASEAN Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

An exhibitor introduces products to a customer at the second RCEP (Shandong) Import Expo. [Photo/Linyi News]

The second RCEP (Shandong) Import Expo was held in Linyi, Shandong province form Aug 19 to 21.

Focusing on the economic and people-to-people exchanges between RCEP countries, cities, business associations and Shandong, the expo showcased well-known brands and high-quality commodities from RCEP countries.

Spanning an exhibition area of 35,300 square meters, the expo attracted more than 43,000 visitors, including 21,000 professional purchasers. The on-site transaction volume reached 230 million yuan ($33.69 million), and intended transaction volume hit 750 million yuan.

A total of 512 exhibitors attended the expo, which had three pavilions: RCEP International, RCEP Brands and RCEP Quality Commodities.

The second RCEP (Shandong) Import Expo opens on Aug 19 in Linyi. [Photo/Linyi News]

Five RCEP countries, namely Cambodia, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and Australia, set up national pavilions. In addition, six overseas city pavilions were also set up to promote regional products.

The expo promoted the integration of e-commerce livestreaming and exhibition activities, and during the expo, a series of online sales promotions were held, with the transaction volume reaching more than 50 million yuan.

A series of supporting activities, such as the RCEP SMEs Forum, an international cooperation and exchange conference, the local product park investment promotion conference, and the Linyi import goods consumer shopping festival, were held during the expo.

In recent years, Linyi has increased close economic and trade ties with ASEAN countries, and ASEAN has become Linyi's largest trade partner. In the first half of 2022, Linyi's trade value with ASEAN reached 16.08 billion yuan, up 29.5 percent year-on-year.

Shandong has established 231 pairs of friendly and cooperative city relations with local governments of RCEP countries, and ASEAN has become Shandong's largest trading partner. In the first half of this year, Shandong's imports and exports to RCEP countries reached 587.47 billion yuan, up 22.9 percent.

A visitor poses for a photo at the expo. [Photo/Langya News]"

"Fishermen in Shidao fishing port of Rongcheng, Weihai, Shandong province, are busy unloading fresh Spanish mackerel on Sept 12. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Province's efforts in improving people's lives, seeking quality development pay off

This summer, Zhang Guoliang and his family spent three days of their vacation in Weihai, a coastal city in Shandong province.

""We drove to the city to escape the heat, but what we experienced was much more than what we had expected,"" the 43-year-old Zhang said in an interview in Jining, a city in southwestern Shandong.

Driving along a highway that featured picturesque coastal and mountainous landscapes in Weihai, the Zhangs went fishing at a marine ranch, visited a tea farm, stayed in a seaweed-thatched house and enjoyed watching the starry sky on crystal clear nights.

""My son learned a lot about sea creatures, and he was impressed by the seaweed house, whose rooftop is piled-up with dried seaweed and layered with wheat straw,"" said Zhang, adding that they stayed one more day than they had planned.

The route the Zhangs drove along goes through urban areas and 400 villages. Connecting scenic spots, hotels, RV campsites, homestays and agricultural sightseeing areas, it integrated urban and rural areas, a symbol of the city's high-quality rural vitalization and urban development.

Local statistics showed the income of farmers in the villages along the route has grown year-on-year around 10 percent.

Over the past decade, Shandong has been following President Xi Jinping's instructions to seek high-quality development, prioritize the interests of the people and turn their wish for a good life into reality.

During Xi's visits to the province in recent years, he expressed the hope that Shandong would strive to take the lead in promoting its high-quality socioeconomic development.

The province has been making efforts to improve people's lives and to promote common prosperity, Li Ganjie, Party secretary of Shandong, said at a news conference on Saturday in the provincial capital of Jinan.

The per capita disposable income of Shandong residents increased at an average annual rate of 8.5 percent over the past decade. Comprehensive progress was made in the fields of employment, education, medical care and elderly care, said Li. The province has taken great strides in its all-around development, he added.

Shandong saw high-quality economic development the past 10 years, resulting in the province's gross domestic product hitting 8.3 trillion yuan ($1.2 trillion) in 2021.

The province has made a breakthrough in replacing old drivers of growth with new enterprises. It has upgraded its heavy industries and made efforts to promote innovative industries to drive its robust economic development.

The number of high-tech enterprises in Shandong surpassed 20,000 last year, seven times more than in 2012, Shandong Governor Zhou Naixiang said at the same news conference. High-quality development has also benefited the environment of the province.

In 2021, the density of PM 2.5－particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less－in the province fell by 15.2 percent year-on-year, Zhou said.

The average energy consumption per unit of GDP in Shandong has declined by 4.2 percent annually over the past 10 years as well, he added.

High-quality development has also attracted foreign investment to the province, contributing to the province's efforts in further opening up its economy.

Over the past 10 years, the total of Shandong's imports and exports nearly doubled from 1.5 trillion yuan to 2.9 trillion yuan, said Zhou. The total of imports and exports in the first seven months of the year saw a year-on-year increase of 18.8 percent.

The province has built several high-level platforms to promote opening-up.

At the recently concluded Qingdao Multinationals Summit, the province sealed foreign investment deals for 99 projects worth $15.6 billion with companies from 16 countries and regions."

"An aerial photo shows a highway segment in Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Weihai, Shandong province, has built a highway that features picturesque coastal and mountain landscapes to better develop its tourism sector and rural areas.

The 1,001-kilometer route has a main line and branch lines. The 501-km main line goes along the coastline and across the mountains. The 500-km branch lines can take tourists to more than 90 percent of the city's tourism attractions, including scenic spots, hotels, RV campsites, homestays and agricultural sightseeing sites.

Among the attractions are four ski resorts, nine natural hot springs, 15 national-level marine ranches and more than 80 agricultural tourism sites.

An aerial photo shows a highway segment in Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

An aerial photo shows a marine ranch in Weihai, Shandong province, that tourists can reach via the tourist highway. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A photo shows a group of seagulls circling above the water surface near an island in Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A photo shows a village, known for its seaweed-capped houses, along the tourist highway in Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Workers load grain at a storage facility in Liaocheng, Shandong province, in June. ZHANG ZHENXIANG/FOR CHINA DAILY

Shandong province is growing in both total planting area and output of summer grain this year thanks to easy access to agricultural technologies and help from better insurance for when farmers face natural disasters, according to the provincial department of agriculture and rural affairs.

The province, one of the major production bases of summer grain in China, witnessed the output of wheat, a staple crop, reach 26.41 million metric tons, up 0.2 percent year-on-year, it said.

The total planting area of summer grain in the province reached 4 million hectares, 9,200 hectares more than last year.

""We conquered bad influences caused by late planting, plant diseases and pests that appeared earlier than previous years, and droughts in the late growth phase of wheat,"" Chi Fang, director of the planting management office of the department, said on Tuesday.

Due to serious floods last autumn, nearly 70 percent of wheat in Shandong was planted late.

""Usually winter wheat is planted in October in Shandong, but floods delayed the planting, with some areas being put off to early December, affecting the crop's growth,"" said Chi.

But the relatively high temperature in winter was good for wheat to grow. In addition, national and local governments conducted timely and effective measures at the crucial growing stages of wheat, he said.

For example, in February when wheat seedlings started to turn green, agricultural officials and technicians instructed farmers on growing weak seedlings into strong ones.

In May, work on spraying pesticides was carried out to protect the wheat against some diseases that frequently occur.

Zhao Ruxue, a farmer in Wenshang county, earned a decent income from the farmland he manages.

This year, Zhao, who began managing the farmland in 2013, handled 11,300 hectares on which he mainly grows wheat and corn.

""The total output is higher than last year, the grain quality is better, and the price of grain is higher too, making this year the best year for me in the last 10 years,"" said Zhao.

What farmers fear most are natural disasters such as flooding and drought, said Zhao.

""Years ago, I made little money from growing grains because of natural disasters and lack of knowledge of effective measures to grow grain when we encounter bad weather,"" he said, adding things got better when farmers started to receive subsidies in 2018 to buy insurance against natural disasters.

Farmer Li Guangxin in Linyi county of the province's Dezhou city said facilities built in villages relieve him from the pressures caused by natural disasters.

""Our town government has been building roads, drilling wells and dredging water channels in our villages,"" he said.

One thing that bothers Li now is there is not enough space to dry and store grain, especially when farmers harvest grain on rainy days."

"Editor's note: China has seen tremendous changes nationwide, from economic growth to environmental protection, from social improvement to cultural progress. In this series, China Daily maps the changes and tells the stories of the people who lived through them.

A container ship sails into the Qingdao Port on June 2, 2022. [Photo/Xinhua]

Province's growth attributed to innovation, forward-thinking

Fifty cold-chain trucks powered by hydrogen fuel cells took to roads early this month in Zibo, Shandong, as the province took another step toward using the clean energy resource.

All of the fuel cells in question use proton exchange membranes developed by Shandong Dongyue Future Hydrogen Energy Material, a company based in Zibo focused on new energy material innovation and development.

The membrane is a core component of the fuel cell. Powered by hydrogen, the fuel cells convert chemical energy into electricity via a chemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen. Hydrogen ions produced by the reaction pass through the proton exchange membrane, forming a loop with the electrons and creating electricity.

According to Dongyue, the company spent 16 years developing the proton exchange membrane and is now one of the few in the world to have mastered the ability to develop and produce the material.

The world's first 600-kilometer-per-hour high-speed maglev train system is launched in Qingdao, Shandong province, in July last year. [Photo/Xinhua]

Since going into production in 2020, the company now has the ability to turn out about 1.5 million square meters of proton exchange membranes every year.

This new energy material project is the epitome of the province's efforts over the past decade to pursue innovation-driven, high-quality development.

During his three visits to Shandong over the past decade, President Xi Jinping encouraged the province to promote innovation-driven development and use it to take the lead in enhancing its socioeconomic development.

Shandong has been busy putting Xi's instructions to work. The province has been upgrading its heavy industries and making efforts to promote innovative industries. It has also been transforming traditional industries such as heavily polluting chemical factories and coal-fired power plants into ones that are efficient and environmentally friendly.

Since 2018 in particular, Shandong has been phasing out outdated production and has upgraded five key industrial sectors including chemicals, agriculture, finance and tourism.

An Oriental stork flies to its nest on a pole at the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying, Shandong. [Photo by YANG BIN/FOR CHINA DAILY]

It has also fostered emerging industries, among them the new generation of information technology, high-end equipment, new energy and new materials, and medical and elderly care sectors.

Shandong has made a breakthrough in replacing old drivers of growth with new, Li Ganjie, secretary of the Communist Party of China Shandong Provincial Committee, said as he delivered a report to the 12th CPC Shandong Provincial Congress in May.

There were more than 20,400 high-tech enterprises in Shandong last year, 7.9 times more than in 2012. Additionally, the production value of these businesses accounted for 46.8 percent of the province's total manufacturing production value, a 17-percentage increase from 2012, according to the local government.

The province helped create 13 provincial-level competitive industrial clusters by last year, including clusters dedicated to new energy materials, information technology and marine equipment, by creating complete industrial chains and fostering a comprehensive, rules-based business environment that covers companies, institutes, financial bodies and other service agencies, rather than simply supporting a handful of leading companies.

An aerial view of downtown Jinan, Shandong. [Provided to China Daily]

These new drivers of growth have made it possible for Shandong to maintain economic growth even in the face of a complicated or challenging domestic or international environment for development, said Cui Jianhai, spokesman for the Shandong government.

The province's GDP reached 8.31 trillion yuan ($1.23 trillion) last year, a year-on-year increase of 8.3 percent.

And in the first half of this year, GDP amounted to 4.17 trillion yuan, up 3.6 percent year-on-year.

""It's not easy to make these kinds of achievements,"" said Cui, adding that so far this year, Shandong has taken coordinated steps to respond to the COVID-19 epidemic and to pursue socioeconomic development.

Foreign trade

Shandong's effort to cultivate new drivers of growth has also attracted foreign investment. The province saw foreign trade volume surge to 2.93 trillion yuan last year, an increase of 89 percent compared to that a decade ago, according to the local government.

An aerial view of downtown Jinan, Shandong. [Provided to China Daily]

In addition, as a proportion of the national total, the province's foreign trade rose from 6.4 percent in 2012 to 7.5 percent last year.

The 12th CPC Shandong Provincial Congress emphasized that the province would deepen reform and opening-up to remove institutional obstacles that restrict development, as well as work to create a new highland for opening-up and enhance the vitality of high-quality development.

The third Qingdao Multinationals Summit in June demonstrated the province's determination to turn itself into that highland. The move is also part of the province's efforts to integrate into the new national development paradigm of ""dual-circulation"", which relies on the domestic market as its mainstay while allowing both the domestic and the overseas markets to mutually reinforce each other.

At the summit, Shandong sealed foreign investment deals for 99 projects worth $15.6 billion with companies from 16 countries and regions. The projects are mainly in the fields of high-end equipment and chemicals, new energy, new materials, information technology, finance, marine development, agriculture and assorted services.

Denis Depoux, global managing director of global consultancy Roland Berger, told the summit that Shandong has made persistent efforts to deepen the reform and opening-up of key areas to improve its business environment, which is meaningful for business development in the province."

"Photo taken on May 1, 2022 shows a container vessel docking at the Qianwan Container Terminal in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

JINAN - East China's Shandong province saw higher than expected foreign trade growth in the first half of 2022, local authorities said.

According to customs data, the province's import and export volume rose 17 percent year-on-year to 1.57 trillion yuan ($232.7 billion) from January to June, ranking sixth among all provincial-level regions in terms of the trade figure.

Exports soared 25.4 percent year-on-year to nearly 945 billion yuan, while imports rose 6.3 percent to 628.5 billion yuan.

Local private enterprises contributed 73.2 percent of the total trade, with their trade volume rising 22.6 percent year-on-year to 1.15 trillion yuan.

In the first half of the year, the province's trade with its top three trading partners, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the United States and the European Union, increased by 47.9 percent, 18.7 percent and 8 percent, respectively.

Shandong's trade with countries along the Belt and Road surged 35.7 percent while its trade with the members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership jumped 22.9 percent."

"Shandong, with a tradition of hospitality that dates back 7,000 years, is regarded as an important cradle of Chinese civilization. It is a place that integrates traditional and modern life styles, and the scenic areas in the province have organized a slew of nighttime activities such as walks, sightseeing tours and night runs to boost its night economy.

The bustling Characteristic Cultural Block of Jinan Ancient City is a must-visit scenic spot in Jinan, the capital city of Shandong province. The dazzling neon lights, ancient streets, and the aroma of gourmet food can be found everywhere in the area, attracting visitors from across the country. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

The ancient city of Jimo has a history of at least 1,400 years. This magnificent Chinese-style city is a cultural ancient city, and very lively at night. As you approach the historic city of Jimo, you'll see its imposing city walls and graceful streets. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Tangku Culture and Creative Park in Zibo city, Shandong province is a gathering place to experience modern culture. The park currently is scattered with large and small coffee shops, woodworking shops, pubs, various studios and other unique stores. It provides a youthful and creative atmosphere to showcase the colorful, energetic and fashionable charm of a modern and new Zibo. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Taierzhuang ancient town, a popular scenic spot in Shandong's Zaozhuang city, is a place where tourists can explore Shandong's traditional culture. It is the only ancient town along the Grand Canal with well-preserved wharves and revetments. A 3-kilometer-long section of the original canal still exists in the town, which is why it is considered a ""living ancient canal"" by the World Tourism Organization. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Yantai Zhifu Wonderland Historical and Cultural Block is located in downtown Yantai, and filled with a antique flavor. A variety of interactive activities such as folk art juggling, Languan opera, and Jiaodong drumming are staged every night, bringing tourists a variety of unique experiences. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Nishan Sacred Land in Qufu, a county-level city in Jining, Shandong province is traditionally regarded as the birthplace of Confucius, a great Chinese philosopher, educator and the founder of Confucianism. The place is a cultural experience base where one can learn about Chinese culture and Confucianism. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"Zhang Xinqi, former deputy director of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Provincial People's Congress, was accused of taking 155 million yuan ($23 million) in bribes by the Nanjing Intermediate People's Court in Jiangsu province on Thursday.

Zhang pleaded guilty and confessed to his crimes.

Prosecutors from the Nanjing People's Procuratorate said from 2001 to 2019, Zhang profited from his positions, including Party chief and mayor of Shandong's Weifang city, mayor of Shandong's Qingdao city and deputy director of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Provincial People's Congress, to assist enterprises and individuals in business operation, project development, engineering project contraction, planning approval and position arrangement.

From 2006 to 2021, Zhang accepted property from enterprises and individuals totaling 155 million yuan directly or through others. Therefore, the procuratorial organ requested Zhang be held criminally responsible for taking bribes, prosecutors said.

Zhang made a final statement and pleaded his guilt in court. The court said the verdict will be handed down at a later date.

Zhang, 66 and a native of Shandong, started work in 1974 and joined the Communist Party of China in 1977. He became mayor of Weifang in 2003, the mayor of Qingdao in 2012 and became deputy director of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Provincial People's Congress in 2017.

Zhang was put under investigation by the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Supervisory Commission in February 2021.

He was expelled from the Party and arrested in August 2021. Then his case was transferred to the Nanjing People's Procuratorate for prosecution, which filed a lawsuit against him in November."

"Transportation equipment are on display at the Exhibition on Multinationals and China in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on June 19, 2022. [Photo/VCG]

Local officials announced at a recent news conference that Shandong leads the country in many scientific and technological innovation fields.

The province is home to the world's first high-speed maglev transportation system, which features a top speed of 600 kilometers per hour.

China's first independently developed ski-waxing truck served as an important vehicle in providing waxing and storage solutions for athletes during the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. The truck was developed by enterprises and institutes in Shandong.

The successful trial of the first domestic underwater oil production system, which is independently developed by a company based in Dongying, has achieved an important leap forward in the localization of key core equipment for China's offshore oil and gas development.

Shandong leads the country in both industrialization and scientific and technological innovation across 20 different fields, including intelligent transportation, fine chemicals, and fuel cells, said Tang Bo, director of Shandong Provincial Department of Science and Technology.

Sci-tech innovation platforms represented by Shandong Institutes of Industrial Technology, Shandong Institute of Advanced Technology and Shandong Energy Institute are booming in the province.

A total of 31 innovation and entrepreneurship communities in Shandong have broken through 391 key technologies, formulated 86 international, national or industrial standards, and achieved an added value of more than 51.3 billion yuan ($7.65 billion)."

"JINAN -- East China's Shandong province reported 66 locally transmitted asymptomatic COVID-19 cases on Thursday, all in the city of Linyi, the provincial health commission said Friday.

As of Thursday, the province had a total of 21 local confirmed cases and 95 local asymptomatic carriers."

"Shandong province will offer new coupons worth 200 million yuan ($29.82 million) this month to spur consumer demand for cars, according to a statement released online by the Shandong Department of Commerce on Wednesday.

The coupons will be valid until the end of this month and can be used at online shops or offline stores.

""Automobiles represent 10 percent of the total retail sales of consumer goods, which is an important sector to spur domestic consumer demand,"" said Wang Hongping, deputy head of the department.

The province released 150,000 coupons worth 500 million yuan last month to spur consumption of passenger vehicles.

For example, people who buy a new-energy car in the province can use a coupon ranging from 3,000 yuan to 6,000 yuan, depending on the price of the vehicle.

In addition, it released coupons worth 120 million yuan to promote consumption of commercial vehicles, such as cargo trucks. The valid time of these coupons has been extended to the end of the month.

Last month, the province released 200 million yuan in coupons to spur home appliance consumption. They are valid until the end of July.

Half the coupons are funded by the province; the other half are funded by the 16 cities of the province, the statement said."

"A delegation from the government of Shandong province visited Southwest China's Chongqing municipality on July 1-3.

During the delegation's visit, a joint conference on East-West Coordination (referring to the coordination between China's eastern and western regions) was held between the two governments, which was addressed by top government leaders on both sides.

Chongqing officials expressed their heartfelt gratitude for Shandong's generous assistance, and cited East-West Coordination as a significant decision made by the central government to balance regional development and bolster mutual prosperity.

Efforts to deepen one-on-one collaboration were urged to consolidate the results achieved in the poverty alleviation campaign. Shandong and Chongqing should develop agriculture in mountainous areas as well as the regional special economy, including agricultural product processing.

In addition, the two regions are expected to further cooperate by promoting in-depth industrial coordination in automobiles, electronic information, equipment manufacturing and biomedicine, encourage the integration of digital economy and real economy, and further modernize the current supply and industrial chains.

The Shandong delegation also visited Chongqing’s innovation and entrepreneurship centers, rural tourism programs, and industrial collaboration projects during its visit."

"The 2022 Shandong Tourism Development Conference will be held in the city of Jining, East China's Shandong province, from June 26 to 27, according to a news conference held on June 20.

The opening ceremony of the annual event will be held in Nishan Sacred Land in Qufu, a county-level city in Jining on June 26, and a number of parallel sessions will be hosted the same day in the province's 16 cities.

Sponsors said that the event will carry out themed exhibitions to showcase the achievements the 16 cities have made in the high-quality development of the culture and tourism sector. A series of events featuring cultural tourism activities will also be held at the same time to show visitors the rich cultural resources of Shandong.

Wang Lei, head of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, said at the news conference that Shandong will release a slew of innovative measures to boost the high-quality development of its culture and tourism sector, such as cultivating a number of industrial leaders, and fostering new business models.

The province will also launch an incubation program in the next three years. By the end of 2025, Shandong will cultivate 100 leading culture and tourism enterprises, 300 backbone enterprises and 600 growth enterprises, according to Wang.

The event will highlight some of Shandong's  key culture and tourism projects including Nishan Sacred Land, the Temple and Cemetery of Confucius, and the Kong Family Mansion, aiming to showcase Shandong's achievements in the culture and tourism sector.

A total of 99 A-level scenic areas in Jining, which is this year's venue of the conference, offer free admission to the public this month. Jining will take this conference as an opportunity to showcase the profound cultural heritage and rich tourism resources in an all-round way, according to a city government official.

The 2022 Shandong Tourism Development Conference is expected to be held in the city of Jining, East China's Shandong province, from June 26 to 27. [Photo/Dazhong Daily]"

"The rising popularity of the prefabricated food industry has attracted investors into the field in recent years. Shandong, an agricultural powerhouse, is ramping up efforts to gain market share in this sector.

During the third Qingdao Multinationals Summit, a special exhibition area has been set up to display ready-made dishes produced by over 30 Shandong-based food enterprises, attracting the attention of many diners in search of appetizing food during the event.

Shandong, which boasts a booming food industry and catering industry, has superior advantages to develop the prefabricated food industry due to its developed logistics system and sound industrial foundation."

"Visitors throng an expo on multinationals and China during the third Qingdao Multinationals Summit in Qingdao, Shandong province. TANG KE/FOR CHINA DAILY

Qingdao summit sees MNCs backing China's efforts to boost supply chains

China's eastern province of Shandong sealed foreign investment deals worth $15.6 billion for 99 projects in various cities on Monday.

Global companies from 16 countries and regions, including Japan's Mitsui & Co Ltd and Germany's ZF Friedrichshafen AG, are among the big-name signatories.

The agreements were signed during the third Qingdao Multinationals Summit, a two-day event that opened on Monday in Qingdao, a coastal city of the province.

Government officials and corporate executives said these deals signify that China will continue to play a key role in supporting the stable operation of global supply chains, and facilitate multinationals to achieve better growth in its lucrative market.

The big-ticket projects are mainly in the fields of high-end equipment and chemicals, new energy, new materials, information technology, finance, ocean development, agriculture and services.

Fourteen projects have a contracted foreign capital exceeding $100 million each. And 61 projects' contracted foreign capital exceeds $30 million each, said the summit's organizers, the Ministry of Commerce and Shandong's provincial government.

The government will support MNCs, an important driving force behind the dual-circulation development paradigm, to give full play to their unique advantages and roles to contribute to China's high-quality development, said Sheng Qiuping, vice-commerce minister.

With global transnational investment in manufacturing shrinking, China, with its huge market and complete supply chain, has attracted MNC investments in manufacturing and made significant contributions to global economic growth in recent years, said a business report released by the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, a think tank of the Ministry of Commerce, during the summit.

The report stated that multiple factors like the rise of trade protectionism, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict have reshaped the global supply chain, leading to a new round of its restructuring.

The scale of foreign investment in China's manufacturing sector has increased steadily, and MNCs' business performance also continued to improve in China, boosting their confidence to sustain or increase their investment in the country, said Gu Xueming, president of the CAITEC.

With China underlining digitalization, green transformation and industrial upgrade, the manufacturing projects invested by MNCs in the country have tended to be large-scale in recent years, covering the whole industrial chain.

The CAITEC report also found that MNCs' investment in China's manufacturing sector has expanded from medium and low-level processors to the high end.

Foreign direct investment in China expanded 17.3 percent year-on-year to 564.2 billion yuan ($84.18 billion) in the first five months of 2022, while the nation saw growth rates of high-tech industries, high-tech manufacturing and high-tech services surge 42.7 percent, 32.9 percent and 45.4 percent, respectively, according to the latest data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The steady performance of China's economy has further strengthened the confidence of the international community in the nation's economic growth prospects. China welcomes companies from all over the world to invest in its market and share the development dividends, Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told reporters at a news conference on Monday.

China has the potential to become a hotbed for research and development activities, especially for large MNCs. There is also enormous untapped potential in both trade in services and decarbonization in the country, according to Business Confidence Survey 2022, released by the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China on Monday.

With a market of 1.4 billion consumers, some of the world's best manufacturing clusters and, in more recent years, a vibrant innovation ecosystem, China presents a growth story that European companies wish to be part of, the EU survey found.

Pascal Soriot, CEO of AstraZeneca, a British-Swedish biopharmaceuticals producer, said: ""The COVID-19 pandemic has tested economies and societies to their limits around the world. Now more than ever before, we must work together, across industries and borders, with urgency and one shared goal, to create a healthier, stronger and more sustainable future for all.""

AstraZeneca announced on Monday that it is planning to build a manufacturing and supply base, and regional headquarters, in Qingdao in the coming years.

Tao Lin, vice-president of Tesla Inc, a US electric vehicle manufacturer, said China's policies of stabilizing foreign investment and trade have generated great confidence among MNCs for future growth in the country."

"Visitors inspect new models displayed at an auto show held in Jinan, Shandong province, during June 9-13. CHINA DAILY

In recent years, Shandong province has been ramping up efforts to promote the all-round improvements of an open economy and attract more investment from Fortune 500 companies.

In 2021, the actual use of foreign investment in Shandong exceeded $20 billion for the first time, accounting for 12.4 percent of the national total, thanks to a series of major business promotional events held in Shandong and the continuous optimization of the investment environment.

Last year, 33 Fortune 500 companies invested in 69 projects in Shandong, including 49 newly-added enterprises and 20 capital-increased enterprises. Five of the top Fortune 500 companies invested in Shandong for the first time in 2021.

Shandong is constantly promoting opening-up at a higher level and promoting high-quality development of an open economy, according to local authorities.

The province has hosted two editions of the Qingdao Multinationals Summit, such as the ""Connecting Shandong with Fortune Global 500"" series of events as well as other high-level summits to promote cooperation with Fortune 500 companies.

Last year, the province signed a total of 311 key foreign investment projects in major economic and trade activities, with a total investment of $35.12 billion, and a total contracted foreign investment of $13.03 billion.

The province has also launched a slew of measures and policies to promote the smooth implementation of foreign-invested projects. Special working teams have been set up to solve enterprise problems regarding project construction, raw material supply, worker recruitment and other issues."

"A salmon is harvested in the Shenlan 1 deep-sea fish farm in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo/XINHUA]

China's first deep-sea fish farm, Shenlan 1－located in waters 120 nautical miles (222 kilometers) off Qingdao, Shandong province－has for the first time harvested cold-water Atlantic salmon that it cultivated.

The harvest last week proves that China has the scientific and technical ability to expand aquaculture far from shore, the provincial agricultural authority said.

China's coastal waters are generally shallow and warm and not suitable for cold-water species.

However, off Qingdao, a mass of relatively cold water－roughly 500 billion cubic meters in areas of the Yellow Sea－enables salmon breeding, said Dong Shuanglin, a professor at Ocean University of China in Qingdao and a member of the expert team focusing on salmon cultivation.

""The temperature, quality and dissolved oxygen of the cold water provide favorable conditions for salmon,"" Dong said.

The volume of Shenlan 1－an octagonal, submersible cage made of netting and weighing 1,500 metric tons－is equivalent to 40 standard swimming pools. It is able to rise or descend according to variations in water temperature.

""In summer, we can dive it to a depth of 25 meters, where the cold-water mass is located, while in autumn, when the surface water is colder, we can lift it to the surface, thus ensuring that the fish live in a sound environment all year,"" Dong said.

Yan Jun, deputy director of the Southern Marine Science and Engineering Guangdong Laboratory, one of the designers of the farm, said Shenlan 1 is ""constantly being renovated and upgraded to be more practical, efficient and intelligent"".

Breeding conditions at the offshore fish farm can be managed by smart monitoring systems and a remote information transmission system.

""The smart systems enable realtime monitoring of the living conditions of the fish, including their shape and size. Based on the data received, staff members can adjust feeding at any time,"" Yan said.

In June last year, the farm harvested 150,000 adult salmon of another species, the first to be harvested after the facility's completion. Last week, it harvested its first Atlantic salmon, which is always well received in the marketplace.

China has major growth potential for salmon consumption, according to a report released in April by Joyvio Food, a Beijing-based company that is engaged in the breeding, processing and sales of aquatic products.

The per capita annual consumption of salmon in China is about 0.06 kilogram, while in Norway, Sweden and Finland, the amount varies from 6 to 8 kilograms, the report said.

Captive farming of salmon domestically will reduce logistics and labor costs, said Li Hong, vice-chairman of Deep and Far Sea Green Aquaculture, the Shandong company that runs the sea farm's salmon business.

""Compared with transporting salmon from abroad, which usually requires three or four days, salmon bred domestically will be fresher. The cold water will produce fish of better quality, including fish less prone to disease,"" Li said.

In the future, the company will integrate shipment, marine equipment fabrication, fish breeding, marine farming and cold-chain transportation to develop modern ocean aquaculture, he said."

"Farmers reap wheat with harvesters in Tancheng county, Linyi city of Shandong province, on Thursday. [Photo by Ding Shanshan/for chinadaily.com.cn]

Machine harvesting of winter wheat started on Thursday across Shandong province, one of the major winter wheat production areas in China.

A total of 1.5 million sets of machines including harvesters will be used this year to reduce grain loss, according to local agricultural authorities.

As of Sunday, 517,200 hectares of winter wheat have been harvested across the province, 12.9 percent of the total area of the crop in the province. Over 99.57 percent of the area that has already been harvested was done by machines."

"The sixth Shandong Culture and Tourism Consumption Season is being held from this month until October, and the opening ceremony is expected to take place in Jinan, capital of Shandong on June 2, aiming to boost the culture and tourism sector, which was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

There will be activities in 10 categories, as well as 16 citywide events. A total of 5,408 stores will take part, with over 2,000 consumption promotions involving sectors such as catering, e-commerce, cultural tourism, creative products, traditional handicrafts, and night tourism, all of which will help to maintain high-quality consumption development and better meet people's demands for diversified and personalized consumer experiences.

Jinan, Qingdao, and Yantai have recently begun a series of colorful activities. Jinan has released 38 million yuan ($5.71 million) in consumption coupons, of which 10 million yuan will be used to enhance consumption in the homestay industry and 3 million yuan will be utilized to boost consumption of various new culture and tourism models such as electronic sports.

The culture and tourism consumption season is expected to create a participatory and consuming atmosphere, further stimulate market vitality, unleash consumption potential and boost the sustained recovery and upgrading of consumption, according to officials from the province's culture and tourism department.

The sixth Shandong Culture and Tourism Consumption Season is being held from this month until October. [Photo/VCG]"

"A harvester collects wheat in the fields of Zhuwangkong village in Weifang, Shandong province on Tuesday. [Photo by Wang Jilin/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Shandong province, a major winter wheat production area in China, have started to harvest their crop.

The area of winter wheat fields in the province has reached 4 million hectares, 8,000 more than last year, according to the Shandong Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Farmers harvest wheat in the fields of Shaozhuang village in Weifang, Shandong province on Monday. [Photo by Li Hongsen/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"According to the goals set forth in the report of the 12th Shandong Provincial Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), which opened on May 28 in Jinan, the provincial capital, Shandong will promote coordinated regional development in a down-to-earth manner in order to become an important growth pole and a strong source of power in the country.

The urban landscape of Jinan, capital of Shandong province [Photo/VCG]

The report, delivered at the provincial Party congress, proposed to give full play to the leading role of the Shandong Peninsula urban agglomeration, support Jinan to build a national central city and Qingdao to build a global marine central city, and promote the integrated development of the three economic circles of the provincial capital, Jiaodong and southern Shandong.

The report also highlighted the development of the Yellow River basin. Shandong will steadily implement the national strategy for ecological protection and high-quality development of the Yellow River basin, according to Shandong officials.

The beautiful countryside in Shandong province [Photo/VCG]

Shandong will cooperate with other provincial regions to manage and protect the river's upper, middle and lower reaches, its mainstream tributaries and its banks. Related projects include embankment construction, flood plain management and environmental restoration.

""We will plan a number of major policies and pilot demonstrations, implement a number of major support projects, strengthen practical cooperation with provinces and regions along the Yellow River in the fields of infrastructure, ecological protection, science and technology education, and make greater efforts to build a model ecological protection area, and a green and low-carbon development area,"" said Shi Aizuo, a 12th CPC Shandong Provincial Congress delegate and deputy director of the Shandong Provincial Development and Reform Commission.

The Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying, Shandong province has become a new home for wildlife. [Photo/VCG]"

"Containers are unloaded at Qingdao Port in Shandong province in March. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, Shandong has been ramping up efforts to phase out backward and excessive production capacity in an effective way, transform and upgrade traditional industries, as well as foster and expand new economic drivers to promote high-quality development.

Since 2018, Shandong has treated more than 110,000 poorly managed and polluting small enterprises. The number of chemical industrial parks has been reduced from 199 to 84, and the province has completed the tasks of reducing crude steel output and coke capacity.

Shandong's regional GDP reached 8.3 trillion yuan ($1.25 trillion) in 2021, up 8.3 percent year-on-year, with the additional value of the ""Four New Economy"" (new technology, new business pattern, new development mode, and new industry) accounting for 31.7 percent, up 10 percentage points from 2017.

Shandong aspires to be at the forefront of innovation-driven development. The province has the most national-level enterprise technology centers in the country, at 198. Seven of the National Development and Reform Commission's first batch of 66 national emerging industry clusters are in Shandong, which ranks first in China.

Since 2018, Shandong has implemented 38,000 technological transformation projects each with an investment of more than 5 million yuan, ranking first in China in terms of investment scale.

Since the beginning of this year, Shandong has coordinated epidemic prevention and control and economic and social development. In the first quarter of 2022, the province's GDP reached 1.99 trillion yuan, an increase of 5.2 percent year-on-year.

During this period, the output of new energy vehicles increased by 217.6 percent, and the output of industrial robots increased by 217.8 percent. ""The former reflects the green development of Shandong's economy, while the latter shows the strong strength of smart manufacturing in the province,"" a local official said.

The 12th Shandong Provincial Congress of the Communist Party of China, which opened on May 28, proposed to advance the transformation of old growth drivers into new ones, upgrade traditional industries, expand emerging industries, strengthen advanced manufacturing industries, cultivate and expand digital driving forces, and create new advantages for high-quality development.

In the next five years, Shandong's economy is expected to be comprehensively improved and more efficient. The per capita GDP will reach 110,000 yuan, and the added value of ""Four New Economy"" will account for more than 40 percent of the regional GDP, according to Shandong authorities."

"A worker harvests salt in Binhai town in the Zhanhua district of Binzhou, Shandong province, on Friday. [Photo by Yang Baoyong/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Workers have started harvesting spring salt from the 26,660 hectares of salt fields in Binhai town in the Zhanhua district of Binzhou, Shandong province.

Total salt output is expected to reach 600,000 tons this year, the local government said.

Photo shows a patchwork of salt fields in Binhai town in the Zhanhua district of Binzhou, Shandong province, on Friday. [Photo by Yang Baoyong/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Containers are unloaded from a ship at a port of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Feb 17, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

JINAN - East China's Shandong province reported its trade with members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) neared 357.4 billion yuan ($53.1 billion) from January to April, an increase of 19.9 percent year-on-year.

The figure accounted for 36.9 percent of the province's total imports and exports.

""More than 100 import enterprises have seen nearly 51 million yuan in tariff concessions during customs clearance at Qingdao Customs in the first four months of the year,"" said Bi Haijun, an official of the customs of Qingdao, an important coastal city and international port city.

""Since the RCEP agreement took effect, the tariff rate of alloy steel plates we imported has declined from 3 percent to zero, with a total tariff concession of over 300,000 yuan, which has greatly reduced our production and operation costs,"" said Qu Xiaoqun, business manager of Yantai Tiezhongbao Steel Processing Co Ltd, a marine engineering platform equipment manufacturer which imports alloy steel plates from Japan.

Qu said that the company benefits from the RCEP agreement and other supportive policies, and domestic trade orders of the company are expected to increase dramatically this year and alloy steel imports from Japan will increase by about 70 percent."

"Containers are unloaded from a ship at a port of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Feb 17, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

JINAN -- East China's Shandong province posted a 14.2 percent year-on-year increase in its foreign trade in the first four months of 2022, Qingdao Customs said on Thursday.

The province's total import and export volume exceeded 968.8 billion yuan ($144 billion) during the period. Of the total, exports grew 22.7 percent to around 572.7 billion yuan, while imports increased 3.9 percent to about 396 billion yuan.

Notably, Shandong's private sector reported 19 percent year-on-year growth to over 697 billion yuan, accounting for 72 percent of its total foreign-trade volume.

During the period, Shandong's trade with countries along the Belt and Road also recorded robust growth, up 26.6 percent, with the value reaching 343 billion yuan.

Mechanical and electronic products were among the province's major exports in the first four months, taking up 42 percent of the total export volume, said the local customs authorities."

"Containers are unloaded from a ship at a port of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Feb 17, 2020. [Photo/Xinhua]

JINAN -- East China's Shandong province's trade with members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) expanded 20.9 percent year-on-year to 257.26 billion yuan ($39.26 billion) in the first quarter of 2022, said the Jinan Customs in the provincial capital.

Over the period, exports between Shandong and RCEP members grew 23.5 percent to 147.62 billion yuan while imports rose 17.6 percent to 109.64 billion yuan, the customs said.

The Republic of Korea, Japan, and Malaysia are the top three RCEP trading partners of Shandong, whose trade with Shandong accounts for 61 percent of the province's total trade with RCEP members.

Over the period, Shandong's imports and exports to those countries totaled 63.1 billion yuan, 47.03 billion yuan, and 46.83 billion yuan respectively, up 13 percent, 18.3 percent, and 65 percent.

A total of 24,000 certificates of origin under RCEP were also issued by authorities in the province."

"A news conference is held in Yantai, Shandong province on Monday morning. [Photo/China Youth Daily]

Gene sequencing conducted on 16 samples of local COVID-19 cases reported in Yantai, a coastal city in Shandong province, showed the BA.2.3 Omicron subvariant which had not been reported before on the Chinese mainland, an official said on Monday.

""Gene sequencing analysis traces all cases to one transmission chain,"" Vice-Mayor Shen Jian said at a news conference on Monday morning.

""The new outbreak has features of spatial clustering, and the virus might have been spreading for days,"" Shen said.

Yantai reported 36 new locally transmitted COVID-19 cases on Sunday, including two confirmed patients and 34 asymptomatic carriers.

The city has taken a series of epidemic prevention and control measures to contain the spread. Over 4,870 close contacts have been traced and are now under quarantine, Shen said."

"The Shandong-ASEAN Two-Way Trade (RCEP) Online Exhibition kicked off on April 20 to facilitate trade and investment cooperation amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 300 Shandong companies and over 100 overseas merchants from Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, and other ASEAN countries are participating in the online trade event, which cover mechanical, electrical and agricultural products, building materials, daily consumer goods, chemicals, and other industries.

More than 300 ""one-to-one"" online negotiations will be held to boost cooperation thanks to accurate matching.

The event has received support from a variety of domestic and international trade organizations, including International Enterprise Singapore, the Singapore-China Business Association, the Indonesian Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and the Asian-International Trade and Investment Association.

The Shandong-ASEAN Two-Way Trade (RCEP) Online Exhibition opens on April 20. [Photo/Dazhong News]

Lyu Wei, deputy director of the Department of Commerce of Shandong province, delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the online trade exhibition. [Photo/Dazhong News]

More than 300 ""one-to-one"" online negotiations will be held to boost cooperation. [Photo/Dazhong News]"

"Shandong province in East China is regarded as an important cradle of Chinese civilization, having generated a diverse range of civilizations, including refined and sophisticated artworks and handicrafts.

Yangjiabu woodcut New Year paintings, Yantai paper-cutting art, Linyi pancakes, and Zibo ceramics are representative traditional handicrafts from Shandong. In order to better promote and inherit intangible assets, the province has made significant efforts to support the innovative development of its rich traditional culture, which has aided not only in preservation and transmission, but also in the vitalization of the province's rural areas.

During this year's Spring Festival holiday, cities in Shandong organized an array of themed activities to bring intangible cultural heritage items back to life among residents, and attract more people to engage in the inheritance and preservation of the traditional art forms.

""The best way to inherit and preserve an intangible cultural heritage is to use them in daily life,"" said Sun Meihua, president of the Shandong Cultural Creative Design Industry Association.

Sun added that inheritors should introduce creative elements of traditional handicrafts, and promote them among the public.

Shandong is rich in intangible cultural heritage items. According to official data, eight items have been added to the Representative List of Humanity's Intangible Cultural Heritage. The province is home to 186 and 1,073 intangible cultural heritage items on the national and provincial lists, respectively, making it one of the most popular in the country.

Shandong will explore innovative ways to promote traditional handicrafts at home and abroad this year, according to the province's culture and tourism department, making them new calling cards for Shandong.

Yangjiabu village has been a production center of New Year paintings since the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). [Photo/VCG]"

"Shandong Nuclear Power Co's plant in Haiyang, Shandong province, provided heating produced by clean energy to all urban districts of the city during the winter. ZHANG XIAOHUI/FOR CHINA DAILY

A demonstration project on the comprehensive use of nuclear energy in Haiyang, Shandong province, is being used as an example in China's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) to better develop nuclear energy.

In addition to its main business of power generation, in 2019, Haiyang Nuclear Power Plant started commercial heating services.

This year, the plant provided heating from clean energy to all urban districts of Haiyang during the winter, marking the first commercial attempt in China to supply heat from traditional nuclear power.

Shandong Nuclear Power Co, which operates the plant, said more than 200,000 residents benefited from the nuclear power project, which provided carbon-free heating for 143 consecutive days to an area of 5 million square meters.

The company is updating the project, integrating it with a seawater desalination system to produce freshwater for the Jiaodong Peninsula in eastern Shandong, where water supplies are short.

A demonstration project for the simultaneous production and channeling of freshwater and heat was completed in May last year. The project now provides freshwater and heat to nearly 2,000 people in the plant's dormitory area.

This process involves a multistage reverse osmosis and evaporation system that uses heat generated by the plant. Desalinated water is treated until it reaches the drinking water standard and is then heated to 95 C. The water and heat are then channeled to consumers via a pipeline.

A device is used to separate the heat and water, with the former entering the thermal system, and the latter entering the water supply system for use.

The company said that compared with the traditional method of producing and transporting water and heat via separate channels, the simultaneous project will halve the total cost.

Wu Fang, chairman of the company, said that in addition to its key business of power generation, a 1-million-kilowatt nuclear unit is expected to supply heating to an area of 30 million sq m.

The unit will produce 30 million metric tons of freshwater during a single heating season by using the technologies to simultaneously produce and channel water and heat, Wu added."

"As the best preserved and youngest wetland ecosystem in China's warm temperate zone, the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying, Shandong province has always been a paradise for wild animals, especially wild birds.

Flocks of migratory birds gather at the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhou Guangxue/For China Daily]

However, as the Yellow River's sediment flow into the sea decreased, the erosion of coastal areas made the ecology of the wetland very fragile, and the natural bird habitat was under threat.

In response, the local government has launched a slew of measures to advance ecological conservation and high-quality development in the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve.

The nature reserve, situated where the Yellow River flows into the Bohai Sea, was established in 1992. It covers about 153,000 hectares, with the wetland making up 70 percent of the total, according to the reserve's management committee.

An official observes oriental storks at the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve. [Photo by Chi Wei/For China Daily]

In recent years, Shandong has returned 4,833 hectares of farmland to wetlands, invested 1.06 billion yuan ($166.53 million) in 16 wetland restoration projects, and increased water replenishment of 452 million cubic meters.

Since 2017, the wetland area of the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve has been restored to 188 square kilometers, transforming the former plains and salt and alkali flats into a large wetland rich in aquatic plants and biodiversity.

Measures, such as building homes for birds, have been taken to create a friendly and suitable environment on land and water for different species in the delta nature reserve.

According to the delta nature reserve, the wetlands are now home to 1,630 wild animal species and 685 plant species, and the number of bird species in the delta region has risen from 187 in 1992 to 371.

An oriental stork flies to its nest atop a pole at the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve. [Photo by Yang Bin/For China Daily]"

"An employee works at a vehicle production facility in Qingzhou, Shandong province. [Photo by Wang Jilin/For China Daily]

Shandong is implementing the strategy to develop a quality workforce in the new era as well as speed up the province's upgrading to become a major world hub of talent and innovation.

The province has been committed to the innovation-driven development strategy. This year, it will strive to increase spending on research and development by more than 10 percent compared with last year, increase the number of new and high-tech enterprises to 23,000, and accelerate the construction of a world-class innovative province.

Focusing on industrial technological innovation, it will carry out research on 100 key and core technologies in biomedicine, high-end equipment, new energy and materials, and other emerging industries.

It will implement the action plan for industrial ecological innovation to promote close coordination and integrated development of upstream and downstream industries as well as large, small and medium-sized enterprises.

More efforts will be made to improve strategic science and technology capabilities, intensify basic research, and promote breakthroughs and original innovation in core technologies in key fields.

It will continue to strengthen intellectual property rights creation, protection, and application, as well as accelerate the province's transformation into a global leader in science and technology.

More top scientists will be attracted, and a large number of scientists and technologists in strategically essential and core technological fields will be employed in the province, and high-level sci-tech leaders and innovation teams will be nurtured."

"As winter wheat seedlings sprout, farmers in Hushan town of Rongcheng, Shandong province, are turning to self-propelled sprayers and drones to tend the crop.

Video by Zhao Ruixue and Li Xinjun"

"The Shandong provincial government on March 25 approved building the Shandong Provincial Laboratory of New Drug Development in Yantai.

The laboratory will focus on making innovations and breakthroughs in cutting-edge and disruptive drug development technologies with the support of the Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica of Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The laboratory is expected to form a scientific and technological research team of 500 members and gather around 1,000 drug development professionals within three to five years. In Yantai city and Shandong province, it will generate a number of key scientific research achievements.

It will also contribute to the construction of a new world-class drug R&D innovation hub and China's ""Northern Blue Medicine Valley"" that has significant international influence.

Building Shandong provincial laboratories is a major measure for Shandong to develop itself into a higher-level innovative province, introduce more high-end scientific and technological resources, and expedite the replacement of old growth drivers with new ones.

During the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-25), Shandong province aims to develop 10 provincial-level laboratories. Yantai has received permission to construct two of them. They are the Shandong Provincial Laboratory of New Drug Development and the Shandong Provincial Laboratory of Advanced Material and Green Manufacturing."

"Shandong province in East China is regarded as an important cradle of Chinese civilization, having generated a diverse range of civilizations, including refined and sophisticated art and handicrafts.

In recent years, the province has made significant efforts to support the innovative development of rich traditional culture, which has aided not only in its preservation and transmission, but also in the revitalization of the province's rural areas.

Earlier this month, Shandong released an action plan for promoting high-quality development of the province's traditional handicrafts, which stressed that the development of handicrafts should ensure direct benefits to the people.

Shandong is rich in intangible cultural heritage items. According to official data, eight items have been added to the Representative List of Humanity's Intangible Cultural Heritage. The province is home to 186 and 1,073 intangible cultural heritage items on the national and provincial lists, respectively, making it one of the most popular in the country.

Shandong's efforts in historical preservation, inheritance, and innovation are exemplified by the ever-lasting fine culture that can be preserved.

A piece of Yantai paper-cutting work caught the audience's attention at this year's China Central Television (CCTV) Spring Festival Gala.

Kernel carving is a traditional micro-sculpture exclusively owned by China. Carved on the kernels of fruits or nuts, these handicrafts can be shaped into the figures of humans, animals, landscapes and pavilions. Folk artisan Wang Xude developed this art based on his predecessors' experiences, marking a new milestone in kernel carving.

Liang Qiaoyan, a Yantai paper-cutting art inheritor, displays her tiger-themed paper-cutting piece, which was selected for the CCTV Spring Festival Gala's culture performance honor. [Photo/Dazhong News]

A piece of Yantai paper-cutting work catches the audience's attention at this year's CCTV Spring Festival Gala. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Kernel carving is a traditional micro-sculpture exclusively owned by China. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

Laoshan Mountain, Qingdao (崂山景区 láo shān jǐng qū) Laoshan Mountain in Qingdao, Shandong province [Photo qdlaoshan.cn] Laoshan Mountain in Qingdao, Shandong province, with its tallest peak rising 1,132.7 meters above the surrounding plateau and bordering Laoshan Bay in the east and close by the Yellow Sea in the south, is known as the "first famous maritime mountain", paying homage to the fact that it is the highest mountain on the coast of China. The mountain has both stunning views and a varied history. It has an abundance of verdant trees, some of which have longer histories than most nations, including cypresses dating back to the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220), elms from the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and gingkoes from the Song Dynasty (960-1279). Besides, the mountain has rocks that vary in shape so much that they can look like humans or animals, while others are known as "Beauty Rock" or "Fingers Rock". It is also known for its mineral water, which is said to invigorate digestion and circulation – perhaps one of the reasons Tsingtao Beer is so popular. Laoshan Taoism has a very long history. It exerted a great influence as early as 2,300 years ago, but the Laoshan School of Taoism was formally founded by Zhang Lianfu in 140 BC. Dating back 2,100 years, Taiqing Palace is the oldest and largest Taoist temple on Laoshan Mountain. Built during the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 24), the complex reached its current size – 30,000 square meters with 147 structures – during the Song Dynasty. The famous writer Pu Songling (1640-1715) in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) once visited Laoshan Mountain and was inspired to write two famous novels, Fragrant Jade and The Taoist of Laoshan Mountain. Fragrant Jade is about flowers changing into girls and falling in love with a young man. The Taoist of Laoshan Mountain describes a Taoist who gained the ability to pass through walls. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Ideal Sightseeing Season: March to November Opening Hours: 7:30 am – 5:30 pm Ticket Price: 180 yuan ($26.09) from April 1 to Dec 31 120 yuan from Jan 1 to March 31 Address: No 29 Meiling Road, Laoshan district, Qingdao, Shandong Website: http: www.qdlaoshan.cn Index-index.html (Chinese) Online Booking: http: dp.qdlaoshan.cn fore index?code=949418# Note: 1. Wear comfortable and warm clothes when climbing the mountains.2. Read the detailed information on different traveling routes on the mountains.3. Buy travel insurance. A clear stream flows across Laoshan Mountain [Photo qdlaoshan.cn] Taiqing Palace in autumn [Photo qdlaoshan.cn]

Qingzhou Ancient City, Weifang (青州古城旅游区 qīng zhōu gǔ chéng lǚ yóu qū) Bucai Gate of the ancient city of Qingzhou [Photo gujiuzhou.com] Qingzhou Ancient City Tourist Area in Weifang, Shandong province is composed of three parts: the ancient city of Qingzhou, Yunmen Mountains, and Qingzhou Museum. Qingzhou, with a history of more than 7,000 years, witnessed the rise and decline of six ancient cities. Qingzhou is a well-preserved ancient city that was mainly built in the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, with numerous old buildings, memorial archways, and more than 120 ancient streets. Zhaode Ancient Street, with a history of some 800 years, was chosen as one of the first batch of Top 10 National Historical and Cultural Streets in 2009. Wannian Bridge, which was built in the Song Dynasty (960-1279), is still in good condition. The harmonious coexistence of people from different ethnic groups, including Han, Hui and Manchu, has helped Qingzhou form a unique culture. It is the birthplace of the world's first stringed instrument – Qingzhou cuoqin – and home to more than 70 intangible cultural heritages. Li Qingzhao (1084-1155), one of the leading female poets of the Song Dynasty, lived there for 18 years, leaving behind many literary works. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: Open all day long Ticket Price: 60 yuan ($8.70) Address: Qingzhou city, Weifang, Shandong Note: 1. There is a tourist service center at the entrance of the ancient city of Qingzhou and at the Qingzhou Museum.2. Buy travel insurance. One of the ancient streets in Qingzhou [Photo sdta.cn] Zhao Xingtang (left) plays the cuoqing, a kind of traditional zither-like instrument, in the ancient city of Qingzhou. [Photo by Wang Qian chinadaily.com.cn]

World's Best Spring Scenic Area, Jinan (济南市天下第一泉景区 jǐ nán tiān xià dì yī quán jǐng qū） Baotu Spring [Photo VCG] The World’s Best Spring Scenic Area, located in Jinan, known as the “City of Springs” and the capital of Shandong province, is composed of one river (the moat), one lake (Daming Lake), and three springs (Baotu Spring, Black Tiger Spring and Five Dragon Pool). The scenic area, covering 3 square kilometers, gathers more than 70 springs, including the most famous ones: Baotu Spring, Black Tiger Spring and Five Dragon Pool. Of all the springs in Jinan, Baotu Spring stands out as it throws up water several meters in the air, a scene that has always been the first of the eight must-sees in Jinan since the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. The spring water that pours out also forms the moat and Daming Lake. Besides the beautiful natural landscape, the area also has a profound historic and cultural heritage, with ancient walls, temples, gardens, mansions and gardens dating back to the Yuan (1271-1368), Ming and Qing dynasties, such as the former residence of Li Qingzhao (1084-1151), one of the leading female poets of the Song Dynasty (960-1127). This scenic area has been a landmark in Jinan for generations and one of the most popular places to visit in the city. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: Baotu Spring and Five Dragon Pool: 7 am – 7 pm from April 10 to Oct 9 7 am – 6 pm from Oct 10 to April 9Daming Lake: 5 am – 10 pmBlack Tiger Spring and the moat: All day long Ticket Price: Baotu Spring: 40 yuan ($5.80)Five Dragon Pool: 5 yuanBlack Tiger Spring, Daming Lake and the moat: Free Address: Baotu Spring: No1 Baotuquan South Road, Shizhong district, Jinan, Shandong provinceBlack Tiger Spring: No 3 Banbian Street, Lixia district, Jinan, Shandong provinceFive Dragon Pool: No 18 Kuangshi Street, Tianqiao district, Jinan, Shandong provinceDaming Lake: No 271 Daminghu Road, Jinan, Shandong province Website: http: www.txdyq.cn (Chinese) Note: 1. Be careful not to fall into the water.2. Schedule your tour in advance.3. Buy travel insurance. Five Dragon Pool [Photo VCG] Daming Lake [Photo VCG]

"The Yellow River Estuary National Park is being built at the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying, East China's Shandong province, and represents a significant step forward for Shandong in promoting environmental conservation and high-quality development of the Yellow River Basin.

Earlier this year, Shandong released a development plan to build the Yellow River Estuary National Park, which will cover 2,152 square kilometers of marine area and 1,371 sq km of land. The national park will be the first in the country to boast both land and marine areas.

During the winter and spring seasons, flocks of migrating birds arrive in rapid succession in the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying, which has become a haven for migrant birds.

""Birds are very sensitive to the natural environment, and their well-being can reflect the environmental conditions. In recent years, the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve has witnessed a growing number of birds, which proves that the ecological environment at the reserve is becoming better and better,"" said Zhu Shuyu, a wetland researcher at the Yellow River Delta Natural Reserve Administrative Bureau.

The construction of the national park will bring great benefits to wetland conservation and restoration, and improve the habitats for birds, according to Zhu.

The national park will also play an important role in protecting and restoring biodiversity of the Yellow River Delta, according to Liu Jing, director of the environmental monitoring center at the nature reserve.

Liu said that the increasing number of birds breeding at the nature reserve shows that the ecological systems there are improving. She added that the good environment has enriched biodiversity, and according to the delta nature reserve, the wetlands are now home to 1,630 wild animal species and 685 plant species.

The Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying, East China's Shandong province, is becoming a paradise for migrant birds during winter and spring seasons. [Photo/Jinan News]"

Firefly Stream Cave and Underground Grand Canyon, Shandong province(萤火虫水洞•地下大峡谷旅游区 yíng huǒ chóng shuǐ dòng dì xià dà xiá gǔ lǚ yóu qū) Location: Yishui county, Linyi city, Shandong province Website: www.rdlylg.comScenic Spot Level: AAAAAOpening Hours:8:50-16:00 (winter)7:30-18:00 (summer)Ticket Price:General admission:160 yuan ($24.71) person Notes:1. Children under 1.2 meters (exclusive) in height, senior citizens aged 70 and above, and servicemen can enter free of charge.2. Half-price concessions are available for children between 1.2 meters and 1.5 meters in height, people aged between 60 and 70, people who have a disability, full-time university undergraduates, and primary and secondary school students. Tourists take photos in the Firefly Stream Cave. [Photo rdlylg.com] Located in the Yimeng Mountain Area, Yishui county, East China’s Shandong province, the Firefly Stream Cave, with stalactites in various shapes, is a rare wonder in Asia. It is home to an underground karst lake with a water volume of 350,000 cubic meters and a large ecological butterfly valley, and is a large comprehensive eco-tourism area integrating leisure and sightseeing, as well as scientific education and expeditions. An underground karst cave with a total length of 1,200 meters formed 65 to 230 million years ago is the most famous and mysterious spot in this tourism area. The cave not only has a large number of peculiar features, such as stalactites and strange rocks, but is also home to a kind of firefly that only lives in this kind of damp environment. The insects resemble tens of thousands of twinkling stars, delighting anyone lucky enough to see them. As the temperature of the Firefly Stream Cave is maintained at 17 C to 20 C all year round, both the environment and the water quality of the cave are very suitable for the breeding of giant salamanders. Currently, there are more than 100 giant salamanders in the cave, one of whom is nearly 100 years old! This animal is very rarely seen in China. The Underground Grand Canyon is a mysterious and oddly-shaped karst cave kingdom.[Photo rdlylg.com] The Underground Grand Canyon is a mysterious and oddly-shaped karst cave kingdom, with a depth of nearly 100 meters. There are more than 100 scenic spots in the cave due to stalactites of various shapes, including "One River", "Nine Springs", "Nine Palaces", "Twelve Waterfalls", and "Twelve Gorges". As the underground river has a length of more than 6,100 meters, the cave is certified as the "longest cave for rafting" by the Shanghai China Records Headquarters. Tourists can drift along in a boat to experience unpredictable ups and downs and various thrills. The underground river drifting also puts tourists in touch with the wildness of nature, meeting what is perhaps a deep human need. Tourists enjoy the boat drifting in the Underground Grand Canyon [Photo rdlylg.com] In addition, tourists can take a rail car from the front of Longxiang Pavilion on the top of Longgang Mountain to appreciate the idyllic scenery on the way to the Underground Grand Canyon. This tourist attraction also takes advantage of its constant temperature (18 C) to develop tourism products such as cave-stored wine.

Huaxia City, Weihai (威海华夏城 wēi hǎi huá xià chéng) The entrance to Weihai Huaxia City in Weihai, a coastal city in Shandong province. [Photo VCG] Weihai Huaxia City, located in Weihai, a coastal city in Shandong province, is a large ecological culture-themed scenic area, showcasing the classic and traditional cultures of China. Since 2003, 44 mining pits have been restored and become part of the scenic area, as part of a drive to integrate environmental improvement and tourism development. The scenic spots built on every pit have different themes, including one fully displaying the historic culture of the era of emperors Yao, Shun and Yu, dating back to approximately 2,600 BC. Another shows the folk culture of eastern Shandong, and the underground Air Defense Education Museum. A cultural highlight of the scenic area is the large open-air performance space with real landscape as part of the show to ensure the best display of local culture and traditions. Weihai Huaxia City is one of the best places for visitors in the region to sample traditional Chinese culture. It has become a tourist hotspot in the city. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: 8 am – 5 pm (entry until 16:40) Ticket Price: 80 yuan ($11.60) Address: No 1 Huaxia Road, Huancui district, Weihai, Shandong Note: 1. The closing time of the Air Defense Education Museum in the scenic area is 4:30 pm.2. Buy travel insurance. A statue of Guanyin bodhisattva (Goddess of Mercy) at the Weihai Huaxia City. [Photo VCG] An art performance staged at Weihai Huaxia City. [Photo VCG]

"All teaching on campus at primary and secondary schools in Weihai, Shandong province, has been suspended and must be conducted online because of a COVID-19 outbreak that hit the city on Monday, officials said at a news conference on Tuesday.

Weihai reported two locally transmitted confirmed cases and 14 asymptomatic carriers on Monday.

All the infections involve people who attended a training project in Weihai and their relatives, except for one asymptomatic carrier who was detected during routine testing of key groups.

The genome sequencing of the first case in the outbreak found the Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

Clusters of infection have appeared, and more cases are likely, the officials said. An epidemiological investigation is underway."

"Artist Ding Jiao in Jinan, Shandong province, creates comics highlighting the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games on Monday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Ding Jiao, an artist at a company in Jinan, Shandong province, created a series of comics on the Olympic and Paralympic Games as a way of cheering for the athletes, including the ongoing ones in Beijing.

The 31-year-old Ding, who works for Expo Huachuang Animation Media Co, was encouraged after the company received a letter from the International Paralympic Committee last week inviting her to create a new comic series for the Games.

""We learned that Ding Jiao, the original artist of your company, has created a lot of comics about Paralympic athletes and has played a very positive role in the promotion of Paralympic sports,"" the letter said.

""We hope more people will get excited about the Paralympic Games through your work,"" it said.

Ding created a series of 96 comics for the Chinese athletes who attended the 2020 Tokyo Summer Paralympic Games last year. These comics were popular and were collected and forwarded by a lot of athletes, the company said.

""I'm also physically challenged, so I know how hard it is for physically challenged people to fight for their dreams,"" Ding said.

""I hope to depict with my pens the happiest and most inspiring moments of the Chinese athletes and spread the Paralympic spirit.""

Ding Jiao, an artist in Jinan, Shandong province, works on comics related to the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games in Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A comic created by Ding Jiao [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"[Video/Iqilu News]

The traditional Chinese lunar calendar divides the year into 24 solar terms. More than 2,000 years ago, ancient Chinese people created this overall framework to mark the annual passage of time based on observations of the sun's motion. Nowadays, the 24 solar terms not only apply to farming, but also guide Chinese people in everyday life. Click the video to enjoy the beautiful scenery of Shandong in 24 solar terms!"

Qufu Minggucheng (Three Confucius Sites), Jining (曲阜明故城（三孔）旅游区 qū fù míng ɡù chéng (sān kǒng) lǚ yóu qū) The Confucius Temple in Qufu, a county-level city in Jining, East China's Shandong province. [Photo VCG] Minggucheng, namely Ancient City in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), is renowned for its three Confucius sites, namely the Confucius Temple, the Confucius Forest, and the Kong Family Mansion, which were added to UNESCO's World Natural Heritage list in December 1994. Therefore, the city in Qufu is also called Three Confucius Sites Tourist Area. The Confucius Temple in Qufu is the largest and most renowned one in China for the famous thinker, educator and founder of Confucianism, who lived at the end of the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC). The temple was first built in the year of 478 BC, the second year after Confucius's death, and was renovated and expanded dozens of times over the following centuries. Covering an area of some 327 mu (21.8 hectares), it is one of the top three ancient architectural complexes in China; the other two are Beijing's Palace Museum and Chengde Imperial Summer Resort in Hebei province. The Confucius Forest is where the tombs of Confucius and many of his descendants are found. Covering an area of more than 3,000 mu and with some 100,000 graves discovered there, it is the largest, oldest and best-preserved family tomb and artificial garden. The Kong Family Mansion, located east of the Confucius Temple, is the place where descendants of Confucius live. There are also other scenic spots in the tourist area, like Nishan Mountain, the birthplace of Confucius. It has always been one of the best places for visitors to experience Confucianism and enjoy ancient Chinese architecture. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: Confucius Temple and Confucius Forest: 8 am – 5:30 pm (entry until 5:10 pm)Kong Family Mansion: 8 am – 6 pm (entry until 5:30 pm)Nishan Mountain Confucius Temple: 9 am – 4:30 pmOther scenic spots: 8:30 am – 5 pm Ticket Price: Coupon ticket for three Confucius sites: 150 yuan ($21.75)Confucius Temple: 90 yuanKong Family Mansion: 60 yuanConfucius Forest: 40 yuanNishan Mountain Confucius Temple: 50 yuan Address: Shendao Road, Qufu, Jining, Shandong province Website: http: www.uqufu.com (Chinese) Note: 1. The scenic area implements the real-name system for buying tickets, so bring valid identification.2. The office hours of the ticketing hall are 7:40 am to 5 pm.3. A ticket is valid for seven days from the date of sale, but you can only enter the scenic area once.4. Schedule your tourist route in advance.5. Buy travel insurance. The memorial archway at the Confucius Forest [Photo IC] A building at the Kong Family Mansion [Photo IC]

Mount Tai, Tai'an (泰山景区 tài shān jǐng qū) The peak of Mount Tai [Photo VCG] Mount Tai, located in the middle of Shandong province and spanning three cities (Tai'an, Jinan and Zibo), covers a total area of 24,200 hectares. Known as the eastern mountain among the Five Great Mountains of China, Mount Tai was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987, and honored as a "World Geopark" in 2006. In China, Mount Tai was among the first group of National Parks of China, is a 5A-class tourist attraction, and is on the top 10 list of national civilized spots in China. Mount Tai is well known for its spectacular natural scenery, including craggy cliffs, deep canyons, grotesque peaks with strange rocks, luxuriant vegetation, flowing springs and twittering birds. The mountain also has marvelous unique wonders: the rising sun at dawn, the jade plate of the sea of clouds, and rosy clouds at sunset. Since ancient times, Mount Tai has been a sacred place for emperors from all dynasties to hold worship ceremonies and offer sacrifices to Heaven. Enshrined by such worship ceremonies, it also attracted believers of both Confucianism and Taoism, men of letters and famous people whose residence and visits left more than 1,000 places of interest behind, such as inscription rocks of the Diamond Sutra. It also became a holy mountain for worship for Chinese people, and is a symbol of the Chinese spirit. Because of the unique integration of human civilization and natural landscape, Mount Tai has been revered by Chinese people for thousands of years and has become renowned all over the world for its beauty. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Ideal Sightseeing Season: February to November Opening Hours: Open all day Ticket Price: 125 yuan ($18.12) (February to November) 100 yuan (December and January) Address: Red Gate route: No 111 Hongmen Road, Taishan district, Tai'an, Shandong Tianwaicun route: Tiandi Square No 79 Longtan Road, Taishan district, Tai'an, Shandong Taohua Valley route: No 54 Hongmen Road, Taishan district, Tai'an, Shandong Website: http: www.mount-tai.com.cn (Chinese) http: www.mount-tai.com.cn english index.asp (English) Online Booking: http: shop.mount-tai.com.cn Note: 1. Wear comfortable, warm clothes when climbing the mountain.2. Be aware of the detailed information about different climbing routes in case you get lost. 3. Buy travel insurance. A spectacular sunrise on Mount Tai [Photo VCG] The rock inscriptions on Mount Tai [Photo VCG]

"A platform to deepen cooperation between Shandong, African countries was launched in Jinan, Shandong province on Feb 28.

The platform was initiated by the Foreign Affairs Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government and it will join with industry alliances, business associations and other institutions in Shandong to provide policy interpretation, resource matching and intellectual support services for cooperation between Shandong and African countries.

Li Yongsen, deputy director of the Foreign Affairs Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government, said at the launching ceremony that Africa is rich in natural resources and has a vast market and huge potential for development.

""Under the new development pattern of domestic and international dual circulation, strengthening cooperation with Africa is of great significance for Shandong to promote a high-level opening-up to the outside world,"" Li said.

Ali Seddiki, advisor to minister delegate to the head of government of Morocco, delivered a speech via an online video at the launching ceremony, congratulating the launch of the Africa Bridge service platform and welcoming Shandong enterprises to start businesses in Morocco.

""Shandong and Morocco have great cooperation potential in the fields of automobile machinery manufacturing, new energy utilization, agricultural development and trade, and infrastructure construction,"" said Reda Oudghiri Idrissi, economic counselor of the Moroccan Embassy in China.

He hoped that the two sides will make use of the Africa Bridge service platform to promote the cooperation between Shandong and Morocco as a model of China-Morocco and China-Africa cooperation.

Attendees at the launching ceremony of the Africa Bridge service platform pose for a group photo on Feb 28. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Children in Yantai, Shandong province, responded warmly to the local education authority's promotion of ice and snow sports after getting some experience.

When the central government called for more participation in light of the Beijing Winter Olympics, the education bureau of Yantai's Fushan district began offering free classes in winter sports since 2019 to pupils in kindergarten through junior middle school.

""My son took an ice skating class in the first half of last year and he liked the sport, so he is taking classes regularly,"" said Tang Jingyi, a mother.

More than 10,000 students in the district have taken classes to experience winter sports, including short-track speed skating, ice hockey, figure skating and curling over the past three years, the bureau said.

Ice and snow sports have been added to the compulsory classes of physical education at the district's primary schools.

Seven primary and junior middle schools in the district are rated as national-level schools characterized by ice and snow sports. Nine schools have organized ice hockey teams.

Video by Sun Yuzhuoran"

Penglai Pavilion, Yantai (蓬莱阁 péng lái gé) Penglai Pavilion is situated on a cliff in the northwest of Penglai, a county-level city in Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo VCG] The Penglai Pavilion, situated on a cliff in the northwest of Penglai, a county-level city in Yantai, Shandong province, is an ancient architectural complex that covers a total area of 32,800 square meters. The pavilion's main building was first constructed in 1061 during the Song Dynasty (960-1279). Renovations and expansions in different styles were made in the following dynasties, with several temples, palaces, attics and pavilions added. The pavilion looks mysterious due to the historical story of Emperor Qingshihuang (259 BC-210 BC), the first person to unify China. Qingshihuang sought an elixir of life in the area, and the legendary story of the eight immortals crossing the sea occurred there. It is also known as a fairyland on earth. One marvelous spectacle of the Penglai Pavilion is the mirage, which attracts countless tourists every year. Therefore, it and three other buildings: Tengwang Pavilion, Huanghe Tower and Yueyang Tower, are called the Four Great Towers of Ancient China. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: 7:30 am – 6:30 pm in peak season (from April to October)8 am – 5 pm in off-season (from November to next March) Ticket Price: 120 yuan ($17.39) Address: No 7 Yingbin Road, Penglai city, Yantai, Shandong Note: 1. Pay attention to the weather forecast.2. Buy travel insurance. Penglai Pavilion [Photo VCG]

Longkou Nanshan, Yantai (龙口南山景区 lóng kǒu nán shān jǐng qū) Longkou Nanshan Tourist Resort, located at Longkou, a county-level city in Yantai, Shandong province, is a comprehensive resort area integrating religion, folk culture, tourism and business, shopping and leisure, food and accommodation, as well as physical activities and entertainment. It has three scenic spots: a religious culture park, a theme park and the Donghai tourist resort. The Nanshan Giant Buddha in the religious culture park is the world's largest bronze Buddha (38.66 meters in height and 380 tons in weight). A museum covering an area of 1,800 square meters, displays the origin of Buddhism in India, its spread and localization in China, and its influence on China's traditional culture through pictures, cultural relics and words. Happy Valley theme park has constructed many scenic spots, including an equestrian club, a pet park and a waterfall square. Donghai Tourism Resort, with a coastline of 20 kilometers, is a comprehensive center for cultural experiences, sightseeing, recreation and exercise. The Nanshan Yacht Club there was the first yacht club in Yantai. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: 7 am – 8 pm Ticket Price: 120 yuan ($17.39) Address: Nanshan Industrial Park, Dongjiang Street, Longkou city, Yantai, Shandong province Note: 1. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.2. Plan your travel route and learn about the scenic spots in advance as it is a large area.3. Buy travel insurance. The Nanshan Courtyard in the theme park at Longkou Nanshan Tourist Resort. [Photo IC]

"In Matao village, Alexander Frey, a Swiss post-90s entrepreneur who has lived in Jinan for eight years, witnessed a different Spring Festival.

""It's really a gorgeous experience of the traditional Chinese New Year, especially in the village. It's so different. People dance and sing. It's the charms of a village,"" said Frey when he experienced yangko, a popular rural folk dance with locals in Matao on Jan 29.

Click the video to learn more about Frey's one-day adventure in Matao village during the Spring Festival. [Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

With several years of effort, Maotao village in Jinan's Changqing district has evolved into a modern village with rural tourism. In 2015, the village established a tourism cooperative, utilizing its natural resources and traditional culture to develop rural tourism, which has attracted a large number of visitors and increased local income significantly.

Frey learned to make Chinese dumplings and experienced the city's intangible culture heritage – paper-cutting and a local specialty – sour pancake – on that day.

He also paid a visit to the village's tea estate and sampled some of the local brew.

Matao village began growing tea in 2009 and founded a cooperative in 2013, according to Xue Lili, general manager of Matao Village Tourism and Resorts Specialized Cooperative. The village has now planted tea trees over a large region.

""Life in the village will get better and better,"" Frey stated as his journey came to an end.

Frey shows his paper-cutting artwork in Matao village, Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Frey experiences yangko with local villagers in Matao village, Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Frey makes dumplings with locals in Matao village, Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Xue Lili, general manager of Matao Village Tourism and Resort Specialized Cooperative introcues the village's tea industry to Frey at a tea planation in Matao village, Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Frey enjoys tea and chatting with locals in Matao village, Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

Liugong Island, Weihai (刘公岛景区 liú gōng dǎo jǐng qū) The full view of Liugong Island [Photo liugongdao.com.cn] Liugong Island, covering an area of 3.15 square kilometers, is located on the northeastern edge of Shandong Peninsula at the mouth of Weihai Bay. It was designated as a key protection site of cultural relics by the State Council in 1988. The island played an extremely important role in national defense. Known as the "birthplace of China's first modern navy", it was the main battlefield for the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95). It offers many places of historic and cultural interest, including the ruins of the Warring States Period (475-221 BC) and the European architecture built when the place was occupied by Great Britain from 1898 to 1930. The Museum of the Sino-Japanese War 1894-1895 on the island is a national museum founded in 1985 to memorialize the First Sino-Japanese War and to protect and manage the 28 historic sites on the island. A replica of Dingyuan, a warship from the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and seen as a symbol of patriotism, is also available for visitors to pay their respects to heroic Chinese sailors. The island was also the first national-level marine forest park in China, due to its great environment, beautiful scenery and various kinds of animals. It has the reputation of being a natural oxygen bar. Scenic Spot Level: AAAAA Opening Hours: 7 am – 5 pm Ticket Price: 130 yuan ($18.85, covering round-trip boat tickets and attractions) Address: No 101-2 Binhai North Road, Huancui district, Weihai, Shandong Website: http: www.liugongdao.com.cn (Chinese) http: www.liugongdao.com.cn index.php?m=content&c=index&a=lists&catid=104 (English) Note: 1. The early boat leaves at 8 am. The last boat into the scenic area leaves at 2:30 pm and the last one out of the scenic area leaves at 4:30 pm.2. The replica warship Dingyuan is open from 8 am – 4:30 pm.3. The scenic area implements the real-name system for buying tickets, so bring valid identification. 4. Buy travel insurance. The China Lettering Art Museum on the island, which opened in 2012 with more than 200 works of art, is transformed from the distillation tower when Great Britain occupied the island from 1898 to 1930. [Photo liugongdao.com.cn] The replica of Dingyuan, a warship from the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), is berthed at Weihai Port opposite the Liugong Island. [Photo liugongdao.com.cn]

"Women make bobo steamed buns decorated with jujubes at an agricultural product cooperative in Cuijia village in Wendeng district, Weihai, Shandong province, in January last year. [Photo/CHINA DAILY]

Shandong province farmer Hou Nianying has had a busy winter, with orders for special steamed buns known as bobo increasing as the Lunar New Year approached.

""This year is the Year of the Tiger, so bobo made in the shape of a tiger are very popular,"" she said.

The 59-year-old, who lives in Weihai's Wendeng district, said many people bought tiger-shaped bobo for their children in the hope they would be as vigorous as tigers this year.

Bobo are wheat buns that are larger than regular steamed buns. Skilled housewives can make them in the shape of different animals and figures, and decorate them with red jujubes and colorful flowers.

Wendeng's bobo-making craftsmanship was included in Shandong's provincial-level intangible cultural heritage list in 2019.

""We make bobo by hand, and all the raw materials used are natural ingredients,"" Hou said.

Bobo get their colors from different vegetables and grains. Pumpkin is used to make yellow ones, spinach for green and sweet potato for purple. Black bean and red bean are used to decorate bobo.

Hou remembers making bobo with her mother and aunts each Spring Festival when she was a little girl, something she still does to this day.

""Every household in our village makes bobo when there is a happy thing to celebrate,"" she said.

To turn the intangible cultural heritage into a sector that could enrich local farmers, an agricultural product cooperative was founded in the district's Cuijia village in 2020 with local government support.

One hundred families in the village, including Hou's, joined the cooperative by investing some money. They share part of its net income according to their investment.

""In addition to the dividends I receive from the cooperative, I can earn over 100 yuan ($15.76) a day by working for the cooperative,"" Hou said.

Before making bobo at the cooperative, workers are trained to make a standardized product, down to details such as how many jujubes to use when decorating them.

""We are required to put on outfits including masks and caps to ensure good food hygiene,"" Hou said.

Cui Xiliang, the village's Party secretary, said bobo production is now incessant, with people buying them for weddings and birthdays as well as Spring Festival.

Wendeng's district government released supportive measures to develop the bobo sector in November, and bobo producers can now apply for subsidies to develop products and upgrade production facilities.

To ensure the quality of bobo, the district's quality supervision agency conducts regular tests."

"A hydrogen-powered ski-waxing truck made in Shandong province is parked in the capital. [Photo/China Daily]

Built using state-of-the-art technology, China's first independently developed ski-waxing truck is in service for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

It runs on a hydrogen fuel cell, making it a zero emissions vehicle.

The truck is part of efforts by Shandong province, where it was developed and manufactured, to promote greater use of hydrogen energy.

The Shandong provincial government signed an agreement with the Ministry of Science and Technology last year to set up research and development projects with a focus on exploring efficient ways of using hydrogen to power a wide range of applications including transportation, ports, industrial parks and residential communities.

""The projects will contribute to national goals, under which peak carbon emissions should be reached before 2030 and carbon neutrality before 2060,"" said Han Shaohua, deputy director of the high-tech office of the Shandong Provincial Department of Science and Technology.

For its initial project, Shandong will build an expressway, two ports, four industrial parks and five residential communities powered mainly by hydrogen over the next four years. Three centers for popularizing the use of clean energy, and to explain how hydrogen is produced and used, will also be built.

This first stage will focus on developing core technologies in hydrogen purification and its production through electrolysis to ensure that China has abundant quantities of hydrogen, said Xu Zichun, director of the National Fuel Cell Technology Innovation Center. ""With this project, we seek to test and master a number of independently developed core technologies and products, and to promote the large-scale application of hydrogen energy,"" Xu said.

Shandong has been ramping up efforts to produce, store, transport and use the clean energy source since last year.

Twenty-two hydrogen fueling stations have been put into service, with daily supply capacity reaching 20,000 kilograms. More than 900 hydrogen-powered vehicles, including buses, forklifts and refrigerated trucks are now on the road, the department stated on Jan 6.

The province launched its first hydrogen-powered intercity vehicle network last June, when 170 cold-chain and slag trucks were put into service.

The vehicles travel between the eastern city of Qingdao and Linyi city in the west, and are expected to help reduce the province's overall carbon emissions by 20,000 metric tons a year, according to the operating team at the Qingdao International Academician Park.

A batch of hydrogen-fueled heavy tractors was put into service in January at the port in Rizhao city. The tractors are specially designed for ports and boast low hydrogen consumption. They can be refueled in five minutes and drive over 300 kilometers on one tank.

When it comes to launching the energy transition, ports are key battlegrounds because they are energy hubs that bring together all types of transportation, including sea, land, waterway and air, said Zhang Feng, deputy general manager of Qingdao Qianwan United Container Terminal of Shandong Port Group.

""We are participating in the project to develop port-based clean energy supply systems by using abundant byproduct hydrogen to replace fossil fuels,"" Zhang said.

The company began constructing a hydrogen fueling station at its port on Dec 29.

""We plan to build an integrated hydrogen energy supply system, three fueling stations and 10 hydrogen-powered rail-mounted gantry cranes within four years,"" Zhang said.

Shandong is also in the process of selecting a number of residential communities as demonstration areas for the use of hydrogen to heat homes. ""We will use measures like building exclusive hydrogen pipelines, as well as blending hydrogen with natural gas to heat homes,"" Han said."

"A technician checks excavators at an engineering equipment manufacturer in Yantai, Shandong province. [Photo by Tang Ke/For China Daily]

Shandong's gross domestic product (GDP) exceeded the 8 trillion yuan ($1.2 trillion) threshold in 2021, local authorities said at a news conference held on Jan 19.

The economic powerhouse in East China saw its GDP increase 8.3 percent year-on-year to 8.31 trillion yuan last year. The province's average GDP growth over the past two years reached 5.9 percent, above the national average of 5.1 percent.

In 2021, the added value of the province's primary industry reached 602.9 billion yuan, an increase of 7.5 percent over the previous year and an average increase of 5.1 percent over the past two years.

The added value of the secondary industry stood at 3.32 trillion yuan, an increase of 7.2 percent over the previous year and an average increase of 5.2 percent over the past two years.

The added value of its tertiary industry was 4.39 trillion yuan, an increase of 9.2 percent over the previous year and an average increase of 6.5 percent over the past two years.

The province's efforts to empower traditional industries with cutting-edge technologies as well as industrial transformation and upgrading have paid off. The added value of industries above designated size increased by 9.6 percent year-on-year, with an average growth of 7.3 percent over the past two years, while the added value of its high-tech manufacturing sector increased by 18.5 percent year-on-year, with an average growth of 14.1 percent over the past two years.

The province's high-end service sector is booming. The service sector contributed 59.5 percent to the province's economic growth. From January to November 2021, the revenue of services above designated size reached 1.03 trillion yuan, up 26.3 percent over the previous year and up 13.8 percent on average over the past two years.

Targeted and efficient investment has been a hallmark of the province's efforts. Investment in fixed assets grew by 6 percent over the previous year and the two-year average growth was 4.8 percent. Investment in manufacturing rose 13.1 percent and investment in real estate increased 3.9 percent. Investment in high-tech industries increased by 10 percent. Investment in health, education and other social sectors increased by double digits.

The province has been ramping up efforts to maintain employment and increase incomes, so as to improve the wellbeing of residents.

Last year, 1.24 million new urban jobs were created, exceeding the annual target of 1.1 million. The registered urban unemployment rate was 2.94 percent, 0.16 percentage points lower than the previous year. The per capita disposable income of residents in the province was 35,705 yuan, an increase of 8.6 percent over the previous year and an average increase of 6.3 percent over the past two years."

"A US cargo ship docks at the Qingdao Port, Shandong province. [Photo by Yu Shaoyue/For China Daily]

JINAN - East China's Shandong province saw its foreign trade surge 32.4 percent year-on-year to 2.93 trillion yuan ($460.7 billion) in 2021, local authorities said on Monday.

The province's exports reached 1.76 trillion yuan last year, up 34.8 percent from 2020, and imports hit 1.17 trillion yuan, an increase of 29 percent, said Zhang Yibing, deputy head of Jinan Customs in the provincial capital. Both growth rates were above the national average.

The province also reported a 40.8 percent surge in trade with countries along the Belt and Road. The figure hit 937.6 billion yuan, which accounted for 32 percent of the provincial total in 2021.

Trade with 14 other member countries of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership reached 1.03 trillion yuan last year, up 32.9 percent from 2020."

"Shandong province has set up a team to investigate illegal villas built in mountainous areas of southern Jinan, the provincial capital, Dazhong Daily reported.

The issue was exposed by the media on Thursday.

The area of the Taishan Mountains is an important ecological and water conservation area for Jinan, working as the main source of groundwater for the city. Jinan is well-known for the hundreds of springs that gush across the city. The city has made the protection of springs a top priority.

The illegal villas have been encroaching in the area, have created soil problems and destroyed groundwater conservation areas, posing a threat to the springs, Economic Information Newspaper reported.

Most of the villas were built between 2003 an 2015. Under the supervision of central environmental authorities, Jinan has been working to remove illegal villas since 2017. But after four years, only some of them have been demolished, and thousands remain standing. Some new ones are under construction, news reports said.

Shandong officials said the province will act resolutely to rectify verified problems in accordance with regulations, discipline and law. Investigation results will be made to public in a timely manner, they said."

"The development planning for the Huang-Bohai New Area in the coastal city of Yantai was approved by the Shandong Provincial People's Government, according to a document issued by the Shandong Provincial Development and Reform Commission on Dec 31.

As one of the four provincial-level new areas, the Huang-Bohai New Area is expected to promote the implementation of major regional strategies, gather high-quality factors and resources, advance the integration of industry into the city, and nurture new growth engines for the local economy.

Compared with other provincial-level new areas in Shandong, the Huang-Bohai New Area will focus on the development of the marine economy, and the local government will develop the area into a new economic center for Yantai, according to the development and planning commission.

The establishment of the Huang-Bohai New Area is an innovative practice for Yantai to better serve the major national strategies. Yantai lies along the Yellow and Bohai seas, borders Liaodong peninsula, and is situated directly across the sea from Japan and South Korea. It is an important center in the Bohai Economic Rim area, one of China's largest economic circles.

The new area is expected to promote the ecological protection and high-quality development of Yantai, and create new advantages for development as well as advance the integrated development of Fushan and Penglai districts.

Efforts will also be made to promote the construction of infrastructure by providing funds and technologies. A tourism and leisure development belt and an ecological protection development zone will be built in the new area, aiming to make the area a renowned tourist destination, and create a better living environment for residents.

According to the development plan, the new area's GDP will hit 170 billion yuan ($26.67 billion) by 2025 with the output value of its marine economy expected to reach 100 billion yuan, and the permanent resident population will be about 650,000. Local authorities said that by 2025, the new area is expected to be an opening-up highland in Northeast Asia, and a digital and smart new area and a new marine city in Yantai and Shandong.

The coastal city of Yantai in East China's Shandong is an important center in the Bohai Economic Rim area, one of China's largest economic circles. [Photo/WeChat account: zsyttv]"

"Hisense Group, a Chinese electronics giant, has announced that it has won a bid in Ethiopia, in partnership with Shandong Hi-Speed Group, to provide intelligent solutions for public bus services in its capital, Addis Ababa.

This represents a solid step forward by Chinese companies in making inroads into the overseas smart traffic segment, executives and experts said.

""Hisense and its partner will improve Addis Ababa's public bus service with hardware and software for vehicle dispatching, real-time monitoring and information release by applying artificial intelligence, big data and cloud computing,"" said Zhang Sihai, president of Hisense TransTech, a subsidiary of Hisense Group.

The solutions aim to improve the efficiency of public transport as well as providing a better traveling and commuting experience, he added.

Public transportation is an important means of getting around for the city's 8 million residents. Addis Ababa is also home to the headquarters of the African Union.

""The upgrading of public transport is expected to play a major role in aiding passengers and in reducing disruption during peak hours,"" said Zhang during an interview last month.

The bid was Hisense's first for smart traffic business in an overseas market and will ""boost the company's confidence to seek a presence on the global stage in the segment"", he added.

The group, based in Qingdao, has taken the lead in China's intelligent transport industry, in which it has been involved since 1998. Hisense's innovative, integrated solutions for the industry have been applied in 169 cities nationwide.

According to the company, its rapid bus transit solutions account for 70 percent of domestic market share, and its sales of traffic light controller systems rank first in the country.

China's smart traffic sector is worth some 20 billion yuan ($3.13 billion), and ""tapping overseas markets is a necessary step in keeping (the company's) smart traffic business growing"", Zhang said.

The winning bid followed Hisense's nearly $1 billion acquisition of Siemens' Intelligent Traffic Systems, which provides solutions for effective road traffic management. The German group's traffic division, which has existed for over 100 years, is a world leader in intelligent traffic services and solutions.

While the acquisition allowed Hisense to get a hands-on understanding of Siemens' smart traffic products, Zhang said that some Hisense products have outperformed Siemens, including its traffic light controller systems and the artificial intelligence-powered monitor of traffic flows.

Wang Fang, deputy general manager of the international department at Hisense TransTech, said that the company is mainly developing its smart traffic business in African, Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative at present, adding that the company is biding its time before entering the European and American markets.

""We will face many challenges doing business overseas. For example, we have to design tailor-made products and solutions in accordance with each country's traffic regulations and culture,"" she said.

All the companies that attended the bidding for Addis Ababa's bus project were Chinese, which Guan Jizhen, deputy chairman of the China Intelligent Transportation Systems Association, said means that ""Chinese companies can compete with their overseas counterparts"".

However, he noted that there is still a long way to go for Chinese companies wishing to enter the overseas smart traffic market.

""The number of competitive products and the brand influence of Chinese companies on the international market is still insufficient,"" he said.

Guan suggested that Chinese companies should make more efforts to improve their technology and services and follow international standards, or even set their own global standards that others can follow."

"The Sino-South Korea Intangible Cultural Heritage Experience Week kicked off in the Economic Development Zone in Weihai, East China's Shandong province on Dec 31.

The activity, which is a key part of the 2021-2022 China-South Korea Year of Cultural Exchanges, will last for 10 days and conclude Jan 9. It consists of three main parts such as China-South Korea intangible cultural heritage shows. Intangible cultural heritage inheritors from the two countries will show visitors a wide range of colorful cultural activities such as sugar painting, carpentry, and costume culture.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of China-South Korea diplomatic relations, and the event is expected to strengthen cultural and people-to-people exchanges and push for greater development of cooperation in various areas between the two countries as well as help Weihai shape its global reputation.

Performers wear traditional Chinese and South Korean clothing at the Sino-South Korea Intangible Cultural Heritage Experience Week. [Photo/WeChat account: weihaifabu]

Visitors paint Chinese characters with an ink-soaked calligraphy brush. [Photo/WeChat account: weihaifabu]

Sugar painting is a popular attraction for both children and adults at the event. [Photo/WeChat account: weihaifabu"

"A hydrogen-powered ski-waxing truck made in Shandong province will serve athletes during the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong province, home to the first scientific and technological demonstration project for hydrogen energy in China, is ramping up efforts to produce, store, transport and use the clean energy resource.

It's part of a major move by the province to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

A total of 848 hydrogen-powered vehicles, including buses, forklifts and refrigerated trucks have taken to the road, according to the provincial department of science and technology.

This hydrogen refueling station is located in Zibo, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Twenty-two hydrogen refueling stations have been built in the province, with daily hydrogen supply capacity reaching 20,000 kilograms, it said.

""Shandong has abundant hydrogen byproduct resources, giving it a leading role in the development of hydrogen energy,"" said Han Shaohua, deputy head of the department's high-tech office.

The province is working on building smart green ports powered by hydrogen energy. It is also promoting the use of hydrogen in industrial parks and residential communities, Han said."

"China's first independently developed ski-waxing truck will serve as an important device in providing waxing and storage solutions for athletes during the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

The truck was developed by enterprises and institutes in Shandong province, including the China National Heavy Duty Truck Group, or Sinotruk, the Shandong Industrial Design Institute, and the Taishan Sports Industry Group. The design, development and construction of the truck took 11 months.

Since its debut on Oct 27, 2021, the ski-wax truck has helped with the training of national cross-country ski teams in Hebei province, Shanghai, Beijing, and Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, and received praise from athletes and waxers.

The truck has an area of 92.5 square meters and consists of a main vehicle, an auxiliary vehicle, and a spare traction locomotive. In addition to waxing, the truck also serves as a place for athletes to rest, relax and receive treatment during the competition.

The truck, which is designed based on Sinotruk's latest achievement, boasts the world's lowest wind drag for trucks of the same class. It is also ranked high globally in terms of reliability, fuel efficiency, comfort, and handling.

An exterior view of China's independently-developed ski-waxing truck [Photo/iqilu.com]"

"Zuo Ansheng from the Hongshizhai Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum in Yinan county, Linyi, creates a series of dragon dough sculptures. [Photo by Wang Yanbing/For chinadaily.com.cn]

As the Year of the Dragon approaches, artists in Shandong province have started making creations to welcome the Chinese Lunar New Year.

Zuo Ansheng from the Hongshizhai Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum in Yinan county, Linyi, has created a series of dragon dough sculptures. One sculpture titled ""Dragon and Phoenix Bring Auspiciousness"" captures the essence of the upcoming New Year celebrations."

"Yue Shun displays one of his paper quilling works at his workshop in Heze, Shandong province. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Eight years of studying paper quilling has given Yue Shun the ability to transform scraps of paper into works of art. Through the techniques of rolling, looping, curling and twisting thin paper strips, the 30-year-old craftsman creates intricate components that are then combined to form exquisite handmade crafts.

At his studio in the Luxi new district in Heze, Shandong province, late this month, Yue deftly employed specialized tools to roll slender paper strips into tight or loose rolls, which serve as the fundamental building blocks of his paper creations. The rolls were then glued together to form the delicate petals of flowers.

""Crafting a paper quilling artwork, particularly one depicting peonies, demands significant time and effort,"" Yue said, adding that patience is the cornerstone of producing exceptional paper works.

""Paper quilling can be used to create designs on their own or to decorate other objects, such as greeting cards, pictures and boxes,"" he said.

Yue has created numerous designs with paper quilling including earrings, flowers, gourds, dragons and human images. Recently he embarked on a project involving a large flower basket, which required an abundance of quilled paper rolls.

To achieve the desired effect of clustered flowers, multiple layers of paper rolls were glued together. He used techniques such as curling, bending, pinching, spreading and embellishing to create the centers and leaves of the flowers.

Over the years, Yue has devoted all his free time to honing his paper craft techniques.

""My mom used to be unhappy with me spending most of my free time at home, complaining that I had no social activities,"" Yue said. ""But I feel a sense of satisfaction as long as I delve into the world of paper quilling.""

Yue has been exploring ways to integrate local elements into his works and employs special techniques to imbue them with a three-dimensional quality.

Among his portfolio is a piece showcasing peonies, the city flower of Heze. The artwork employs 11 different colored papers to achieve a stunning gradient and a three-dimensional effect.

In his efforts to expand the influence of paper quilling art, Yue has been teaching the craft at several primary and junior high schools.

""Paper quilling, as a creative and practical craft, enhances manual dexterity and contributes to the intellectual development of young people,"" he said.

Looking to the future, Yue will focus on creating more paper quilling artworks that honor Heze's rich cultural heritage.

""My mom now supports me to create some paper quilling artworks that present Chinese cultural elements,"" he said."" Sometimes she gives me some advice on my creations.

""I'd like to blend the art of paper quilling with traditional Chinese culture, preserving and promoting this art form for future generations."""

"Tourists marvel at the spectacle of swan flocks in Rongcheng, a county-level city of Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Recent snowfall has adorned the fishing villages in Rongcheng, a county-level city of Weihai, Shandong province, attracting tourists to marvel at the beautiful winter scenery. The area is one of the important habitats for swans in China.

In the county, tourists enjoy the spectacle of swans and savor the local fishing village ambiance. Seagrass cottages have become a unique accommodation option, allowing tourists to immerse themselves in the lifestyle of fishermen.

To enhance the tourist experience, Rongcheng has improved tourism facilities, offering a comfortable environment for leisure travel. Tourism development has driven rural revitalization, bringing economic growth and employment opportunities to the county, said the county government.

Recent snowfall and swans create beautiful winter scenery in Rongcheng, a county-level city of Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Photovoltaic panels stretch over 310 hectares of barren hilly land in Sanzhuang town of Rizhao, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A 90-megawatt solar power project has begun operation in Sanzhuang town of Rizhao, Shandong province, using the barren hilly areas to support the nation's efforts to invigorate rural areas and reduce carbon emissions.

Sunlight is abundant in the coastal city, sourcing rows of photovoltaic panels stretching over 310 hectares of barren hilly land to generate electricity.

The project, which replaces the use of coals to generate electricity, can reduce CO2 emissions substantially, according to Chu Xingtian, a project staff member.

""The vacant land under the photovoltaic panels is planted with honeysuckle, which increases the income of local farmers,"" said Chu."

"The factory of Yaxing Chemical in Changyi, a county-level city in Weifang, Shandong province. [Photo/chinayaxing.com]

At a production line of new materials in Changyi, a county-level city in Weifang, Shandong province, workers are busy fulfilling orders in an organized and efficient manner.

""The regular on-site coordination and timely communication with local government departments have significantly facilitated our operations, effectively boosting project progress and securing time for completion,"" said Liu Wenpeng, head of the engineering department at Weifang-based Yaxing Chemical.

As major projects usually serve as a robust force and engine for improving regional economic development as well as public services, Changyi has embraced major project construction to underpin its steady economic development and provide robust momentum and support for promoting high-quality development.

From January to October, a total investment of 100.8 billion yuan ($14.1 billion) was put into 183 major projects, with 33 key projects reaching completion and production. All the 37 provincial and municipal-level key projects have commenced, leading to a well-organized order of project advancement, said Sun Zhaoxing, director of Changyi's development and reform bureau, emphasizing the city's focus on swiftly advancing key projects and fully utilizing advanced production capacity.

To further enhance project management services throughout full lifecycle, Changyi has also initiated 16 rounds of bank-enterprise matchmaking activities, benefiting over 700 companies. About 40 billion yuan in loans have been provided to key projects such as the construction of a digital agricultural demonstration park, injecting financial vitality into the city's development.

From January to October, the total industrial output value by above designated size entities in Changyi reached 68.53 billion yuan, an increase of 7.4 percent year-on-year. The operating income of industries above designated size stood at 63.61 billion yuan, up 11.4 percent year-on-year.

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"The snow-capped seaside in Rongcheng, a county-level city of Weihai, Shandong province.[Photo by Li Xinjun/for chinadaily.com.cn]

In a rare and extreme weather event, Yantai and Weihai cities in East China's Shandong province experienced a severe cold wave accompanied by heavy snowfall this week.

The snowfall created a unique and picturesque landscape, with netizens likening it to an Arctic expedition.

From Tuesday to Thursday, Yantai weather station received a snowfall of 28.6 millimeters, with a snow depth of 52 centimeters, breaking historical records since meteorological documentation began in 1951.

As of Friday, Wendeng district in Weihai reported a snow depth of 74 centimeters, setting a record for the deepest snow accumulation in Shandong province.

""This blizzard event is considered an extreme occurrence,"" Yang Chengfang, chief forecaster at the Shandong Meteorological Service, told Xinhua Daily Telegraph.

The cold wave and blizzard occurred from the afternoon of Dec 15 to 17, influenced by a strong cold air mass, she said.

She added that the event was unprecedented, with Wendeng breaking historical records for daily snowfall on Dec 16, reaching 27.5 millimeters."

"By emphasizing the acceleration of manufacturing transformation and upgrading to enhance core competitiveness, the rapid establishment of a modern industrial system is driving the development of new industrialization in Changyi, a county-level city in Weifang, Shandong province.

Inside the digitized production workshop of Shandong Kaitai Microfiber Co Ltd, real-time production data is displayed on a big screen.

""The company has transitioned from traditional manual data collection to automated processes such as mobile scanning. Particularly in time-consuming tasks like fabric inspection, data entry and storage, we have achieved full automation through digitalization,"" said Zhang Shuxin, general manager of the company, adding that the firm's digital transformation has resulted in a 15-percent increase in production efficiency.

By providing tailored technology upgrade routes, software and hardware development, and operational maintenance — part of customized digitization plans — Changyi has helped a number of traditional enterprises be free from technological challenges.

""Key equipment upgrades, cloud integration of machinery, production line optimization and automation have made traditional industries in Changyi smarter and more environmentally friendly,"" said Liu Huaize, director of Changyi's industrial development promotion center.

As Changyi boasts a slew of cutting-edge enterprises, which a focus on specific segments of the industrial chain, the companies' long-term research and development efforts will elevate critical performance indicators to international levels, injecting continuous and robust momentum into local emerging industries, said the local government.

Currently, the city has nurtured eight intelligent factories at or above the municipal level, with over 200 companies adopting cloud-based solutions.

From January to October, Changyi's industrial added value for enterprises above designated size saw a year-on-year increase of 10.6 percent, while the total industrial output value and operating income of industries above designated size rose by 7.4 percent and 11.4 percent, respectively."

"Vehicles clear snow in Weihai, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Heavy snowfall has hit the Yantai and Weihai coastal cities in Shandong province since Tuesday night, resulting in deep accumulated snow, according to the Shandong Meteorological Bureau.

As of 8 am Friday, the snow in the Wendeng district of Weihai has surpassed 70 centimeters, while Rongcheng, a county-level city of Weihai, has accumulated 44 cm of snow, and Yantai has a snow depth of 52 cm.

Machinery and anti-skid equipment have been mobilized to clear snow on roads, focusing on slopes, turns, bridges and expressways to ensure smooth traffic, said the Weihai Transport Bureau.

The snowfall slowed down on Friday and is forecast to end on Saturday."

"More than 20 expats from countries such as Fiji, Kiribati, and Papua New Guinea visited the Zhongyuan Modern Agriculture Carnival in Shenxian county of Liaocheng, Shandong province on Dec 12 to experience the charm of local agricultural technology up close.

Expats pose for a photo while visiting the Zhongyuan Modern Agriculture Carnival in Shenxian county. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""Fantastic! I must bring back China's advanced agricultural technology to my home,"" Kevenaisi Guma from Fiji marveled while taking photos with his phone.

The Shenxian Zhongyuan Modern Agriculture Carnival project has a total planned area of about 140 hectares. The first phase covers over 26.66 hectares, with the greenhouses occupying around 75,000 square meters.

The main venue of the carnival includes 10 themed pavilions, each with its unique positioning and distinctive features.

The foreign visitors were captivated by various cultivation methods such as pillar cultivation, spiral biomimetic cultivation, and tunnel hydroponics.

The Shenxian Zhongyuan Modern Agriculture Carnival displays an array of vegetables and advanced agricultural technologies. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""Leafy vegetables have shallow root systems and short plants, which is why we employ cultivation methods like pillar cultivation and spiral biomimetic cultivation. This allows us to fully utilize the vertical space and increase the yield per unit area,"" the guide explained.

""Today I witnessed a wide variety of vegetables and advanced technologies. I heard that the vegetables produced here are supplied to various parts of the country. It's truly impressive,"" said Rikaweni Maima Eritrea from Kiribati, giving a thumbs-up in admiration.

After wrapping up their visit, the foreign visitors expressed their desire to learn more about China and share more Chinese stories with their compatriots back home."

"Pursuing high-quality development and low-carbon growth, local governments across China are sparing no efforts to build and make full use of renewable energies of all categories.

Hekou district of Dongying, Shandong province is one of them. The district is striving to build a green and low-carbon energy system, said Zhang Xueliang, director of the Development and Reform Bureau of Hekou.

""We will scientifically distribute green and low-carbon energies such as photoelectric and wind power, and accelerate the formation of green and low-carbon energy industrial structures in our district. We are making an effort to contribute to the high-quality development of Shandong province,"" Zhang said.

According to Zhang, the district has given full play to its abundant reserves of renewable energies such as solar, wind and biomass, and developed a series of related projects.

Alternatives and renewable energies, such as solar power, wind and biomass energies, have been widely adopted for industrial and civilian usage.

State Grid Dongying Hekou Power Supply Company, jointly with Hekou Development and Reform Bureau, explores integrated energy patterns, such as ""solar power plus"" or ""wind power plus"", to expand the capacity of the local power grid and improve its reliability and stability.

The district did this to further enhance the commercial application of renewable energies and enrich the region's power stable power supply, Zhang added.

Up to now, the district's installed capacity of renewable energy power generation has reached 1.31 million kilowatts, generating 1.97 billion kilowatt-hours of green power annually, and the energy storage capacity has reached 200 MWh.

The district has also pushed the digital transformation of the power grid by building an online monitoring platform and making the process of power dispatching fully automated and intelligent, which has greatly reduced costs and potential risks, according to Zhang."

"A villager arranges festive decorations in Donglijia village, Xiazhuang town, Gaomi, a county-level city in Shandong province, on Dec 6. [Photo by Li Haitao for chinadaily.com.cn]

With Spring Festival around the corner, Donglijia village in Xiazhuang town, Shandong province, is currently experiencing its busiest season as villagers work overtime to produce red paper, print couplets and sell festival supplies.

Donglijia village is renowned for its red paper and couplet production. Over 60 percent of the villagers work in the red paper couplet production industry.

A villager dries newly printed Spring Festival couplets in Donglijia village, Xiazhuang town, Gaomi, a county-level city in Shandong province, on Dec 6. The couplets are a traditional decoration for celebrating Spring Festival or Chinese New Year. [Photo by Li Haitao for chinadaily.com.cn]

Customers browse festive decorations in Donglijia village, Xiazhuangtown, Gaomi, a county-level city in Shandong province, on Dec 6. [Photo by Li Haitao for chinadaily.com.cn]

A worker arranges festive decorations at a red paper production enterprise in Donglijia village, Xiazhuang town, Gaomi, a county-level city in Shandong province, on Dec 6. [Photo by Li Haitao for chinadaily.com.cn]

A worker packs red paper decorations at an enterprise in Donglijia village, Xiazhuang town, Gaomi, a county-level city in Shandong province, on Dec 6. [Photo by Li Haitao for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"JINAN — The receding tide at the mouth of the Yellow River in Dongying, Shandong province, one late-September morning revealed a vast sea grass bed.

Dozens of workers walked back and forth along the shore in the city's Kenli district, gathering Japanese eelgrass seeds to be sown next spring. The seeds, about the size of sesame seeds, were not fully mature, and the workers put them in mesh bags and soaked them in water to allow the eelgrass to continue growing.

""Sea grass seeds are too light and will be easily washed away by the waves when they are fully mature, so collecting them around the time of the Mid-Autumn Festival is the best strategy,"" said Zhou Yi, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Oceanology.

Zhou, who has been studying sea grass beds for more than 20 years, visits the special ""grassland"" in the Yellow River estuary every other month. ""This sea grass bed is about 30 hectares in size, and most of it has been restored in the past three or four years,"" he said.

The Yellow River estuary was once the largest Japanese eelgrass bed in China, and it still appears endless and lush like grassland on land when the tide is low. In 2019, Typhoon Lekima destroyed about 667 hectares of sea grass beds, leaving large stretches of bare beach.

Zhou Licheng, director of the Shandong Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve's scientific research center, said sea grass beds play a similar role to forests on land, supporting small fish and crabs that are eaten by a variety of birds. The spread of smooth cord grass, an invasive species native to the United States' Atlantic coast, and frequent typhoons have badly damaged sea grass beds in the Yellow River estuary, Zhou Licheng said, creating breaches in the local intertidal ecosystem.

Smooth cord grass has been identified by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as one of the world's 100 most dangerous invasive species and was one of the earliest invasive species officially recognized as a threat by Chinese authorities.

In order to restore the ecosystem, the reserve has cooperated with the Institute of Oceanology and the Ocean University of China, both in Qingdao, Shandong, and other institutes since last year to promote the repair of sea grass beds. Growing sea grass underwater is quite different from growing grass on land.

""We have tried direct planting, direct seeding and other methods, but due to the influence of submarine sediment, ocean currents and other factors, the plants and seeds sown can be easily washed away or eaten by marine organisms,"" Zhou Yi said, adding that after many attempts, the team finally developed a combination of transplanting seedlings and planting ""rolled clay balls"".

He said the rolled-clay-ball method involved wrapping the seeds in soil, adding necessary nutrients and then using machinery to sow the balls on beaches.

Research has shown that one-third of the world's sea grass beds have been lost due to a combination of human activities and global climate change over the years.

On Nov 28, Dongying's city government announced at a news conference that more than 99 percent of its troublesome smooth cord grass had been eradicated, with 100 hectares of local sea grass beds restored.

Zhou Yi said: ""We will explore new ways while observing their results. If this restoration method is proved effective by long-term practice, we will promote it in more places.""

Xinhua"

"Eyeing better integration into the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the business incubator in Qihe county of Shandong province is becoming a new innovation hub for State-level high-tech companies and province-level engineering laboratories to bolster high-quality development of the country.

""We are promoting our companies and industries to closely cooperate with universities and institutions in Beijing and Tianjin, by integrating Zhongguancun's entrepreneurial ecosystem and concept with the local demand for industrial transformation and technological innovation,"" Zhai Minggang, director of Zhongguancun E Valley (Qihe) Incubator, told China Daily.

The incubator has cultivated more than 10 national-level high-tech companies and developed two provincial-level key engineering laboratories. The accumulated operating incomes of incubated companies have exceeded 2 billion yuan ($279.3 million), Zhai added.

Integrating into the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region has been an important measure for Qihe to raise its opening-up standard and acquire external resources, according to the local government.

So far, the county has carried out 23 investment promotion events for the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region this year, with new contracts on two major energy projects signed, another 10 relevant projects under construction and seven technological achievements put into commercial operation. Among them, investments into two industrial parks have exceeded 1 billion yuan.

A slew of key projects have also been put into operation in the Qihe High-tech Industrial Development Zone, an important platform for Qihe to integrate into the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. The zone aims to attract and develop emerging industries including new materials, biomedical and medical devices, and e-commerce.

The joint efforts from local governments and Zhongguancun, Beijing's high-tech hub, to push for industry-level innovation are of great significance for the country's drive for further industrial upgrading and high-level development, and is also positive for the nation's economic recovery for this year and the next, according to Yang Weiyong, an associate professor of economics at the University of International Business and Economics.

""The innovation capability of the country lies in individual companies and local governments at grass-root levels. Thus the cooperation and efforts made by local governments at all levels and State tech hubs will make a big difference in enhancing the nation's innovation prowess,"" Yang said."

"A staff member of Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid is at work. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Jinan-Zhengzhou High-speed Railway linking the two capital cities of Shandong and Henan is scheduled to open on Friday, serving as another new section of the national ""eight verticals and eight horizontals"" high-speed railway network.

Its significance for Shandong province — which holds the ""four horizontals and six verticals"" network — is about connecting multiple high-speed railway corridors between the north and the south, and the east and the west of the province.

The Shandong section of the Jinan-Zhengzhou High-speed Railway opens five stations — Jinan West Station, Changqing Station, Chiping South Station, Liaocheng West Station and Shenxian Station. It also has three traction substations, namely Shenxian county, Liaocheng West, and Chiping South, and the power supply of the three traction substations are all provided by the Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid.

The power supply of the traction substations, involving multiple relocation and coordination, met with various difficulties. Therefore, the Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid sought support from the provincial company and took the initiative to provide ""one-stop"" services for the construction of the high-speed railway.

After six rounds of power supply plan review meetings and multiple project feasibility studies, and engineering design, the company sought to provide service with safety and reliability. The final layout determined that each of the six individual 220 kilovolt substations should provide a line. This will provide each of the three traction substations with two power sources, with one as the main supply and the other as backup.

The construction involved four districts and counties in Liaocheng, including Dongchangfu district, some tourist resort areas, Chiping district and Shenxian county. It requires the construction and relocation of 230 tower foundations and the installation of 68.4 kilometers of lines. In total, the city needs to relocate power lines in 136 locations, covering a distance of 56.5 km, the largest relocation of this kind in Liaocheng over the past 10 years.

The power supply company has established a special team to develop detailed plans and coordinate human arrangements. By establishing a daily-reporting work mechanism, it closely monitors key jobs such as layout design, material supply, tower construction and progress control, ensuring that the quantity, quality and schedule all meet the standards.

Also, the power supply company organized a Party member service team to maintain the substations and lines, ensuring the successful operation of the power supply equipment and laying the foundation for the opening of the Jinan-Zhengzhou High-speed Railway."

"The Smart Dragon 3 carrier rocket, which was made in Haiyang, Shandong province, successfully sent a test satellite into orbit above the sea near Yangjiang, Guangdong province.

This launch marked the second mission of the Smart Dragon 3 carrier rocket series following the successful maiden flight of this type of rocket.

The Smart Dragon 3 carrier rocket for this mission was made at the solid carrier rocket assembly and testing base in Haiyang, Shandong province.

Before being transported to the designated sea area for launch, the Smart Dragon 3 carrier rocket underwent technical preparations at Haiyang's Oriental Maritime Space Port.

This successful mission showcased the practicality of long-distance maneuverable launches at sea. The mission's satellite was uniquely positioned at a 30-degree angle, overcoming challenges related to satellite attitude control and separation safety.

The launch significantly shortened fulfillment cycles, enhanced market service capabilities, and catered to future high-frequency launch demands.

In addition, the first phase of the Shandong Haiyang solid carrier rocket assembly and testing base, where the Smart Dragon 3 and other solid carrier rockets are located, is now capable of producing 10 rockets per year.

The construction of the second phase of the solid carrier rocket assembly and testing base in Haiyang is expected to be complete by the end of December 2023. The second phase will increase the manufacturing capacity to 20 solid carrier rockets per year.

The Smart Dragon 3 carrier rocket is set to undertake at least five launch missions in 2024.

The Smart Dragon 3 carrier rocket successfully sends a test satellite into orbit above the sea near Yangjiang, Guangdong province. [Photo by Zhang Jingyi for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"A view of Dasong Everbright City in Dongping county of Tai'an city of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A forum on developing the night economy of Dasong Everbright City in Dongping county of Tai'an city was held to seek new opportunities for sustained growth of the local economy November 26, 2023.

Dongping, the birthplace of Shuihu culture (Shuihu Zhuan, or the Water Margin, is one of the Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese literature), is at the junction of the Yellow River and China's Great Canal and boasts the scenic Dongping Lake.

Based on its natural and cultural resources, the county opened Dasong Everbright City, a Song Dynasty (960-1279) theme resort combining Yellow River culture and Taishan Mountain culture, in January as a major effort to boost culture and tourism and other related industries together.

The resort has received as many as 2.77 million visitors since its opening and is emerging as a new internet celebrity spot in Shandong, according to Ma Huanjun, Party secretary of the county.

Attendees to the forum took part in discussions on supporting policies, infrastructure, industry innovations and industry integration. The forum is part of the winter tour campaign in Dongping consisting of other tourism and culture activities. The campaign will last until February."

"People work at a koi farm in Sanshilipu town in Gaotang county, Shandong province. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Years ago, the low-lying land along the old course of the Yellow River around Sanshilipu town in Gaotang county, Shandong province, held back the development of villages in the area, but it is now being used to raise koi fish, giving a boost to villagers' livelihoods.

In late October, the town enters its peak season for koi sales. At a koi park, several varieties of koi with striking white, black, gold and red hues swim gracefully in ponds, attracting potential customers. ""Our fish have been selling like hotcakes recently,"" Xia Qingjun, the manager of a koi farming cooperative at the park, said while preparing more than 300 koi for shipment to cities outside Shandong.

Over the past few years, the town has tapped into its abundant water resources to develop the koi farming industry. That has led to the formation of an integrated koi industry that encompasses scientific research, breeding, farming, sales and tourism.

The town government has sought guidance from experts at research institutes, who provide regular technical assistance to koi farming enterprises and individual farmers.

Initially, earthen ponds were used to raise fish, which resulted in low survival rates. However, with the introduction of standardized ponds, each housing 50,000 koi of the same size, the survival rate has significantly improved, said Jia Qinghe, 51, who has been farming koi for 13 years. Farmers in the town are also introducing an aquaponic system to cultivate koi and vegetables from the same water source.

Water containing fish waste is pumped into the vegetable-growing area from a pond that is home to fish. The waste fertilizes the crops. The plants absorb the nutrients and clean the water, and the clean water flows back to the pond.

""This system not only achieves a symbiosis between fish and vegetables but creates an indoor landscape,"" said Ma Chuansheng, who is in charge of building the system.

Sanshilipu has dedicated over 67 hectares of land to koi farming, the town government said, with the capacity to breed over 100 million koi a year. To expand the market, local fish farmers have embraced e-commerce platforms and livestreaming to promote sales. ""During the shipment, the fish are placed in specialized packaging bags filled with oxygen. They can endure a two-day journey without any problem,"" said one livestreaming host seen promoting koi at the park in late October.

The town's deputy Party secretary, Xu Qingpan, said around 100,000 packages of koi are dispatched every year, generating sales close to 100 million yuan ($13.8 million).

The koi industry in Sanshilipu has also promoted the development of nearby towns in the county, which the China Fisheries Association recognized in 2021 as the ""koi capital"" of China.

That recognition saw 100 breeders from across the country bring around 2,000 koi to participate in a competition in the county in October where the fish were judged on the basis of their patterns, colors and weight. ""Previously, we were reliant on purchasing high-quality koi from abroad. Now, we have our own techniques to breed koi,"" said Guo Mengmeng, a 35-year-old koi breeder from the county.

A premium koi can cost thousands of yuan, and if a fish wins a competition, its price can be even higher, Guo said. The county has over 533 hectares of ponds dedicated to farming around 30 varieties of koi, which has become an engine to drive local economic development."

"A student at the 6th Shandong College Student AI Competition and the Intelligent Equipment Design Contest. [Photo/Dezhou Daily]

The 6th Shandong College Student AI Competition and the Intelligent Equipment Design Contest was held in Laoling, Shandong province on Nov 25.

A total of 77 college students from 15 universities showcased a range of innovative intelligent equipment, including automated water-cleaning robots, concrete inspection devices, and intelligent strawberry-picking robots during the event.

""I didn't expect Laoling's science and technology innovation environment and talent policy to be so superior,"" said Ma Shuowei, a junior student of Shandong Management University, who revealed an intelligent archive management robot at the competition.

The competition serves as a platform for collaboration between businesses, academia, and government, and is expected to spur local economic transformation, attract talent, and facilitate technology transfer.

Laoling is known for its sports hardware, food seasoning, medicine and chemicals, and automotive and parts industries.

The city, which presently has 182 technological innovation platforms, secured the top provincial scientific and technological progress prize for two consecutive years. It is also the only county-level city in China with two national engineering and technology research centers.

Through innovation fairs and school-enterprise collaboration, Laoling has attracted 45,000 talents from diverse fields. Last year, it was approved as a pilot city for youth-friendly development in Shandong province."

"Dezhou's Qihe county in Shandong province is ramping up green efforts in power sector, with efforts paying off in its economic development zone, according to local officials.

""Now, government units in the development zone are self-sufficient in terms of power demand in office space, thanks to the photovoltaic project in the parking lot,"" said Zhao Jun, director of the Comprehensive Management Department of the Shandong Qihe Economic Development Zone.

""Solar power can meet all the office electricity demand.""

Qihe has been promoting green transition in the energy sector. As part of its push, the county is building its economic development zone a national development sample case.

The Qihe Economic Development Zone was declared a ""Green Industrial Park"" in Shandong for its green transition efforts.

In February, the park renovated and upgraded parking lots in its office areas, and added PV panels on parking sheds. The panels, spread over 864 square meters, have generated power of 170,000 kilowatt-hours.

Additionally, the park also launched a project to build more such parking lots along 13 roads. To date, four roadside parking lots with over 2,000 parking spaces have been built, with the solar power output from this sector standing at 1.4 million kWh.

Besides, the development zone has utilized a large amount of workshop roofs of settled companies in the park to promote distributed photovoltaic installation projects.

Such green efforts have been welcomed by companies, as these measures not only improve the appearance of the facilities, but also bring additional profits to companies.

According to the park, more green projects are now in the pipeline to help achieve the green energy development goal and build a net-zero park.

To date, 80,000 square meters in the park has been covered by photovoltaic power, with an installed capacity of 11 megawatts, the park said.

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"The urban landscape of Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo/IC]

Shandong has in recent years been ramping up efforts to build regional public brands centered around the ""Friendly Shandong, Remarkable Shandong"" theme so that it can become a calling card for Shandong's high-quality development.

The province has cultivated a range of well-known brands across several sectors including manufacturing, tourism, culture, agriculture and food.

An agricultural powerhouse, Shandong's total agricultural output value has been the highest in China for many years thanks to its fertile soil, abundant water resources, and favorable climate.

Shandong is renowned for its high-quality and diverse agricultural products, including Shouguang vegetables, Yantai apples, Zhanhua winter jujube, Zhangqiu scallions, Jinxiang garlic, Laiyang pears, Jiaozhou Chinese cabbages and Feicheng peaches.

The province's advanced agricultural technologies and efficient farming practices have contributed to its position as a leading agricultural producer in the country.

Zhanhua winter jujube is a special local product of Zhanhua district, Binzhou, Shandong province. [Photo/IC]

A large industrial province, Shandong is home to all 41 major industrial categories. It is particularly known for its heavy machinery manufacturing companies like Sinotruk and Weichai Group.

It is also home to well-established companies in the electronics sector such as Goertek, Haier and Hisense, which have gained global recognition for their high-quality consumer electronics.

Shandong, the hometown of philosophers Confucius and Mencius, also has abundant cultural and tourism resources. With a history dating back thousands of years, Shandong is home to renowned cultural sites such as the majestic Mount Tai and the ancient city of Qufu, with its well-preserved Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion.

Moreover, Shandong's coastal cities, such as Qingdao and Yantai, offer picturesque landscapes, beautiful beaches, and a vibrant seafood culture. Whether it's exploring historical landmarks or enjoying coastal charm, Shandong offers a remarkable cultural and tourism experience."

The Enterprise Innovation and Development Conference was held in Jinan, East China's Shandong province on Nov 23.More than 200 representatives from multinational companies, local firms, business associations took part in the event to seek cooperation opportunities in innovative business development.During the conference, 12 international cooperation projects worth a combined 2.59 billion yuan ($362.7 million) were signed. These projects are related to sectors such as advanced manufacturing, information technology, healthcare and modern services, and are targeted at overseas markets including North America, the European Union, Southeast Asia and Africa."These signed projects are of great significance for Shandong's efforts to optimize the layout of the industrial chain and supply chain, accelerate digital and green transformation, and promote win-win cooperation between Chinese and foreign businesses," said He Zhongjun, vice-president of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade Shandong Sub-council.Shandong Guoli Economic and Technical Cooperation Ltd, a domestic leader in international vocational education, signed a cooperation agreement with K-Brand, a high-end medical and beauty technology company in South Korea, during the conference.This cooperation will see those in China who are interested in working in the modern service industry receive professional vocational skills training by K-Brand. These individuals will receive a certificate recognized by the South Korean government before working in South Korean companies. K-Brand is expected to train up to 1,500 people per year.

"Two unmanned maritime helicopters were deployed in Weihai, a coastal city of Shandong province, on Wednesday. The drone-like sea helicopters are anticipated to greatly improve the management of boat traffic and make it easier to respond quickly to accidents at sea, CCTV News reports.

At 7.33 meters long, 1.58 meters wide and 2.43 meters tall, the helicopters have a load capacity of 75 kilograms and can be remotely controlled from up to 150 kilometers away. They have a maximum range of 400 kilometers and a top speed of 150 kilometers per hour. Each is equipped with advanced facilities such as thermal imaging, long-range video transmission, and emergency supply delivery capabilities.

They can also operate under weather conditions with a wind force below level eight (wind speeds of 34 to 40 knots), making them the most advanced unmanned helicopters used in China's maritime system.

The waters off Chengshantou in Weihai, which will be monitored by the unmanned helicopters, is a crucial passage for ships to ports along the Bohai Sea and the northern part of the Yellow Sea. Each year, approximately 110,000 voyages are made by ships through these waters, while tens of thousands of fishing boats are active in the area.

The unmanned helicopters will be used for law enforcement activities, such as tracking and investigating illegal vessels, said Wang Gang, the director of the Weihai Maritime Bureau Command Center.

These drones will also play a significant role in conducting large-scale search and rescue operations and monitoring oil spills in the Yellow Sea and Bohai Sea, said Wang."

"China's largest nuclear heating project starts operations in Haiyang, a county-level city of Yantai, Shandong province, on Nov 15, 2022. [Photo/CCTV]

The third phase of China's first heating project fueled by nuclear energy, covering multiple prefecture-level cities, was put into operation in Haiyang, East China's Shandong province, over the weekend, as part of the government's efforts to increase green energy supplies for heating during this winter and next spring.

The project, with a planned installed capacity of 900 megawatts, is part of No 1 Warm-U-Clear, the first commercial nuclear energy heating project in China, its operator State Power Investment Corp said.

The green energy will be provided by the Haiyang nuclear power plant, which has a heating system connected to two traditional nuclear units.

It provides green heating to Shandong province's Haiyang and Rushan through a transport pipe, it said.

The total heating area of the project will reach 12.5 million square meters this winter, which will keep about 400,000 people warm, it said.

Provinces across the nation are stepping up energy supplies to meet rising energy demand for heating during the winter.

The project will provide much-needed experience to further apply clean energy heating nationwide, said Lin Boqiang, head of the China Institute for Studies in Energy Policy at Xiamen University.

The role of nuclear power as a clean energy source for heating is expanding in the country. In the long run, this will not only reduce heating costs but also significantly improve the operational efficiency of nuclear power plants, Lin said.

The efforts in nuclear heating illustrate China's ambitions at de-carbonizing its energy-intensive heating sector, he said.

State Power Investment Corp has been stepping up efforts to expand its nuclear power-based heating projects to more areas across the country in recent years.

The company started its first phase of nuclear heating in 2019 in Shandong province, which has provided 700,000 sq m of carbon-free heating, followed by the second phase that covered 5 million sq m in 2021, it said.

Since the operation of the first phase of No 1 Warm-U-Clear in 2019, it has replaced the consumption of 390,000 metric tons of standard coal while reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 720,000 tons, SPIC said.

The first pilot nuclear heating project in southern China, which is built upon residual thermal power of China National Nuclear Corp's Qinshan nuclear power station in Zhejiang province, is also currently under operation in Haiyan county, in East China's Zhejiang province.

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"Jinan, capital city of Shandong province. [Photo/IC]

Since the beginning of this year, Shandong has been ramping up efforts to keep the economy stable and promote regional high-quality development.

The province has launched well-targeted policies and measures with a focus on securing market players, sustaining employment and driving up consumption to realize its economic growth target for this year and keep major economic indicators within a certain range.

From January to October this year, industrial production in Shandong province remained stable, with the added value of industrial enterprises above designated size increasing by 6.9 percent year-on-year. Among the 41 major industry categories, 33 achieved growth in Shandong.

The equipment manufacturing industry and consumer goods industry are showing signs of recovery, with added value increasing by 9.4 percent and 3.3 percent, respectively, year-on-year over this period.

In the first 10 months, fixed asset investment increased by 5.3 percent year-on-year, while investment in the manufacturing industry and infrastructure increased by 11.3 percent and 25 percent, respectively.

The upgrading of traditional industries has accelerated in Shandong, and investment in industrial technological transformation increased by 14.2 percent year-on-year.

As of the end of October, there were 14.57 million market entities in the province, an increase of 4.6 percent year-on-year.

From January to October, about 1.1 million new urban jobs were created in the province, an increase of 3.6 percent year-on-year."

"Shandong Radio and Television Station signed strategic cooperation framework agreements with news media groups and international communication groups including China Daily and China News Service at the inaugural ceremony of the Shandong International Communication Center, which was held on Sunday in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

When Mylene Mathieu, a French social media influencer who lives in China, shared her experience and views about local cuisine, she made comparisons with France.

When she talked about the size of a dish in Shandong, for example, she said the vegetables of a single dish in Shandong can be divided into several dishes that can occupy a whole dining table in France.

Her comparisons impressed audiences, drawing waves of applause at the inaugural ceremony of the Shandong International Communication Center, which was held on Sunday in Jinan, the provincial capital.

The center — a platform to connect Shandong with the world — aims to shore up international communication about the province by integrating functions of content production, cultural exchanges, talent cultivation, research and innovation in the field of international communication.

We will cooperate with all sectors of society to build a comprehensive international communication network, innovate ways to tell stories about Shandong and enhance communication between China and foreign countries and regions, said Xi Yanchun, deputy head of the Publicity Department of the Communist Party of China Shandong Committee and director of the Information Office of the provincial government.

Ahmed Nadeem, secretary-general of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, delivered a video speech in which he expressed his expectation of cooperation between the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union and Shandong International Communication Center.

Shandong Radio and Television Station(SDRT), where the center is based, will leverage its advantages and integrate the province's international publicity resources to build the center into a leading platform for international communication with extensive influence at home and abroad, said Lyu Peng, Party secretary and president of SDRT.

At the inaugural ceremony, SDRT signed strategic cooperation framework agreements with news media groups and international communication groups, including China Daily and China News Service, to boost international communication."

"Consumers browse peanut products of Houtuan village, Qishan township, in Shandong province, at a store. [Photo provided by Yang Yizhen and Bo Jingyi/chinadaily.com.cn]

With its long-time edge in peanut plantation and production, a small township in Shandong province is pushing forward rural revitalization and generating new growth through an increasingly updated and complete industrial chain.

In the agricultural heartland of Qishan township of Shandong province, Houtuan village boasts a rich history in peanut cultivation and farming expertise. Blessed with fertile soil, pristine water quality, and ample sunlight, the village gets to leverage its natural advantages for peanut cultivation. To maximize this potential, the village has ramped up efforts to select superior seed varieties and expand the cultivation scale.

Houtuan village has successfully introduced and tested 45 different peanut varieties so far, establishing a 40-mu (2.67-hectare) high oleic peanut experimental base. Last year, the village achieved an impressive yield of approximately 400 kilograms per mu of high oleic peanuts, contributing to a substantial income of nearly 2 million yuan ($28 million) in the peanut industry.

The promotion of new high-oleic peanut varieties in Houtuan has also catalyzed the creation of over 200 mu of integrated demonstration fields in seven surrounding villages, radiating out to encompass more than 6,000 mu of high-acid peanut fields throughout the entire township. In recognition of its achievements, the project was honored with the first prize for technological achievement by the Shandong Academy of Agricultural Sciences in 2023.

The role of cutting-edge technology in industry development and talent cultivation has also been attached with significant importance in Qishan. On the one hand, collaborating with about 100 peanut specialists from the SAAS, the township employs intelligent application platforms and expert service teams to guide and assist farmers, benefiting over 1,000 households and bridging the ""final gap"" in its agricultural technology dissemination.

On the other hand, Qishan has never ceased its pace to invest in nurturing local talent for the peanut industry. Operating on the principle of ""personalized teaching in accordance with demand,"" the town often invites experts from peanut research institutes to conduct on-site classes, fostering more than 300 local experts.

Aiming to gradually form a completed industry chain, Qishan strives to achieve an integration encompassing ""breeding + order-based sales + deep processing,"" crafting a blueprint for its future peanut industry.

At the breeding stage, the town promotes industrial development through research projects. In the supply and sales phase, it supports family farms and smallholders with order-based sales, aiming to purchase 500 metric tons of high oleic peanuts with an estimated sales revenue of 4.5 million yuan in 2024. At the processing stage, technological upgrades are expected to enhance efficiency, with the adoption of low-temperature cold pressing increasing peanut oil yield by 5 percent.

In August, Qishan's local oil mill collaborated with the SAAS to jointly create a brand of environmentally friendly high oleic peanut oil. In this regard, the town's total output value of the peanut industry is projected to exceed 29 million yuan this year."

"Employees produce lawn products for a company in the Economic Development Zone of Laoling, a county-level city in Dezhou, Shandong province. [Photo by Jia Peng/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong province has been ramping up efforts to boost its strength in product quality, cultivate famous brands and move the manufacturing sector toward higher-end, smarter, and greener production.

The province has carried out industrial foundation reengineering projects and research projects on major technologies and equipment, as well as implemented measures to help enterprises that use special and sophisticated technologies produce unique products.

The province has integrated the brand and quality construction strategy with the implementation of other major strategies such as expanding domestic demand, building a modern industrial system, and constructing a leading zone for green, low-carbon, and high-quality development.

Efforts will also be made to strengthen the establishment of various technological standard innovation centers, industrial metrology and testing centers, quality inspection centers, and a ""one-stop"" service platform for quality infrastructure.

In addition, provincial authorities will help enterprises bolster product quality and safety, conduct various activities such as Quality Month and Chinese Brand Day, intensify the publicity of quality popularization, and actively build a new pattern of quality co-governance to improve the reputation and credibility of products made in Shandong."

"Employees produce lawn products for a company in the Economic Development Zone of Laoling, a county-level city in Dezhou, Shandong province. [Photo by Jia Peng/For chinadaily.com.cn]

The total export volume generated by companies in the Economic Development Zone of Laoling, a county-level city in Dezhou, Shandong province registered a year-on-year growth of 31.6 percent during the first ten months of this year, said the county government.

An employee prepares automotive wire harnesses for an automotive parts manufacturing company at the Economic Development Zone of Laoling, a county-level city in Dezhou, Shandong province on Tuesday. [Photo by Jia Peng/For chinadaily.com.cn]

An automotive parts manufacturing company at the Economic Development Zone of Laoling, a county-level city in Dezhou, Shandong province uses robots to produce brake pads for overseas orders on Tuesday. [Photo by Jia Peng/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"A farmer in Qishan township, Shandong province shows sweet potatoes harvested in October. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Nearly 667 hectares of ""Qishan sweet potato"" were harvested in October in Qishan township, an agriculture hub in Shandong province, after the local government made a big investment in an industrial upgrade to boost the local economy.

According to the Qishan government, the township has invested more than 4 million yuan ($557,783) to build the second-phase virus-free seedling breeding base and 5 million yuan to introduce deep processing production lines. Further efforts were also made to promote the brand of ""Qishan sweet potato"" and boost sales.

With government support, the quality and efficiency of sweet potato production were greatly enhanced, which also helped improve local residents' income.

Qishan government also said it has introduced training programs for local farmers, created a favorable environment for relevant businesses, and cooperated with agricultural scientific institutions in Shandong province, which has yielded fruitful results."

"Whooper swans were seen in their winter habitat at the Rongcheng Swan National Nature Reserve in Weihai, Shandong province, on Saturday. [Photos by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Whooper swans are spending the winter in Rongcheng, a county-level city under Weihai, Shandong province. They stay for around five months at the national nature reserve, with its bay and wetlands, making it one of the largest wintering grounds for whooper swans in the world."

"The first Caoxian Hanfu Cultural Festival kicked off on Nov 11 in Caoxian county, Shandong province. The month-long event will feature a host of activities, including exhibitions, forums, sales promotions, traditional culture lectures, and performances, aimed at raising the profile of the local industry for traditional Chinese costumes, especially the hanfu.

An exhibition hall of traditional Chinese costumes in Caoxian county, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Trends popular among the country's youth such as ""China chic"" (designs featuring elements from traditional Chinese culture), and the growing influence of young consumer groups have driven the development of the hanfu industry in recent years, and Caoxian has seized these opportunities to boost its own profile.

Caoxian is currently home to 2,282 upstream and downstream enterprises in the hanfu industry that have 13,989 online stores on various e-commerce platforms, including Taobao, Tmall, JD, Pinduoduo, Douyin, Kuaishou, and Xiaohongshu. There are presently some 100,000 professionals working in the industry.

A staff member sells traditional Chinese costumes via livestreaming in Caoxian county. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The county has formed a complete industrial chain and brand incubation system that covers original research and development, design and production, accessory production, copyright protection, experiential exhibitions, and online marketing.

According to data from Chinese online discounter Pinduoduo, out of its top 2,000 online hanfu stores, 1,200 are from Caoxian. Additionally, over half of the top 100 hanfu stores on the platform are also based in Caoxian.

Caoxian's share of the domestic hanfu market is more than 40 percent.

A model presents traditional Chinese costumes. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Staff members of Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid work at Dong'e Ejiaos' photovoltaic power station. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

In recent years, East China's Shandong province has used photovoltaic power as an important means to optimize the local energy structure. Adapted to local conditions, the province also promotes photovoltaic construction by utilizing resources such as enterprise factories, rural residences and idle ponds with the aim to realize the coordinated development of photovoltaic power generation, new energy, animal husbandry, and leisure and entertainment.

Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid, with the ambition to tap into its technological resources and corporate advantages, is working together with local governments to promote the photovoltaic development plan enacted by the city government and to launch the project across all the cities and counties in the province.

After defining the available capacity station by station, line by line and substation by substation and making construction plans annually, it has promoted multiple benefits including energy transformation, grid security and social investment.

As a representative project, in the factory of Dong'e Ejiao - China's renowned donkey-hide gelatin producer - the neatly arranged rooftop photovoltaic panels reflect the blue sky under the sunlight. Employees from Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid have been assisting the workers there in inspecting switch equipment and photovoltaic circuits.

Dong'e Ejiao is located in Dong'e county, Liaocheng city. The company's self-invested rooftop distributed photovoltaic power generation project has a total capacity of 3.37 megawatts.

The project utilizes the company's idle rooftop area to install photovoltaic components, with an annual electricity generation of around 3.5 million kilowatt-hours, which can meet its own consumption and save approximately 4.5 million yuan ($620,217) in electricity costs annually.

Wu Mingzhe, a staff member of Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid, said the project will continue to operate for eight years and is calculated to save 1,280 metric tons of standard coal, reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 3,300 tons and reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by 105 tons, which showcases significant energy-saving and emission-reducing benefits.

""Currently, more than 20 percent of the electricity consumed in our industrial park comes from photovoltaic power generation, and it is seldom affected during peak electricity consumption periods. The photovoltaic panels can directly absorb solar energy, providing thermal insulation for the factory while effectively reducing building energy consumption. Our factory area has become a real energy-saving 'green factory',"" said Ren Jie, a maintenance staff member at Dong'e Ejiao Group's photovoltaic power station."

"Seventy-four students infected with norovirus at a middle school in Anqiu, Shandong province, experienced nausea, vomiting and diarrhea on Saturday, the city's bureau of education and sports said on Monday night.

Norovirus is highly contagious and often food-borne. It is sometimes incorrectly referred to as ""stomach flu"" but is not related to the flu virus.

Hongyi Middle School organized medical treatment for the affected students and sent 14 to the hospital for observation and treatment.

Ten students remain hospitalized, four have been discharged, and the rest, who returned to school, no longer show symptoms.

After collecting and analyzing samples, the city's disease control and prevention center concluded that the norovirus infection, caused the illnesses.

The school in Anqiu cleaned and disinfected its facilities to reduce the risk of transmission."

"A promotional event, entitled ""Friendly Shandong, Remarkable Shandong"" is being held at Beijing Exhibition Center from Nov 10 to 12, showcasing Shandong's renowned brands, high-tech products, specialties, handicrafts and picturesque landscapes.

Diplomatic envoys were impressed by Shandong's achievements in agriculture, advanced industries, culture and tourism and expressed their cooperation potentials with Shandong. Check out what they say:

Caroline Wilson, British Ambassador to China. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

""Shandong presents many opportunities for doing business, and is one of our priority provinces for developing the UK and China's trade and investment relations. Some of the UK's leading companies already have a presence in Shandong, such as AstraZeneca, which recently announced new investment at their site in Qingdao. And some of Shandong's leading companies, such as Haier and Hisense, have established operations in the UK. We hope to build on this strong foundation in future.""

Muhammad Hasanein Khaddam, Syrian Ambassador to China. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

""Shandong is one of the cradles of Chinese and international civilizations both in philosophy and spirituality. I look forward to visiting the birthplace of the great philosopher Confucius and Mount Tai. Shandong has made remarkable economic success. I hope to introduce Syria to Shandong business communities and also wish to introduce Shandong business communities to Syria to participate in our reconstruction.""

Ratish Vinay Pal Singh, Charge d'affaires of Fiji Embassy in China. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

""I take back a lot of good information about how much more Shandong can do for many countries including Fiji. There's more in Shandong that we can learn from apart from Confucius practice. Fiji and Shandong have great potential for cooperation and exchange in tourism, agriculture, and fishery and we will actively promote cooperation between Shandong and Fiji in various fields in the future.""

Ivan Zyuulu, Ambassador of Zambia to China. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

""The event provides enlightening and opening up avenues for discussions and comping up with ways and means of working together between China and Zambia and carrying out cultural and people-to-people exchanges. There are a lot of opportunities for cooperation between Shandong and Zambia. Zambia is a less developed country and industrialization is one of our key targets. There is a lot of experience from Shandong, which we can learn from. In addition, some provinces of Zambia are primarily focused on agriculture and learning from how Shandong is handling its agriculture programs would be very helpful to develop our agricultural sector."""

"Scallions 2.58 meters tall won top honors at a harvest festival that kicked off on Friday in the Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo by Lu Hongdong/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Super tall scallions — 2.58 meters — were recognized at a harvest festival that kicked off on Friday in the Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong province.

""I grow about 1.3 hectares of scallions,"" said Song Guangbao, who grew the tallest scallions this year. ""The weather, with less rain, has been favorable for scallion growth, allowing me to produce 5,000 kilograms of scallions per mu.""

Zhangqiu boasts a long history of scallion cultivation. They are known for being tall, sweet and crisp. The scallion industry drives regional economic development and increases farmers' incomes.

A farmer in the Zhangqiu district of Jinan, Shandong province, checks his scallions. [Photo by Gao Chuanzeng/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Zhangqiu boasts a long history of scallion cultivation. They are known for being tall, sweet and crisp. [Photo by Gao Chuanzeng/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Agricultural products are promoted via livestreaming at a three-day event titled Friendly Shandong and Remarkable Shandong, which opened on Friday in Beijing. WANG JING/CHINA DAILY

Quite a few visitors to a three-day promotional event in Beijing on Friday tried their hands at fixing a Luban lock — a traditional Chinese educational toy believed to have been invented by Lu Ban, a structural engineer from the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC).

The lock, whose concave and convex parts dovetail perfectly, is among hundreds of products that have been selected from the agriculture, manufacturing as well as cultural and tourism sectors of Shandong province in East China.

They are being promoted at the event, titled Friendly Shandong and Remarkable Shandong, two major brands that the province has been nurturing to represent the hospitality of the local populace of Shandong and the exquisite workmanship of the province's products, which embody the country's intangible cultural heritage and form the epitome of craftsmanship and dedication.

Lu, who was born in what is now Shandong province, is known as the ""father of carpentry"" in China. While it is easy to take his locks apart, it is difficult to reassemble them, and this is what attracts many to try their luck.

As a key place for early Chinese civilization, Shandong, the hometown of Chinese philosophers Confucius and Mencius, has many cultural treasures worthy of note on the global stage, said Benjamin Hammer, a US citizen who works at Shandong University.

Hammer chose a bouquet of edible peonies made of pancake as a gift at the promotional event. The colors of the pancake flowers are from fruits and vegetables, and the makers used glutinous rice and honey to stick the pieces together, presenting an exquisite handicraft item.

Zhou Naixiang, the governor of Shandong who addressed the opening of the event, said: ""In the economic field, Shandong has committed to developing 10 industries, including information technology, modern efficient agriculture and high-quality cultural tourism, presenting huge potential in cooperation.""

zhaoruixue@chinadaily.com.cn"

"The ninth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations in Qufu, Shandong province, is set to break new ground with expanded international participation and an unwavering commitment to openness. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong, the birthplace of Confucian culture and an important birthplace of Chinese civilization, adheres to tradition while also innovating, allowing traditional Chinese culture to shine in the new era, local media reported.

In recent years, relying on its rich cultural heritage, Shandong has built major cultural platforms such as the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations and the Nishan World Center for Confucian Studies, and has created exemplary zones for the preservation and development of outstanding traditional culture in places like Qufu and Tai'an.

Nishan is just a microcosm of Shandong's new benchmark in cultural innovation.

Qingdao, a coastal city in Shandong, has revitalized its century-old courtyards through urban renewal, making them a popular must-visit spot for locals and tourists.

Weifang has taken the lead in the province by establishing the Weifang Handicraft Museum and the ""Shandong Handicraft • Weifang Shangpin"" exhibition and sales base, promoting the development of advantageous handmade industries such as kite-making, guitar production, and gold and jewelry processing.

Rizhao has multiple intangible cultural heritage workshops that rely on black pottery, farmers' paintings, and straw and willow weaving, which generate employment and have market potential.

By utilizing local intangible cultural heritage protection facilities, traditional craft training institutes, idle spaces, and existing enterprise workshops for renovation or construction, Rizhao has created relatively concentrated spaces for traditional craft production, training, exchange, and showcasing.

Zibo has created a number of exquisite cultural and creative products. These products incorporate traditional cultural elements of Zibo, such as pottery, silk, and cuju (a form of football), and have been well-received on the market."

"A villager prepares fresh-cut roses at the Qufang Modern Agricultural Industry Park in Wujia Qufang village in Juxian county, Shandong province. ZHAO RUIXUE/CHINA DAILY

Zhang Jicai, a villager in Rizhao, Shandong province, spends 10 minutes walking from her home to a rose-growing greenhouse at the Qufang Modern Agricultural Industry Park where she works.

In the clean and bright greenhouse in her village — Wujia Qufang, located in Juxian county — an array of roses from countries such as the Netherlands, France and Germany are ready to blossom.

""I work in a 'flower house' and live in a 'garden-like community',"" said Zhang, 36.

The community she lives in is a newly built one. She and 1,660 others in her village moved into two-floor villas and apartments in the community in 2020.

Facilities, including a kindergarten, a primary school, an after-school study room, a canteen for elderly people and a clinic, are well-appointed with exquisite landscaping.

""Years ago, young people in our village went to cities to work, but now they are eager to return to the village because we can earn a decent salary by working in the park,"" said Zhang, adding that more importantly, young people who return can take care of their children and parents.

The creation of the agricultural park has brought about many changes in Wujia Qufang.

It has not only provided jobs for villagers, but has also boosted their collective income, said Dong Xueshan, Party secretary of the village.

The park, which received an investment from a company in 2018, now produces 4,000 metric tons of cherry tomatoes and 17 million fresh-cut roses annually. Besides offering jobs, the park also pays the villagers a dividend for its use of the land.

The roses grown in the greenhouse are high quality.

""The fresh-cut flowers can last for two weeks, about twice as long as regular roses,"" said Zhao Shanxing, chief engineer of the park. ""For holidays such as Spring Festival and Valentine's Day, the demand is high, with an average of 200,000 flowers sold every day.""

This year, the park's best rose sales were during Qixi, the Chinese version of Valentine's Day, with customers preferring orange roses in particular, he said.

Because the current supply of roses cannot meet demand, the operator of the park is building two new flower bases to increase production.

""We plan to expand our cherry tomato and fresh-cut rose markets overseas next year,"" Zhao said.

As the village earns more from the industry, more services are being provided to improve villagers' lives.

All of the 227 people above age 65 can enjoy breakfast and lunch for free daily in the village's daycare center for seniors.

""The reason for providing two meals is because young people have to go to work during the day, so they don't have time to take care of their parents. We encourage young people to have dinner with their parents, which is a traditional value of filial piety,"" Dong said.

The 700-square-meter center is equipped with a canteen, a clinic and sports facilities, and it has become a place where seniors gather to socialize."

"The joint investigation team that has been looking into the poaching and trafficking of wild birds in the Changdao National Nature Reserve in Yantai, Shandong province has filed five illegal hunting cases and has three people in custody, ThePaper reported on Monday.

A program from the news website released an undercover video, exposing the poaching of wild birds on Tuoji Island and Daheishan Island in the reserve, which is a crucial gateway for north-south migratory birds in eastern China. The video shows dense bird nets scattered in the forests on the islands in the reserve, which had entangled protected birds such as eagles and falcons. After being caught, some of the birds were dismembered on the spot, and their remains, including heads, wings and tail feathers, were left on the ground.

The bodies of some birds were sent to local restaurants.

Wildlife conservationists set free several protected birds, including a short-eared owl and a skylark, while undercover with ThePaper reporters.

Following the release of the video, a joint investigation team was formed by members from authorities, including public security bureaus and the reserve management center. They went to islands and restaurants to conduct on-site investigations. Efforts are also being made to combat the illegal hunting of birds by clearing bird nets."

"Paul Wainaina, Kenyatta University's vice-chancellor, addresses local staff and guests during the signing of a memorandum of understanding with Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. [Photo by Otiato Opali/chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Kenya's Kenyatta University have signed an agreement to jointly establish the China-Kenya Traditional Medicine Center.

The agreement was signed during the Kenya-Shandong Dialogue on Traditional Medicine Cooperation and Development, held at Kenyatta University in Kenya's capital Nairobi on Oct 25.

Senior officials from East China's Shandong province, including those from Shandong Provincial People's Congress and the Provincial Foreign Affairs Office, and representatives of the Shandong Chamber of Commerce in Kenya also attended the meeting.

Sun Licheng, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Provincial People's Congress, said that Shandong is championing traditional medicine as a pivotal emerging industry. The province is keen on pioneering a series of innovative traditional medicines and is enthusiastic about collaborating with Kenya, which would encompass robust industrial partnerships, standard making and deepened cultural exchanges in traditional medicine, he said.

Li Kejian, president of Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, said that the envisioned center would evolve into a comprehensive hub for traditional medicine services and cultural outreach. While it would primarily target Kenya, its influence would span across East Africa and potentially all of Africa, aiming to enhance the health welfare of its residents, he said.

Paul Wainaina, Kenyatta University's vice-chancellor, said that the cooperation between the two universities comes at the right time.

""We used to have a small laboratory where we would analyze the efficacy of various herbal concoctions, but the laboratory was inadequate,"" he said. ""We want to be able to commercialize what we have. We are looking forward to looking at the herbal resources we have in Kenya and what the Chinese partners can contribute with a view of working together to produce supplementary medicine.""

According to the Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Shandong province, the center's objectives are multifaceted, including initiating an international laboratory for traditional medicine, standardizing African traditional medicine practices, facilitating personnel training, and fostering enterprise alliances for protecting and innovating medicinal resources, processing traditional medicinal herbs, and promoting trade in traditional medicinal products."

"A worker packages freshly cut roses in a workshop in Zhaoxian town on Tuesday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

At a rose growing base in Zhaoxian town in Juxian county of Rizhao, Shandong province, farmers are busy sorting and packaging freshly cut roses that will be delivered to big cities including Beijing and Shanghai.

The town has more than 400 hectares of land growing more than 30 varieties of roses and producing 62 million fresh flowers annually. The rose-growing sector has increased local incomes and promotes rural revitalization.

Because the current supply cannot meet the demand for roses, the operator of the base is building two new bases to increase production, said Zhao Shanxing, the chief engineer.

Packaged roses are ready for delivery to customers from a base in Zhaoxian town in Rizhao, Shandong province, on Tuesday. [Photo by Zhang Yujun/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"A view of Yellow River Delta in Dongying, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Yellow River, the second-longest in China, is known as China's ""Mother River"" and the cradle of Chinese civilization.

The river flows through nine cities and 25 counties in East China's Shandong province before reaching the Bohai Sea, stretching for 628 kilometers within Shandong. With a basin area of 18,300 square kilometers, the river has helped form distinctive cultural and natural landscapes and nourished many dynamic cities in Shandong.

As one of the main settings in the classic Chinese novel Water Margin, Dongping Lake in Shandong's Tai'an city is the largest lake in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River.

In recent years, Dongping county has leveraged the natural advantages of Dongping Lake to develop and enhance its tourism industry. For example, it has constructed eight scenic areas along the 84-kilometer lakeside. With the local government's support, the cultural and tourism industry in the region has been thriving.

An oriental white stork flies over the intersection of the Yellow River and Bohai Sea in Shandong province. CHINA DAILY

A time-honored street in Lijin county, Dongying, has been a hit with tourists who are interested in intangible cultural heritages. Here, visitors can appreciate the natural scenery of the Yellow River, experience traditional folklore, savor produce that comes from the Yellow River estuary, as well as local intangible culture heritage items.

To connect the abundant tourism resources along the Yellow River and the sea, Shandong is promoting the construction of an immersive cultural experience tourism corridor. It has launched 10 high-quality tourism routes along the Yellow River and the sea that feature self-driving, cycling, camping, study tours and night tours."

"Farmers in Zhuliuwang village in the Fushan district of Yantai, Shandong province pick grapes on Tuesday. [Photo by Liu Weifang/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Zhuliuwang village in the Fushan district of Yantai, Shandong province, started picking grapes recently as the golden harvest season arrives.

Taking advantage of suitable local soil and climate conditions, farmers in the district are developing grape growing into a business that integrates planting, deep processing, marketing and leisure tourism."

"Recently, a high-purity sputtering target project for integrated circuits officially commenced mass production in the Tianqu New District of Dezhou, Shandong province, said its producer, YouyanYijin New Materials Co Ltd.

These targets are primarily used for the production of 12-inch large-scale wafers. Once in full operation, they are expected to capture more than 20 percent of the global market share in the field of sputtering targets for integrated circuits.

While the project serves as a flagship of the integrated circuit industry in the district, it also vividly showcases the flourishing development of the thriving sector.

In recent years, the Tianqu New District has given top priority to the development of the integrated circuit industry. By undertaking innovative reforms, effective resource allocation, and intensified efforts to attract investment, the district has actively promoted the deep integration of the industrial, innovation and value chains, and has played a pivotal role in the development of the integrated circuit industry in Shandong.

From January to August this year, the integrated circuit industry in the district achieved a revenue of 4.31 billion yuan ($590 million), representing about 40 percent of the city's total revenue in the sector. Notably, the district's revenue of the three ""core"" sub-sectors of integrated circuits — materials, designing, and packaging testing — also accounted for 96 percent of the city's total, signaling its simultaneous increase in both quantity and quality.

The accelerated development of the integrated circuit industry in Dezhou's Tianqu New District has drawn in leading domestic electronic information companies. To date, the region has attracted 121 such enterprises, including 36 large-scale ones.

The development layout is forming a diversified and synergistic ""one core, multiple elements"" industrial ecosystem surrounding core manufacturers such as YouyanYijin New Materials Co Ltd, Qorvo Inc, Kuncheng Electronics Co and Tongyuanwei Semiconductor.

""As of now, Shandong's Dezhou is actively establishing itself as a critical national hub for integrated circuit key materials. Tianqu New District in Dezhou has successively introduced significant projects such as joint semiconductor packaging and testing by Weixun, large-sized silicon wafer production by Qorvo Inc, and more,"" said Li Tao, a member of the Party Working Committee and deputy director of the management committee of the district.

""This will propel Dezhou's silicon materials industry to the forefront of integrated circuit key materials in the country,"" Li added."

"In the past decade, China has promoted the building and renovation of rural roads, such as this one in Changxing county, Zhejiang province. TAN YUNFENG/FOR CHINA DAILY

Transportation project boosts incomes, helps manufacturers get products to market

Since May, a manufacturing company in a rural area of eastern China has greatly improved the transportation of its products thanks to the opening of an upgraded road.

""Transportation efficiency has increased three to five fold,"" said Ding Yuhao, a purchasing manager of the company in Xindian, Yucheng county, Shandong province. Jinan Ruinasi Door, Window and Curtain Wall Company mainly produces large windows and glass walls and requires large trucks to transport its products.

""We had to use smaller trucks to carry products from the factory to the main road, and then shift them to bigger trucks to carry on,"" Ding said, adding the company faced similar problems when it transported raw materials to its factory.

Since the road linking the factory to the nearby freeway network was upgraded and reopened in May, no more truck changes have been required. The upgraded road linking Yucheng county and Xindian is 16.1 kilometers long, and 21 meters wide with four lanes. The speed limit is 60 km per hour.

Before the upgrade, the road, built in 2010, was 8 meters wide with two lanes. The total investment in the upgrade project was 280 million yuan ($38.49 million), according to the Yucheng transport commission.

The road is part of the rural highway network in Yucheng, which has greatly improved transportation and travel for local residents and companies, said Pang Chenchen, an official from the transportation infrastructure assurance center in Yucheng.

The county's rural highway network now stretches 1,951 km. Since 2017, Yucheng has received multiple regional and national awards for its accomplishments in building rural roads. Last year, the county was selected as one of the national model counties for building rural roads, according to the local transportation commission.

Hou Runfang, head of the human and administration affairs department of Dezhou Victoria Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Company in Xindian, said transportation was restricted before the improvements.

""Back then, when two trucks passed each other, drivers had to be extremely careful,"" Hou said.

Every day, the farm produces and ships about 100 metric tons of fresh milk. Other agricultural products, such as cattle and feed, are brought to the farm, making transportation the lifeblood of the company.

""Each trip (from the farm to the county) saves up to half an hour. In the past, with poor road conditions, it was easy to get stuck in traffic,"" she said.

""There was no partition in the middle of the road, so some people easily crossed the road illegally, which raised safety concerns and further slowed the transportation speed,"" she said.

Fresh milk must be delivered quickly to ensure quality, and saving 30 minutes on transportation is very important, she said. ""Our employees also find it more convenient to travel between work and home since the road was upgraded,"" Hou said.

Two workers load parcels on a bus which serves as a delivery vehicle in rural areas of Yucheng county, Shandong province, on Aug 30. ZHANG YU/CHINA NEWS SERVICE

An upgraded freeway opened in 2021 has also benefited residents.

Pang, from the infrastructure assurance center, said there are now eight entry points to the freeway.

""From any town in the county, it takes only 10 minutes to drive to the freeway. Before 2021, we only had two entry points. It was common to see vehicles lining up to enter or leave Yucheng,"" Pang said.

Liu Xingwang, a truck driver who usually travels between the provincial capital Jinan and Yucheng, said traffic flow has improved greatly. One of the entries to the freeway network that opened in 2021 has greatly saved travel time, he added.

Liu Zhuxiang, head of Qiyao village in Yucheng, said the improved transportation network has benefited residents.

""Transportation was less convenient. Farmers usually carried pears to the market to sell,"" he said, adding that with improved and wider roads, customers can drive trucks to farm gates to buy fresh fruit.

The incomes of local people have also increased, he said.

In the past decade, China has promoted the building and renovation of rural roads. According to the Ministry of Transport, China has more than 4.5 million km of rural roads. In 2011, the length was 3.56 million km. In the past decade, the roads in 105,000 villages and more than 1,000 towns have been surfaced.

Last year, China built and upgraded more than 180,000 km of rural roads."

"Workers at a photovoltaic power station in Suanzili village, Liaocheng. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Thanks to an abundance of natural resources, Suanzili village in Xiaojiazhuang town, Chiping district of Liaocheng, Shandong province, is pursuing efforts to develop clean electricity — with an emphasis on photovoltaic power.

The village site is mostly saline-alkali and waterlogged land that used to be the old course of the Yellow River, making it unsuitable for agricultural production. However, it has favorable sunlight conditions, and under the stewardship of Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid, Chiping Xinjiayuan Photovoltaic Agriculture invested 180 million yuan ($24.6 million) to build a photovoltaic power station with a designed capacity of 40 megawatt-hours.

The station, which began operating in 2017, has an average annual power generation of 49 million kilowatt-hours, equivalent to the energy generated by 16,000 metric tons of standard coal annually. Last year, it generated operating income of 40.82 million yuan.

""The photovoltaic power station was built on 0.8 square kilometers of saline-alkali land in a location where the annual land transfer fee can exceed 1,650,000 yuan per sq km. The power generation company sets aside 3.6 million yuan from the annual power generation income for rural revitalization special funds, achieving double income growth for the villagers and the collective society,"" said Li Dengxin, Party secretary of the village.

Liaocheng city is in an area with abundant solar and wind energy resources, making it suitable for large-scale development and construction of new energy facilities. Photovoltaics are the main channel for that development, and after years of effort Liaocheng's new energy industry is now entering a period of high-quality and rapid development. Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid has simplified procedures for the application and launch of photovoltaic power generation projects and sought market-oriented projects, promoting their rapid development.

""To ensure the efficient and orderly grid connection and power generation of photovoltaic projects, we optimized the grid connection process for photovoltaic power generation projects and provide high-quality services in project application, design and construction, and grid connection acceptance in order to accelerate the grid connection of such projects."" said Hu Xiaodong, general manager of Shandong Liaocheng Power Supply Company of State Grid."

"A farmer dries red chilli peppers in Zhuquan village of Tongjing town, Yinan county, Shandong province on Saturday. [Photo by Wang Yanbing for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Zhuquan village of Tongjing town, Yinan county, Shandong province have started drying their crops and fruits, presenting a picturesque scene of harvest."

"A training course was set up for an emergency search and rescue team from Nepal at an earthquake emergency rescue training base in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Nineteen members of an emergency search and rescue team from Nepal participated in a training course recently at an earthquake emergency rescue training base in Jinan, Shandong province.

They practiced search and rescue techniques and conducted practical exercises with the emergency rescue team of the Red Cross Society of China Jinan Branch.

A training course was set up for an emergency search and rescue team from Nepal at an earthquake emergency rescue training base in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

They were taught emergency rescue theory and techniques to enhance their comprehensive cooperative rescue capabilities, organizers said.

The training course focused on basic knowledge of emergency rescue equipment, construction and management of emergency rescue bases, rescue techniques for collapsed buildings at earthquake disaster sites, high-altitude rope rescue techniques and on-site medical care, said Ao Yufeng, team leader of the Jinan emergency rescue team."

"A farmer collects high-oleic peanuts in a demonstration field in Yaxi town of Rongcheng, Shandong province, on Sept 18, 2023. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Yaxi town of Rongcheng, Shandong province, started harvesting high-oleic peanuts on Monday in a demonstration field. Yaxi has established a breeding base for high-oleic peanuts covering more than 133 hectares. The object is to naturally substitute the nuts' linoleic acic with oleic acid, which give them a shelf life up to 10 times longer after roasting."

"The Yellow River flows through nine cities and 25 counties in East China’s Shandong province before reaching the Bohai Sea.

The river and the sea nourish many dynamic cities in Shandong in terms of culture, ecology and economy.

Let’s follow in the footsteps of a delegation of international reporters and internet influencers as they discover the cultural gems and stunning natural views in the Shandong cities of Weifang, Dongying and Zibo."

"Yellow River, the second-longest river in China, is known as China's ""Mother River"" and the cradle of Chinese civilization. Nestled at the point where the Yellow River meets the Bohai Sea, Dongying city of Shandong province is a region enriched with an abundant blend of cultural heritage and breathtaking natural scenery.

The Yellow River Delta showcases stunning natural beauty that offers lucrative opportunities for tourism. It serves as a crucial wintering and stopover destination for migratory birds, providing visitors with the chance to observe these wild avian wonders.

Additionally, the delta affords tourists the breathtaking spectacle of the Yellow River gracefully merging with the sea, showcasing its remarkable and majestic allure.

During a recent tour, Paul Rutikanga, a reporter from Rwanda, expressed his amazement, saying ""This is my first time, seeing China's 'Mother River,' the Yellow River, and it's truly spectacular.""

As part of the tour titled ""Meeting the Sea along the Yellow River - Global Influencers Explore Shandong's Charm"" from Sept 8 to 10, a delegation of international influencers and reporters explored the cities of Weifang, Zibo, and Dongying in Shandong, delving deeper into the Yellow River culture.

""I've learned about the efforts made by the locals to protect the delta wetland ecosystem and rare bird species, which has shown me the beautiful coexistence of humans and nature,"" said Paul.

The Yellow River meanders through nine cities in Shandong province from west to east and nurtures a wealth of cultural heritage and natural landscape along its banks.

The province is also home to four UNESCO World Heritage sites, including Mount Tai, and boasts eight items inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity such as paper-cutting and Chinese shadow puppetry.

Shandong has been working to promote Yellow River culture by leveraging its tourism resources and is building its tourism brand of ""Meeting the Sea along the Yellow River"". According to Wang Lei, head of the Shandong Provincial Department of culture and tourism, local authorities have been organizing a series of promotional activities since June, 2022, that have facilitated cooperation and exchanges in the Yellow River basin.

Official statistics show that Shandong received 340 million tourist trips in the first half of this year and generated a tourism revenue of 406.07 billion yuan ($55.54 billion)."

"East China's Shandong province is where the Yellow River and Grand Canal converge. The former has given birth to countless rivers since ancient times, while the latter connects five major river systems of China, encapsulating the memories of a nation's rise and fall and the diligence and wisdom of generations living along the canal.

A delegation of reporters and social media influencers from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Rwanda, Greece, Egypt, and Yemen embarked on an exploration of Weifang, Dongying and Zibo, cities in the province, from Sept 8 to 10.

During their first stop in Weifang, the guests were treated to an exhibition showcasing a wealth of intangible cultural heritage items pertaining to the Yellow River and Grand Canal.

Paintings, food, dances, wares and handicrafts from ancient China dazzled the group.

""This is the first time I've been to Shandong, everything is very interesting, and I am particularly fond of the way lace is made with wood bobbins,"" said Asmaa Mostafa, an Egyptian internet influencer and international student based in Wuxi, Jiangsu province, while visiting a booth themed on traditional Shandong weaving.

Zou Hanzhen is the fourth-generation inheritor of a wood bobbin lace-making technique from Yantai in Shandong. ""I have been practicing it for more than 50 years. I saw my grandmother and mother doing it for a living while I was a kid. This type of lace was actually very popular around the 1970s and was exported to over 60 countries, especially Italy, Belgium, the UK and Japan,"" said Zou proudly.

Zou Hanzhen, an inheritor of Yantai's wood bobbin lace-making technique, poses with her works on Sept 8. [Photo by Xin Siyuan/ provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""I really wish that more people would learn this lace-making skill, since we have very limited practitioners here, and it is gradually dying out. I would like to see it taught in schools,"" Zou added.

Like a majestic dragon winding its way through northern China, the Yellow River is both ferocious and gentle, bringing fertile soil and oasis-like landscapes, as well as floods and mudslides that have claimed countless lives throughout history. It is through the perpetual struggles with the river that the Chinese have learned to coexist with nature.

""Where there is water, there is culture. The Yellow River is central to Chinese culture, and the South-to-North Water Diversion Project is not only an achievement for China, but for the world. It demonstrates humanity's relationship with nature – how they work with nature and overcome it,"" said Richard Blewitt from the UK.

Expats learn Lyuju Opera in Guangrao county, Dongying city on Sept 9. [Photo by Xue Miao/ provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Dongying is where the Yellow River flows into the Bohai Sea and is the birthplace of Lyuju Opera, which is renowned for its unique singing style, graceful movements and elaborate costumes.

""Even without understanding the lyrics, through the voices and actions alone, you can get an idea of the song's feel,"" said Dean Munk, a Canadian teacher based in Jinan for six years. His absorption in history made him decide to stay in Shandong, the birthplace of Confucius.

On the afternoon of Sept 9, the expats went to the Bird Museum of the Yellow River Delta and the Yellow River Estuary Ecotourism Area.

""We now see the birds returning to the area, and they are living with people, it is a very positive message. I am very happy to see that nature is rejuvenating itself,"" said Alexandra Alexandrou, a blogger and traveler from Greece, lauding a slew of actions the city has taken to protect birds and their habitats.

The final destination of the delegation's trip is Zibo – a serene and small industrial city until March this year, when a barbecue campaign took the country by storm and triggered a tourism surge.

In contrast to the sizzling charm of barbecue, ceramic, another calling card of Zibo, remains a quiet craft that requires patience and knowledge encompassing painting, sculpture and many other artistic forms.

Mohammed Al-Zouba tries carving patterns on a plate at the 23rd China (Zibo) International Ceramics Exposition on Sept 10. [Photo by Xin Siyuan/ provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

This old craft turns out to have many modern-day fans, including Mohammed Al-Zouba, a Yemeni photographer who tried his hand at making glazed earthenware and ceramics at the 23rd China (Zibo) International Ceramics Exposition, which is being held on Sept 9 -12."

"Chinese and foreign visitors pose for photos at the Taishan Mountain. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

The 37th Taishan International Mountain Climbing Festival was held in Tai'an city, East China's Shandong province, from Sept 3 to 6, attended by nearly 500 guests from both China and abroad.

Under the theme of ""Ascend Taishan Mountain to View the World"", the international festival featured a diverse range of activities aimed at promoting cultural exchanges between China and the rest of the world. Highlights included dialogues on culture and tourism, a scenic tour of Tai'an and an international tourism photo exhibition titled ""Connecting China"".

Taishan Mountain, one of ""The Five Sacred Mountains of China"", symbolizes ancient Chinese civilizations and beliefs, and has always been a source of inspiration for Chinese artists and scholars.

Wan Ting, deputy director of the Network of International Culturalink Entities (NICE), speaks at the event's opening. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

During his remarks at the event's opening, Wan Ting, deputy director of the Network of International Culturalink Entities (NICE), the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, underscored Taishan's pivotal role in facilitating cross-cultural dialogues. He said he hopes the event will help further promote exchanges between civilizations.

The opening ceremony was highlighted with captivating performances such as the dancing piece ""Taishan Rime"", traditional Chinese music and classic Chinese opera.

Chinese musicians perform traditional music at the event's opening ceremony. [Photo provide to Chinaculture.org]

The ""Ascend Taishan Mountain to View the World"" symposium engaged participants in discussions about cultural heritage preservation, protection and development, as well as its relevance to today's life.

During sightseeing excursions, both domestic and international guests marveled at the awe-inspiring landscapes of Taishan Mountain and explored historical sites including the Dai Temple - the largest and best-preserved structure on Taishan Moutain.

Foreign visitors pose for photos at the Taishan Mountain. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]

The 37th Taishan International Mountain Climbing Festival was jointly organized by the Network of International Culturalink Entities, Shandong's provincial department of culture and tourism, and the Tai'an municipal government.

Chinese artists perform traditional opera at the event's opening ceremony. [Photo provided to Chinaculture.org]"

"Paul Rutikanga (R) shows off a work he created with the help of an artist at an intangible cultural heritage exhibition in Weifang on Sept 8. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Yellow River flows through nine cities and 25 counties in East China's Shandong province, spanning 628 kilometers before reaching the Bohai Sea. The river and the sea together nourish many dynamic cities such as Weifang, Yantai, Rizhao and Dongying in various aspects of culture, ecology and economy.

I was as thrilled as other global reporters and social media influencers from Sept 8 to 10 when we were invited to a trip to experience the high-quality cultural and tourism resources in Shandong province.

The three-day ""Meeting the Sea along the Yellow River - Global Influencers Explore Shandong's Charm"" event, organized by Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, enabled us to visit three wonderful places of Weifang, Dongying and Zibo.

This fantastic trip started on Sept 8 in Weifang, a city rich in culture and urban vitality. Our delegation visited the River Harmony: 2023 Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition along the Yellow River Basin and the Grand Canal.

We experienced dozens of intangible cultural items, including Weifang Kites, known for intricate designs and vibrant colors, peach shell carvings, where delicate patterns are etched on fragile peach pits, and wood engraving New Year paintings, a craftsmanship that combines traditional engraving and carpentry skills.

Paul Rutikanga, a reporter from Rwanda, was awestruck by the exhibition. ""I'm overjoyed to have the opportunity to witness the cultural legacies with my own eyes; it's incredible that the inheritors are confident in passing down history to future generations,"" he said.

We also had the opportunity to set eyes on the coastal city of Dongying, which offers biological diversity and cultural charm. The Lyuju Opera show staged on Sept 9 for us featured unique makeup and delicate moves. The wetland along our way to where the Yellow River meets the sea reflects lush greenery and is a perfect sanctuary for migratory birds.

Mohammed Al-Zouba, a Yemeni photographer, said he was amazed to learn that the number of the Oriental White Stork, once an endangered species, has doubled to over 6,000, and more and more migratory birds are choosing to stay in the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying.

Douglas Dueno is a foreign expert of China Daily Website.

Expats enjoy a moment trying on costumes of Lyuju Opera and posing for a group photo with famous Lyuju Opera actors and actresses on Sept 9. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

International visitors learn about biological diversity at a bird museum in Dongying on Sept 9. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The Taishan Mountain climbing race was held on Wednesday, attracting over 10,000 people competing for glory. [Photo by Liang Ben/For chinadaily.com.cn]

As a major event of the 37th Taishan Mountain International Climbing Festival, the Taishan Mountain climbing race was held on Wednesday, attracting over 10,000 people competing for glory.

Zhu Bingying from Henan province won the championship in the youth women's group with one hour 14 minutes 44 seconds. Meanwhile Meng Guangfu from Guizhou province won the championship in the youth men's group with one hour 5 minutes 52 seconds.

The youth group runners needed to cover a journey of 8.6 kilometers ending at Jade Emperor Peak, the summit of Taishan Mountain.

""The Taishan race is a distinctive one because the course is all steps, which requires us to maintain a better rhythm,"" said Meng.

The festival began in Tai'an, Shandong province on Tuesday. Initiated in 1987, the festival has developed into a comprehensive platform that offers rich activities including climbing competitions, exhibitions, and cultural and sports performances.

Zhu Bingying from Henan province won the championship in the youth women's group with one hour 14 minutes 44 seconds at the Taishan Mountain climbing race which was held on Wednesday in Tai'an, Shandong province. [Photo by Chen Yang/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Meng Guangfu from Guizhou province won the championship in the youth men's group with one hour 5 minutes 52 seconds at the Taishan Mountain climbing race which was held on Wednesday in Tai'an, Shandong province.[Photo by Chen Yang/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Fishermen sort and ship their catches at Luofeng fishing port in Chengshan town, Rongcheng, Shandong province on Monday. [Photo by Li Xinjun for chinadaily.com.cn]

Fishermen were busy sorting their catches at a port in Rongcheng, a county-level city in Weihai, Shandong province, on Monday. Fishing boats set sail from ports in Shandong the previous Friday, after the recent four-month fishing moratorium in the Bohai Sea and Yellow Sea ended.

People select and buy fish at Luofeng fishing port in Chengshan town, Rongcheng, Shandong province on Monday. [Photo by Li Xinjun for chinadaily.com.cn]ion"

"The 27th Shandong-Taiwan Economic and Trade Cooperation Talks is held in Weifang, Shandong province, from Saturday to Monday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Fourteen Taiwanese-funded projects were signed at the opening ceremony of the 27th Shandong-Taiwan Economic and Trade Cooperation Talks on Saturday, involving sectors including health care and intelligent equipment development and manufacturing.

During the three-day event held in Weifang, Shandong, attendees held talks on the topics of agriculture, cultural and tourism industry, health care, biopharmaceuticals, intelligent manufacturing and ready-to-eat food.

The event was jointly organized by the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council and the Shandong Provincial People's Government, aiming to promote exchanges and cooperation between the two sides."

"Farmers in Gangxi town in Rongcheng, Shandong province, sort and package figs on Wednesday. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers in Rongcheng, a county-level city in Weihai, Shandong province — known for sweet figs — have been busy harvesting the fruit. In Gangxi town, one of the main fig-producing areas of Rongcheng, farmers sorted and packaged figs on Wednesday."

"Visitors check a model of a clean energy project during the Green, Low-carbon and High-quality Development Conference in Yantai, Shandong province, on Tuesday. [TANG KE/FOR CHINA DAILY]

At an industrial park in Yantai, Shandong province, a truck is filled with liquid carbon dioxide on Monday and heads for Weihai, neighboring Yantai. The liquid carbon dioxide can be used as a shielding gas during welding work at a shipbuilding factory, said the driver.

Built by Moon Environment Technology Co Ltd, two cylinder-shaped containers hold the liquid carbon dioxide for industrial use, while one round-shaped container holds liquid carbon dioxide for food production use.

""We can sell out the liquid carbon dioxide we produce on the same day,"" said Pang Qiyuan, a technique manager of the company.

Materials for the liquid carbon dioxide come from waste gas created by a chemical factory located in the same industrial park.

Carbon dioxide waste is transported from the chemical factory to Moon Tech through a 170-meter-long gas pipeline every hour. After undergoing processes including compression, desulfurization, separation and cooling, around 480 metric tons of high-purity liquid carbon dioxide is produced daily, which is applied in various industries such as welding and dry ice production.

The project, which can utilize over 95 percent of the carbon dioxide waste, is part of Shandong's efforts to pursue high-quality development with green and low-carbon features.

Shandong used to be an industrial hub. During the past decade, the eastern province has made efforts to upgrade the green and low-carbon transformation of its traditional industries, in a bid to contribute to the nation's dual carbon goals.

The province has ramped up its efforts on green development since early this year, aiming to accomplish various preparation works and ensuring a strong start to the construction of a pilot zone for green, low-carbon and high-quality development, which is the first of its kind in the sector in the country.

During the Green, Low-carbon and High-quality Development Conference, the province signed agreements for a total of 103 projects in fields such as clean energy production to this end on Tuesday.

China aims to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.

China has maintained a growth trend in the sector of green trade in recent years, with an average annual growth of 3.18 percent from 2013 to 2022, according to a report on China's green trade development released at the conference in Yantai, which concluded on Wednesday.

The report was released by the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Ministry of Commerce.

The proportion of China's green trade in the global market has increased by 2.3 percentage points, according to the report.

Influenced by factors such as weak global economic recovery and slacking external demand, China's green trade scale declined last year, but the green trade market structure shows a clear trend of diversification, Cui Weijie, deputy director of the academy, said at the conference.

""Shandong has apparent advantages in clean energy, such as nuclear power, which provides a good foundation and conditions for green and low-carbon development,"" said Cui.

From 2016 to 2022, Shandong's green trade increased 120 percent, accounting for 5.59 percent of the country's total, according to the report."

"Linyi county in Shandong province is improving its grassroots governance through innovative measures taken in community networks.

""The county's government arranged a total of 1,205 civil servants for community sections countywide and sought help from 15,562 community assistants to improve services for local residents,"" said Guo Qiang, a local government official. ""These officials are the very foundation of grassroots social governance, and how to consolidate the foundation is what we need to continue to pay attention to.""

The county has established a six-level community section management system that coordinates administration in the county, making the collection of information more streamlined and efficient.

To better address resident concerns, the local government launched several events to get closer to real opinions, arranging face-to-face talks and establishing WeChat groups.

If disputes, difficulties or other kinds of requests were heard during the process, the government will arrange immediate assistance to help resolve the issues.

So far, these efforts have helped the government resolve a total of 769 issues concerning social security, environmental protection, market regulation and other areas."

"Representatives attend a charity dinner in celebration of the 58th National Day of Singapore in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Aug 20. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Trade between Singapore and East China's Shandong province has seen rapid growth despite the COVID-19 pandemic, and both sides are looking to strengthen ties, officials said.

In celebration of the 58th National Day of Singapore and the 33rd anniversary of the establishment of China-Singapore diplomatic relations, a charity dinner was held in Qingdao, Shandong province, on Aug 20.

The fifth management committee of the Shandong liaison office of the Singapore Chamber of Commerce and Industry in China (SingCham) was inaugurated at the same time.

During the event, Chee Hong Tat, Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Transport, said trade between Singapore and Shandong has seen rapid growth over the past three years despite the pandemic, a result of the continuous efforts both sides have made to boost economic cooperation.

The Shandong liaison office of the Singapore Chamber of Commerce and Industry in China (SingCham) is inaugurated in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Aug 20. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

He pointed out that SingCham's Shandong office has contributed significantly to bilateral trade and cultural exchanges, while encouraging companies to create more business and cultural exchange opportunities from both sides.

Launched in 2014 in Qingdao, the SingCham Shandong office aims to serve Singaporean companies that intend to invest in Shandong. It also functions as a networking platform for Singaporeans working and living in Shandong.

Ke Hongjing, president of both the office and Unihearts Health, said the newly launched liaison office will serve as a bridge between Singaporean companies and people in Shandong, providing a win-win platform and friendlier environment to promote cooperation between the two sides.

Falling under Singaporean Unibase Holding, Unihearts Health is a health management company that provides medical services to children and families."

"Many people's mental image of Chinese farmers consists of rural workers wielding hoes and sickles. However, in Juye county, Shandong province, the farmers have replaced these typical tools with inks and brushes.

Juye is located in Heze, a city known for the cultivation of peonies. But it is not only the flowers that have provided a source of revenue, peony-themed art has also become a hit with tourists in recent years. Indeed, the most famous artists are local farmers.

There are 49 painting workshops and 11,000 farmer-painters in the county. Last year, they created more than 1.2 million fine brushwork paintings during the fallow season. These were exported to 40 countries and regions, such as the United States, France and Singapore, with an output value of nearly 2 billion yuan ($280 million).

Yao Guiyuan, 75, from Hongmiao village, was a pioneer in the field of the local painting business. Gifted with the brush, Yao left home in his youth to make a living by painting furniture in Northeast China's Heilongjiang province.

In Chinese culture, the peony is a symbol of wealth, prosperity and beauty. Yao's paintings, which featured red peonies with large petals, won popular appeal and helped boost his income.

In the 1970s, Yao worked as a professional painter at an arts and craft factory in Juye, but he lost his job when the factory closed in the early 1980s. In 2009, he returned to the countryside and opened a painting cooperative, where he taught locals how to draw and looked for markets for their artworks.

Over half of the 80 households in Yao's village have joined the industry. Most of their artworks sell for more than 100 yuan, but others have fetched tens of thousands of yuan.

Gui Huaifang was one of Yao's early students. She worked hard and quickly mastered the drawing techniques. It now takes her, on average, about half a month to complete a painting, and her works can fetch 4,000 yuan apiece.

Now the craft has become a ready source of income for local farmers. The annual income of a painter like Gui can reach between 60,000 and 100,000 yuan.

Yao's followers have brought their peony art to a broader stage. Many artworks have been displayed at national events, provincial exhibitions and foreign art museums. In August 2022, a painting by Yao's son, Yao Shuzhao, was displayed on the big screen in New York City's Times Square for four consecutive days.

The painting industry has not only improved the incomes of locals, but has also become a respected pastime within the community. Rather than leaving their rural homes in search of work in the big cities, the women can stay home and spend more time caring for their children and elderly relatives. Thanks to peony art, they are harvesting new opportunities and building better lives at home."

"People dine at the Fushansuo Market in Shinan district of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, Aug 7, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Authorities in Shandong have called on businesses to ensure the full implementation of paid annual leave among staff in a bid to boost consumer spending in the eastern province.

Reviving consumer demand and bolstering consumer confidence are key priorities for China's economy for the rest of the year, as the country seeks to drive a consumption-led recovery amid downward pressures, according to economists.

Policymakers rolled out a raft of measures last month to boost consumption in products and services such as automobiles, electronics, housing and decorations.

According to the National Development and Reform Commission, making sure all workers get and take their yearly paid holiday entitlement will spur them to consume more.

However, despite the commission's action, work culture in China can sometimes lead employees into working long hours and taking very little leave.

""We have paid vacations, but most of us only take five days off a year,"" said 27-year-old Zhang Zhe, who works in a bank in Jinan, capital of Shandong.

""I and many of my colleagues prefer not to take vacations if they affect our work,"" he said.

Cao Heping, a professor at Peking University's School of Economics, said that the full implementation of paid vacation can help promote consumption in various sectors, such as tourism.

It can encourage people to travel, which can supplement the long traditional holidays in a positive way, Cao told China News.

The Shandong government's call was accompanied by those for better tourism-related services, such as more shuttle buses provided to and from scenic areas, the staging of more cultural performances and exhibitions of handmade products. Tour operators, for example, were encouraged to implement a multi-use ticket system at scenic areas that would allow visitors to use their tickets on multiple days.

In recent times, Shandong cities such as Zibo have sought to court fame online in order to drum up consumption and help their tourism industry's recovery after the pandemic.

Zibo has had several videos about its unique barbecue restaurants go viral online, and the hit song Luocha Haishi (A Market in a Faraway Land) by singer-songwriter Daolang has led to a surge in tourists."

"An e-commerce setup in Guanxian county, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Yellow peach farmers from Yicun village and grape growers from Dongkaihetou village have recently enjoyed brisk sales, thanks to a local e-commerce platform.

In livestreaming sessions, residents of the two villages in Guanxian county, Liaocheng, Shandong province, got to show the audience where their fruit was grown and how it was harvested.

According to Cheng Lifeng, an official from the county’s Wangcun village, the sessions have attracted a considerable amount of online attention.

“Thanks to the development of e-commerce, sales revenues for our village’s agricultural products have increased, and sales channels have also expanded,” Cheng says.

As the number of customers has grown, prices have also risen, encouraging more farmers to engage in quality agricultural production, Cheng adds.

Rural specialties from the county for sale by livestreaming. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Qingdao Port of Shandong Port Group [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong province, an economic power in East China, vows to accelerate efforts to build a world-class port cluster within the province as a way to promote its high-quality development and enhance its opening-up process, officials said on Friday.

""Currently, a coastal port cluster has formed in Shandong, with Qingdao Port as the leader and Rizhao Port and Yantai Port as the backbone. Weihai Port, Dongying Port, Weifang Port, Binzhou Port, and other ports are developing in a coordinated manner,"" said Fan Bo, vice-governor of Shandong at a news brief held in the province's coastal city Qingdao, where the Shandong Port Group is headquartered.

""Such development pattern laid solid foundation to build a world-class port cluster,"" Fan added.

In 2019, Shandong province established the massive Shandong Port Group, integrating the major ports in the province, including Qingdao Port, Yantai Port and Rizhao Port.

In 2022, Shandong Port Group registered its cargo handling capacity as more than 1.6 billion metric tons. Its container handling capacity exceeded 37 million twenty-foot equivalent units, according to official data.

At the end of July, Shandong provincial government issued a three-year action plan to build a world-class port cluster.

According to the action plan, the cargo handling capacity of the Shandong Port Group is expected to reach 2 billion tons and its container handling capacity will exceed 40 million twenty-foot equivalent units.

""The transformation into a world-class port cluster will not only optimize the operational dynamics and spatial layout of all ports across the province, but will also amplify their service capacity and global connectivity,"" the vice-governor commented.

Shandong ports will also be leveraged as a hub to build a fast and convenient land-ocean passage along the Yellow River to promote growth in the province's cities, he added.

The total added economic value produced and triggered by the Shandong port cluster is expected to reach 1.3 trillion yuan ($177 billion) by 2025, said Huo Gaoyuan, chairman of the Shandong Port Group."

"At a wetland park in Rongcheng, Shandong province, groups of egrets rest and forage in the woods on Aug 14, 2023. [Photo by Li Xinjun/for chinadaily.com.cn]

At a wetland park in Rongcheng, Shandong province, groups of egrets rest and forage in the woods, enjoying the quality ecological system of the wetland. In recent years, Rongcheng has focused on cleaning up water basins, aiming to restore the functions of main rivers, improve the aquatic ecology of rivers and enhance irrigation and supplementary water supply capacity. The water quality near the coast has maintained an excellent rate for several consecutive years."

"Passengers are seen boarding the New Brand Peace passenger-cargo ferry, on Aug 11, in Weihai, East China's Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Innovative measures have been implemented by the boundary inspection stations in East China's Shandong province to ensure smooth and efficient international travel, given the surge in business and tourism trips.

The Qingdao Airport border inspection station actively enhances research into new entry and exit procedures, submitting regular analysis reports to guide government oversight and management, as well as corporate development.

The Jinan border inspection station has strengthened communication with the cultural and tourism department, facilitating ""individual clearance for dispersed groups"" and promoting the revival and expansion of consumption.

The Yantai Airport station has upgraded intelligent customs clearance facilities and proactively disseminated information about dividend policies to enterprises and and airlines.

Consequently, the province's border inspection authorities have scrutinized over 12,000 aircraft sorties, more than 20,000 ships, and over 1.373 million passengers, reflecting a year-on-year increase of 95.7 percent, 5.6 percent, and 170.4 percent respectively.

International cargo and passenger shipping between the province and the Republic of Korea also resumed on Friday after nearly 1,300 days of hiatus due to the pandemic.

We work diligently to construct a ""bridge of hearts,"" ""port of development,"" and ""city of happiness"" along the ""Belt and Road"" route, said Wu Shaoyang, a police officer at the Huangdao border inspection station."

"Artists from the Ningjin Acrobatics Troupe from Ningjin county, Dezhou, Shandong province perform at a theater in South Korea in July. [Photo by Meng Juan for chinadaily.com.cn]

Artists from the Ningjin Acrobatics Troupe from Ningjin county, Dezhou, Shandong province recently completed their run at a theater in South Korea, winning thunderous applause for acrobatic acts such as aerial silk and hoop diving.

The acrobatics of Ningjin is a national intangible cultural heritage. The county troupe has performed in countries including Saudi Arabia, Russia and Thailand, gaining a reputation for innovative artistic styles and exquisite performances."

"A gas explosion occurred in a street-side house in Gaomi, Shandong province on Sunday morning, resulting in two deaths and injuring two others, according to a post on the official WeChat account of the Gaomi Emergency Management Bureau. The injured parties suffered minor wounds.

Authorities are currently investigating the cause of the explosion."

"On Aug 5, the Literature and Art Troupe of Wucheng County, Shandong province, took center stage in Huayuantun Village, Jiamaying Town, at an art education venue in the county.

Their engaging performance turned the Communist Party of China's innovative theories into intellectual tools by employing a popular format, accompanied by lively and heartfelt explanations.

This approach aimed to effectively guide the audience toward understanding and embracing the concept of ""words into ears, words into minds,"" resulting in a ripple effect of shared enlightenment.

Throughout the year, Wucheng's cultural education team has conducted insightful grassroots lectures that convey complex theories and policies through lively performances.

Grounded in the principles of relevance, real-life applicability, and mass accessibility, Wucheng County has harnessed the benefits of close communication between its people-centered education efforts and the grassroots populace.

The county has orchestrated interactive, immersive, and participatory initiatives such as home discussions, tree-side micro-lectures, square story-sharing sessions, and literature and art showcases.

These endeavors have fostered an intimate connection with the masses, allowing theory and truths to be absorbed in forms that resonate with them.

Wucheng currently boasts a diverse array of such activities that cater to different audiences. Leveraging the talents and resources available at the county, town, and village levels, this multi-tiered system employs various formats and tailors its approach to specific groups.

By delivering focused and pragmatic lectures, Wucheng County breathes life into grand theories, making them relatable and engaging for the masses.

This concerted effort cultivates a stronger sense of ideological, political, and emotional alignment among the grassroots population, effectively bringing theory to life and integrating it into their daily existence."

"Containers are unloaded at Qingdao Port in Shandong province in March. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For China Daily]

Shandong province released a three-year action plan (2023-25) on Aug 8 to accelerate the construction of several world-class port clusters with core competitiveness and international influence.

The plan emphasizes that Shandong should build a development pattern centered around Qingdao Port. This will ideally be supported by surrounding transportation hubs such as Rizhao, Yantai, Weihai and Weifang ports, in order to drive the high-quality development of the Yellow River basin and boost the dual-circulation development paradigm.

By 2025, the cargo throughput of Shandong ports is set to surpass 2 billion metric tons with the container throughput reaching 40 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs).

World-class port clusters

Under the plan, Shandong will upgrade its berths for containers, bulk cargo, crude oil, and liquified natural gas (LNG). It will also renovate storage yards and tank areas and build new port waterways, anchorages and breakwaters.

Furthermore, the province will optimize port services such as building major hubs for international containers and roll-on/roll-off passengers in Northeast Asia, and construct distribution centers for international bulk cargo transshipment, oil and Chinese grains.

In addition to this, it will strengthen the connection between ports and the hinterland, and upgrade a batch of port highways, railways, pipelines, and conveyor corridors.

Sea-rail intermodal transport

The plan stressed that the scale of container transshipment should be expanded with the establishment of five major shipping routes to Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, India, Pakistan, Europe and the Americas.

By 2025, the total number of foreign trade routes in Shandong is expected to reach 278, and the volume of container transshipment will exceed 7.4 million TEUs. The number of inland ports will reach 50, and there will be over 10,000 China-Europe freight trains in operation.

Modern services

The plan encourages financial enterprises to set up institutions in Shandong's port cities and launch new businesses such as in the field of maritime insurance.

It aims to support the development of such fields as port operations, industrial investment, construction and development, logistics trade, maritime transport, cruise tourism, high-end equipment, and healthcare.

By 2025, the trading volume of the bulk commodity platform in Qingdao will reach 500 billion yuan, with eight overseas warehouses, two domestic distribution centers, and 10 distribution bases. The total shipping capacity is set to exceed 20 million deadweight tons, with a fleet size of over 200 vessels.

Industrial clusters

The plan states that Shandong should build port-oriented industrial parks and accelerate the construction of industrial clusters. It also encourages the province to cooperate with surrounding ports in sectors such as container transfer, port tax refund, and roll-on/roll-off passenger transportation.

Shandong will moreover bolster the integration of ports and the cruise industry, and boost the development of cruise fleets, duty-free shops, and shopping malls.

Favorable policies

Shandong will also deepen its reforms in port and shipping areas, build an intelligent and efficient digital government, and explore new business formats such as international ship registration and the opening-up of international air rights in the China (Shandong) Pilot Free Trade Zone."

"Tourists visit the famous Baotu Spring in Jinan. The spring is also known as the ""Number One Spring under Heaven"" for its impressive water volume and consistent temperature. [Photo/IC]

In the first half of this year, the number of tourist visits in Shandong reached 340 million and its tourism revenue achieved 406.07 billion yuan ($56.29 billion), equivalent to 107.3 percent and 87.7 percent of the levels seen in 2019, respectively.

The fulfillment of people's long-suppressed desire to travel, previously stymied due to COVID-19 outbreaks, has injected fresh impetus into the rapid revival of the province's economy.

The online travel agency Qunar said Zibo in Shandong saw its hotel bookings increase 20-fold during this year's May Day holiday compared to last year. The city's popularity boomed after its barbecuing style, which uses griddle pancakes to wrap grilled meat similar to the way Peking duck is eaten, went viral.

Tourists crowd a market in Zibo, Shandong province. [Photo/IC]

Shandong's tourism market will maintain its recovery momentum as consumption trends and activities continue to gain traction, said local officials.

In the coming months, Shandong will strengthen the marketing of its brand as ""Friendly Shandong"" and ""Shandong Specialties"", and roll out a tourism promotional event dubbed ""Travelling around Shandong and enjoy life in Qilu"".

It will also continue to launch an extravaganza of cultural tourism consumption activities, and provide more colorful cultural tourism products to stimulate the vitality of the cultural tourism market.

Tourists escape summer heat in a bamboo forest in Yinan county of Linyi, Shandong province. [Photo/IC]"

"As a cradle for Chinese civilization with abundant resources and numerous cultural relics, Shandong province is striving to boost rural development through four major initiatives: improving public services, holding colorful activities, protecting local cultural heritage, and integrating culture and tourism.

The comprehensive cultural service center in Gaojia village, Lijin county, Dongying city. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Grassroots public services

This year, Shandong has constructed cultural service centers covering all 1,822 townships and more than 64,000 villages, and it has selected 10 model towns and 20 villages for cultural development. It has also built more than 70 village libraries as well as several public cultural venues in rural areas.

Activities

The province has held more than 3,700 evening shows in villages, and staged more than 120 new rural-themed theatrical performances this year. Additionally, the Shandong Public Cultural Cloud Platform offers about 69,000 online courses and more than 76,000 video resources.

Shandong hosts folk culture and art exchange and display activities. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Cultural heritage protection

Shandong has taken the protection of local cultural heritage as a key task in its high-quality development plan.

For example, field archaeology had been carried out extensively, uncovering a large rammed earth platform with ritual characteristics that dates back to the Warring States period (475-221 BC) at the Qianzhongzitou site in Gaomi city. This is of great significance for studying the related historical background of the site.

The province has preserved historical towns and villages and conducted research on intangible cultural heritage workshops in Zibo, Liaocheng, Linyi and other cities.

Deep integration of rural culture and tourism

This year, Shandong issued the Implementation Plan for the High-Quality Development of Rural Tourism (2023-25), which focuses on integrating rural tourism with the exploration of cultural heritage and local customs. It will provide support to 40 tourism accommodation clusters, 95 key rural tourism towns, 273 village scenic spots, and 151 seasonal rural events.

More than 2,000 themed activities will be organized, forming a long-term mechanism that boosts consumption through brand activities.

An aerial view of Daolang town, Daiyue district, Tai'an city. [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Future prospects

In the second half of this year, Shandong will hold various cultural performances such as small plays, evening events, and seasonal rural activities. It will also enhance training for cultural teams at the grassroots level and support the development of local theatrical groups.

In addition, Shandong will select examples of cultural development and promote its exemplary cases."

"People pass a collapsed brick wall on Sunday morning in Dezhou city, Shandong province. A 5.5-magnitude earthquake struck Pingyuan county, south of Dezhou, at 2:33 am on Sunday. The quake, which occurred at a depth of 10 kilometers, left 24 people injured. A total of 213 house collapses were reported as of 4 pm on Sunday. Water supply, electricity and communications have not been affected in the area. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Warning system saves lives; 21

people injured, 126 houses collapse

A magnitude 5.5 earthquake jolted Pingyuan county in East China's Shandong province out of sleep early on Sunday. The tremor, which was the strongest to hit the region in the past decade, injured 21 people and resulted in the collapse of 126 houses.

An evolved warning mechanism, which is being implemented nationwide, limited the extent of damage in the county, located south of the city of Dezhou, and helped residents remain calm, local authorities said, adding that rescue work was underway.

The earthquake struck at 2:33 am at a shallow depth of 10 kilometers at the epicenter, the Shandong Provincial Department of Emergency Management reported. It was felt in many places in Shandong and Hebei provinces, as well as in Beijing, and quickly became a trending topic on Sina Weibo.

The chances of a stronger earthquake in the epicenter area in the coming days are less, the Shandong government said on its official Weibo account.

Many people received a quake alert on their cellphones several seconds in advance. The Beijing Earthquake Agency said the warning mechanism aims to provide emergency response time for people and special industries.

Zhang Zhixing, 40, a company manager who lives in Beijing's Tongzhou district, said his parents and elder sister, who live in Shandong, called him twice on Sunday morning.

""I was sleeping. Calls from my family woke me up, and I turned on the quake alert setting on my phone. Thanks to technological advances, we now receive timely warnings,"" he said.

Zhang said the Beijing government is very prompt in sending alerts for possible natural disasters on a regular basis, which come in handy.

""Last week, I received text messages from the Beijing government, warning of heavy rain and flooding. These alerts helped me plan my work and avoid risks,"" he added.

In recent years, China has strengthened its efforts to build a nationwide earthquake warning system. On June 8, Min Yiren, director of China Earthquake Administration, said at a news conference that the country has developed the world's largest earthquake early warning network.

The network will provide valuable information to reduce earthquake casualties, improve emergency response time for major infrastructure, and drive earth sciences research and international cooperation on disaster reduction, China Media Group reported.

On Sunday, the Ministry of Emergency Management activated a Level-IV emergency response soon after the earthquake rocked Pingyuan county and dispatched a team to Shandong to lead rescue work.

Meanwhile, the Dezhou fire department sent 15 vehicles and 107 personnel to the epicenter. Other cities in Shandong, including Jinan, Tai'an, Liaocheng, and Binzhou, assembled 24 vehicles, 236 fire rescue personnel and sniffer dog teams for Pingyuan.

Jinan, the capital of Shandong, suspended train services for equipment inspection, resulting in delays, according to China Railway Jinan Group.

The earthquake also damaged parts of Pingyuan's gas pipeline network. To ensure the safety of residents, gas supply will be stopped till repairs are completed, local authorities said.

Meng Yuanku, deputy director of the College of Earth Science and Engineering at Shandong University of Science and Technology, said the shallow depth of the earthquake posed a significant threat to people's lives, Hubei province-based Jimu News reported.

""This earthquake may be related to the Liaocheng-Lankao and the Lingxian-Guanxian fault zones. These fault zones are hidden and belong to localized regional fault zones. Generally speaking, the shallower the depth of an earthquake, the more its destructive power. Since the magnitude of this quake was not very high, the damage was limited,"" he said.

Zhao Ruixue contributed to this story.

Contact the writers at wangsongsong@chinadaily.com.cn"

"A photo shows emergency vehicles at the command center in Wangdagua town, Pingyuan county, Shandong province, on Sunday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

JINAN -- As of 4 pm, 24 people have been injured in the 5.5-magnitude earthquake that struck the county of Pingyuan in Dezhou City of East China's Shandong province earlier Sunday.

Local authorities said 213 buildings and walls in the earthquake zone were damaged, while transportation, communication, and power supply remain normal.

Over half of the injured in the county have been discharged from the hospital, while the on-site rescue forces have partly withdrawn from the quake zone."

"A 5.5-magnitude earthquake occurred in Pingyuan county, Dezhou, Shandong province, at 2:33 am on Sunday, according to the China Earthquake Networks Center.

The epicenter was monitored at 37.16 degrees north latitude and 116.34 degrees east longitude, with a depth of 10 km, said the CENC.

As of 7 am, a total of 126 houses collapsed in the county and 20 people suffered minor injuries, according to Shandong Provincial Department of Emergency Management.

Emergency and rescue members arrive at Pingyuan county of Shandong province that has been hit by a 5.5-magnitude earthquake August 6, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Some trains are temporarily suspended due to the impact of the earthquake, according to China Railway Beijing Group.

The State Council's earthquake emergency response office and the Ministry of Emergency Management have dispatched work teams to Shandong to provide guidance and assistance in earthquake relief efforts."

"BEIJING - A 5.5-magnitude earthquake jolted the city of Dezhou in East China's Shandong province at 2:33 am Sunday (Beijing Time), according to the China Earthquake Networks Center (CENC).

The epicenter was monitored at 37.16 degrees north latitude and 116.34 degrees east longitude, with a depth of 10 km, said the CENC."

"Wind turbines generate clean energy at a wind farm in Rongcheng, Shandong province, on July 6, 2023. [Photo by Li Xinjun/FOR China Daily]

In recent years, Shandong province has bolstered its green and low-carbon transformation and upgrading of traditional industries.

Green factories

By leveraging the dual-carbon industrial internet, efficient and synergistic disposal of hazardous waste in cement kilns and industrialization of carbon dioxide nanocalcium at the exhaust gas outlet, Shandong Donghua Cement Co Ltd, has established an industrial carbon reduction and control system that covers the entire chain.

Donghua is considered a pioneer in developing hydrogen-ammonia-coal cement raw material mixed combustion. After the project is completed, it can replace 60,000 metric tons of standard coal per year and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 155,000 tons.

China Merchants Jinling Shipyard (Weihai) Co Ltd is another company in Shandong that has been embracing sustainability.

""We utilize the rooftops of production plants to build distributed photovoltaic power stations that reduce our carbon dioxide emissions by an average of 7,600 tons per year. We have also strengthened the control of non-organized emissions of volatile organic compounds,"" said Zheng Hehui, general manager of the company.

By the end of 2022, 567 projects in Shandong had been included in the manufacturing list by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, covering 223 green factories.

The province is aiming to build 500 green factories and 20 green industrial parks by 2025.

Digital transformation

Shandong is also promoting the integration of the digital economy and the real economy. For example, it has created a demonstration zone for industrial internet that now has the highest number of national platforms in the country.

Dishang Group, which has 11 production bases at home and abroad and is one of the largest clothing export enterprises in the country, is an exemplary case of digital and intelligent transformation in Shandong.

In 2017, Dishang created a vertical ecological chain platform for textile and clothing that includes a cloud design center, materials platform, flexible manufacturing base and intelligent consumer application platform. The platform integrates some 500 global brands, 3,000 designers, and more than 4,000 material suppliers, enabling online digital 3D clothing design, digital sewing and digital sample production.

Technological innovation

Wanhua Chemical Group is among those that have excelled in technological innovation, which has allowed the company to create coatings that will not discolor even under extreme temperatures.

The company is well-known as the supplier of raw materials that are used in the coatings for high-speed trains.

These raw materials from the company's ADI series boast excellent weather resistance and color stability, and are also used in the aerospace, high-end equipment and automotive industries."

"A farmer at Guquan village in Mengyin county, Linyi, Shandong province sorts peaches. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Guquan village in Mengyin county, Linyi, Shandong province has undergone a remarkable transformation from a once economically poor community to a model of prosperity thanks to the local peach industry.

Due to the mountainous landscape that hindered the village's development, the village once suffered from poverty. Most young people left for cities to make a living. This situation started to change when Liu Yuanhua was selected to work as the Party secretary of the village in 2019.

""Villagers in Guquan have the tradition of planting peaches, so we focus on deeply developing the peach industry,"" said Liu.

The village has been cooperating with companies and colleges to develop new peach varieties to meet various consumer demands. To date, the village has develop more than 30 varieties of peach.

Peaches grown in the village have been sold to overseas markets including Southeast Asian countries.

Thanks to the peach industry, the collective economy of the village has surged to 2 million yuan ($279,513) in two years.

The lives of the 2,350 residents in the village have also improved, with elderly residents benefiting from accident insurance provided by the village and all villagers receiving compensation for their annual medical expenses.

He Hong contributed to the story.

Farmers sort peaches at a production line built by an agricultural company at Guquan village in Mengyin county, Linyi, Shandong. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Editor's note: We have asked expats living in China to share their stories about the cities they work and live in. Shoaib Kahut is from Pakistan and he just received his PhD in Economics at Shandong University this summer.

Shoaib Kahut holding his Doctor's degree certificate while seated beside a statue at Shandong University. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Over the course of five enriching years, I had the privilege of embarking on a transformative journey in East China's Shandong province, pursuing my PhD in Economics at Shandong University. This captivating province, nestled between majestic mountains and adorned with ancient cultural treasures, provided the perfect setting for my academic pursuit and personal growth.

Shandong's cultural tapestry

Stepping into Shandong was like entering a tapestry woven with rich history and deep-rooted traditions. The province's architectural marvels, ornate temples, and genuine warmth of its locals left an indelible impression on my heart.

A profound highlight of my experience was visiting the birthplace of Confucius in Qufu. Delving into the teachings and ideology of this revered philosopher, I found invaluable insights that shaped my understanding of China's economic development and societal values. Confucius' enduring impact on ethics, governance, and social harmony continues to resonate in my academic pursuits and human-centric approach to economic policies.

Shoaib Kahut receives his PhD in Economics at Shandong University this summer. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Academic excellence at Shandong University

Drawn by the university's reputation for academic excellence, I chose Shandong University for my doctoral studies. The diverse faculty and state-of-the-art research facilities provided an intellectually stimulating environment, fostering collaborations with scholars from diverse cultural backgrounds. Engaging in seminars and conferences further honed my analytical skills and broadened my knowledge horizon.

Amid the rigorous academic curriculum, supportive mentors, and inspiring lectures, I discovered a passion for exploring new research areas and pushing the boundaries of economic inquiry. Shandong University nurtured my intellectual growth, instilling in me a lifelong commitment to the pursuit of knowledge.

Nature's splendor: Akin to home

Coming from Islamabad, a city embraced by the Margalla Hills, Shandong's natural beauty struck a familiar chord. The province's picturesque landscapes, adorned with mountains, springs, and verdant countryside, offered a serene respite from academic pursuits.

Among the myriad breathtaking sites, the pinnacle of my experience was ascending Mount Tai. The arduous journey to the summit, accompanied by fellow travelers, left an indelible mark on my soul. Witnessing the ethereal sunrise from the peak, I felt a profound connection with nature's wonders and a renewed appreciation for life's simple joys.

Shoaib Kahut attends the 6th Jinan International Orienteering for Springs. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Exploring the diversity of Shandong

Beyond the campus, I had the privilege of venturing into other cities within Shandong, each offering a unique perspective on China's cultural heritage and modernity.

In Jining, the echoes of history were omnipresent, and my understanding of China's cultural legacy deepened. Rizhao's idyllic beaches offered a soothing escape, allowing me to rejuvenate and reflect. Dongying, with its dynamic energy centered around the oil industry, stood in stark contrast to the tranquility of the Yellow River Delta.

Welcoming warmth of the locals

As a foreign student, the warmth and friendliness of the locals were instrumental in making Shandong feel like my home away from home. Engaging in traditional tea ceremonies and celebrating festivities like the Chinese Lunar New Year, I experienced firsthand the genuine hospitality that lies at the heart of Shandong's culture.

My journey in Shandong province has been nothing short of life-changing. As I proudly hold my PhD in Economics from Shandong University, I carry with me a treasure trove of knowledge and cherished memories.

The province's cultural heritage and natural splendor have left an indelible mark on my heart. My experiences in Shandong have shaped my academic pursuits, broadened my worldview, and deepened my appreciation for the diversity of cultures and traditions.

Grateful for the opportunities bestowed upon me, I eagerly embark on new endeavors, equipped with the wisdom and insights gained during my stay in this captivating province. Shandong will forever hold a special place in my heart, and I am eager to share the lessons learned and the beauty experienced with the world."

"A view of Dahonggou village in Zoucheng, a county-level city in Jining, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/ chinadaily.com.cn]

With muddy roads transformed into wide and clean roads and previously messy areas now growing flowers and plants, the overall appearance of villages in Jining, Shandong province has undergone a remarkable change, bringing joy to villagers.

Wang Yu'e, a 44-year-old resident of Dahonggou village in Zoucheng, a county-level city of Jining said her four-room house was renovated into a homestay in 2019 with the help of a company that cooperates with the village to develop the agricultural, cultural and tourism sectors in the village.

Since then, she has taken up the role of cleaning the guest rooms, earning a monthly salary of around 3,000 yuan ($460). In addition, Wang can earn some bonus income by joining in the development of the village's collective economy.

""In total, my annual income has increased by around 50,000 yuan compared to that of three years ago,"" said Wang.

The village has been adopting a development model called ""Rural Vitalization Partners"" to invite partners to jointly develop the rural area.

To date, 160 partners have joined hands with Dahonggou village in developing various cooperative projects, including tea houses, Chinese traditional clothing shops and small bars.

According to Yuan Yibin, Party secretary of Zoucheng, these projects have vitalized 70 idle houses in the village and put 31 hectares of idle land surrounding the village into use.

A similar development model is also being conducted in Dongzhongdu village of Sishui county where partners have utilized 45 idle courtyards and over 16 hectares of idle land around the village to develop a range of facilities, turning the village into a rural slow-living leisure destination that integrates leisure, vacation, field study, shopping and training.

The transformation of the villages not only brings tangible economic benefits but enhances the overall well-being of the residents, said Lin Hongyu, Party secretary of Jining.

The night view of Dahonggou village in Zoucheng, a county-level city in Jining, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Kids make clay sculptures in a workshop at Dahonggou village in Zoucheng, a county-level city in Jining, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/ chinadaily.com.cn]

A camping area at Dongzhongdu village of Sishui county, Jining, Shandong province. [Photo by Xing Ting for chinadaily.com.cn]

An idle granary at Jiashantou village of Sishui county, Jining,Shandong province has been renovated into a leisure valley art granary. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/ chinadaily.com.cn]"

"A worker drives a tractor off the production line at Weichai Lovol Intelligent Agriculture Technology Co Ltd in Weifang, Shandong province on July 26, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Weifang in Shandong province has been making strides in the development of modern agriculture as it focuses on promoting high-quality agricultural growth in the region.

The city has taken measures such as establishing standardized vegetable production demonstration parks and encouraging companies to set up vegetable innovation laboratories.

It also promotes the transformation of agricultural machinery industry toward high-end and intelligent technologies.

A worker assembles tractors at Weichai Lovol Intelligent Agriculture Technology Co Ltd in Weifang, Shandong province on July 26, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Workers assemble tractors at Weichai Lovol Intelligent Agriculture Technology Co Ltd in Weifang, Shandong province on July 26, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Workers test a corn harvester at Weichai Lovol Intelligent Agriculture Technology Co Ltd in Weifang, Shandong province on July 26, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Technicians work in the breeding laboratory at a vegetable seed company in Weifang, Shandong province on July 26, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

A worker codes seed packaging bags in the packaging workshop at a vegetable seed company in Weifang, Shandong province on July 26, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

A farmer takes care of crops at the standardized vegetable production demonstration park in Weifang, Shandong province on July 26, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

An unmanned agricultural machine performs baling operations at a smart agriculture demonstration base in Weifang, Shandong province on June 17, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"A painter of Hongmiao village in Juye county, Heze, Shandong province works on a peony painting on Monday at the village's painting cooperative. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

Holding a pair of brushes — one with pigment and the other with water — Tian Lili paints peonies on a 1.8-meter-long paper on Monday at a painting cooperative in Hongmiao village of Juye county, Shandong province.

The 42-year-old Tian needs one week to finish the painting.

""My working time here is flexible. Usually, I paint peonies seven or eight hours a day when there is no farming work to do,"" said Tian, who has been working on painting peonies for 12 years at the cooperative.

""Working here enables me to take care of my parents and children while earning a living by painting peonies,"" she added.

Like Tian, in Juye more than 11,000 painters, most of whom are farmers, have taken to painting to make a bit of money on the side while remaining locally based rather than traveling away from their homes to make money.

The meticulous brushwork of Gongbi painting has not only depicted a path of rural vitalization in Juye, which is administered by Heze, a city known as the ""Peony Capital of China"", but laid a foundation of high-quality economic development in the county.

To date, Juye has more than 160 painting and calligraphy training institutions. There are more than 20,000 people involved in the painting industry including painting and marketing.

With an annual output of over 1.2 million paintings, the artwork is sold to 40 countries and regions, according to the county government.

Local painters of Juye county, Heze, Shandong province works on a peony painting on Monday at the county's calligraphy and painting academy. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

A local painter from Juye county, Heze, Shandong province works on a flower painting on Monday at the county's calligraphy and painting academy. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]"

"State Power Investment Corporation sealed a bundle of contracts worth 5 billion yuan ($694.8 million) related to its Guohe One nuclear power technology during a nuclear energy industry supply and demand conference held in Shandong province on Monday.

As one of China's most advanced and independently developed third-generation pieces of nuclear technology, Guohe One is one of the crowning achievements in China's nuclear power research. As part of efforts to step up strategic cooperation with Shandong province, SPIC has installed 2.5 million kilowatts of nuclear power capacity, with 5.5 million kilowatts under construction.

It has also been approved for an additional 11.5 million kilowatts of nuclear power capacity, said Lu Hongzao, deputy director of SPIC.

Shandong will continue to seize opportunities in China's nuclear power development and promote nuclear power while ensuring absolute security, said Hu Bo, head of the energy administration of Shandong province.

According to a report released by the China Nuclear Energy Association, by 2025 China's installed nuclear power capacity will reach 70 million kilowatts in operation and 30 million kilowatts under construction, with a combined capacity of 200 million kilowatts in both operation and under installation by 2035.The annual power generation capacity of a single Guohe One reactor can meet the electricity demand of more than 22 million households and can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 9 million tons per year."

"To boost cross-border e-commerce and promote the stable growth of foreign trade, Shandong province will implement 44 measures, including the construction of cross-border e-commerce industrial belts, cultivation of well-known brands, financial and logistics services, and improvement of trade facilitation, according to a three-year action plan released on July 11.

According to the plan, Shandong will ramp up efforts to build 20 characteristic industrial belts, nurture 100 renowned brands with core competitiveness, and incubate 1,000 emerging cross-border e-commerce companies by 2025.

The province will focus on key sectors such as modern light textiles, new energy and materials, smart home appliances and automotive equipment, carry out the ""cross-border e-commerce plus industrial belt"" project, attract leading enterprises, construct cross-border e-commerce parks, improve supply chains and talent training, and speed up the digital transformation of traditional industries.

To cultivate top cross-border e-commerce brands, Shandong will help enterprises utilize multiple channels like search engines, social media and cross-border livestreaming for global promotion purposes.

The province will encourage enterprises to establish their own overseas outlets and offer services such as website design, marketing, logistics and warehousing for them.

Shandong will also help enterprises to take advantage of tax exemptions for value-added tax and consumption tax on cross-border e-commerce retail exports.

The city will continue to implement value-added tax policies for cross-border e-commerce business-to-business (B2B) exports and improve the level of convenience for tax refunds for cross-border e-commerce B2B exports and cross-border e-commerce overseas warehouse models."

"[Photo/IC]

The Shandong Provincial Department of Transport has established a special team to conduct a thorough investigation into construction quality issues associated with the Lairong high-speed railway on Thursday.

The department has pledged that the investigation will yield results in a timely manner.

The Lairong high-speed railway, connecting Laixi in Qingdao and Rongcheng in Weihai, both in Shandong province, was reported to have quality issues by media outlets on Thursday.

Henan Sanjie Industrial Co, a subcontractor for drilling poles for a section of the subgrade of the railway, reported that China Construction Eighth Engineering Division Corp, the main contractor, was suspected of cheating on construction materials.

Sanjie company said that most of the threaded piles didn't meet the standards in designed depth, which will considerably reduce the amount of concrete filled into the drilled poles, Economic Information Daily reported.

As an important part of the high-speed railway, the subgrade of the railway line matters in trains' operation safety.

China State Construction Engineering Corp, which owns the eighth division company, told a reporter at Huaxia Times that the corporation has noticed the report and will closely monitor the situation to verify the claims.

In a statement issued on Thursday, China Construction Eighth Engineering Division Corp also promised to fully cooperate with the investigation.

The Lairong high-speed railway, with a designed speed of 350 kilometers per hour, has a total length of 192.36 km.

The project involves a total investment of 29.7 billion yuan ($4.14 billion).

Construction of the railway started in November 2020. It is scheduled to be ready for operation by the end of October.

CSCEC won the bid for the construction project of a section of the Lairong railway with a contract value of 3.15 billion yuan, published materials show."

"Containers are unloaded from a ship at a port of Qingdao, East China's Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

JINAN - East China's Shandong province saw its foreign trade reach 1.56 trillion yuan ($218 billion) in the first half of this year, up 1.8 percent year-on-year, of which over 70 percent came from its private sector, local authorities said.

During the period, private enterprises in the province posted a 3-percent year-on-year foreign trade growth and contributed 73.6 percent of Shandong's total imports and exports. These figures also demonstrate the increasingly prominent status of the province's private sector in driving its foreign trade, said the local customs during a press conference on Tuesday.

Of the total, Shandong's exports grew 1.9 percent to nearly 925 billion yuan, while imports rose 1.7 percent to more than 638 billion yuan during the first six months of this year.

Notably, the province's trade with countries along the Belt and Road rose 12 percent year-on-year to a total of 632 billion yuan during the period, of which more than 80 percent came from the private sector."

"Six Gen Zers from across the globe gather at the Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong, a panel of the Global Youth Conference, on July 7 for a roundtable discussion. CHINA DAILY

Six Gen Zers from across the globe gathered at the Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong, a panel of the Global Youth Conference, on July 7 for a roundtable discussion to share their impressions of Shandong and Chinese culture after a themed journey around the province.

To begin the discussion, the young guests each chose a word to describe Shandong in their eyes and elaborated on their choices with real-life observations.

For Guo Yilin, who was born and raised in Shandong, the word she chose was, of course, ""home"". She feels that her personal growth is intertwined with the development of the province, where the culture has helped her develop the quality of integrity.

Chayan Yailert, from Thailand, loved the traditional culture of the ""ancient"" Shandong, while Dylan Austin Walker, from the US, appreciated the city's ""innovation"" — noting that a dynamic, old-meets-new Shandong gave the Gen Zers a lasting impression.

Botakoz Yelshibek, from Kazakhstan, saw many ""opportunities"" in such a dynamic environment after finishing a five-month internship in Jiaozhou, Shandong.

Nakahara Kosumosu, from Japan, was impressed by the ""hospitality"" of the Shandong people, which she felt was a reflection of the city's Confucian legacy.

Zheng Yaling, from Taiwan, China, celebrated the ""connection ""between people from Taiwan and Shandong. She mentioned the common appreciation across the Straits for beautiful poems, such as those by the Song Dynasty's famous female poet Li Qingzhao. She even sang a song by Teresa Teng — a song adapted from one of Li's poems. Zheng pointed out that Teng's mother was actually from Shandong, too.

Then the discussion focused on two topics — ""history and modernity"" and ""the city and its people"", with the young guests sharing their takeaways from the journey.

Nakahara talked of her discoveries at the Kite Museum in Weifang, the birthplace of kites. She said she was impressed by the symbolic meanings of Weifang kites, decorated with words and paintings themed after folktales, such as The Mouse Marrying off its Daughter. She believed that traditional handicrafts embody the wisdom of the people and should be well preserved even in the age of mass production. This reminded her of the craftsmanship celebrated in Japan, which is a quality that is evidently appreciated across cultures.

""Experiential activities can be a good means to promote understanding and help preserve these traditional handicrafts,"" Walker agreed.

Yailert mentioned his observations of the Chengziya Museum. ""Relics like the black pottery are clear evidence of China's 5,000 years of civilization,"" he said. He considered it of great importance for young people to know about such history as it is what distinguishes people and helps the world prosper with diversity. He also marveled at the modern production system displayed at the Qilu Pharmaceutical Company and highlighted the importance of self-innovation.

Guo elaborated on this point with her study experiences in Beijing and London. ""We should strengthen international cooperation while developing core technologies. Though we still have a long way to go, we are already on the way,"" she said.

Yelshibek observed that the infrastructure, policies and overall atmosphere of Shandong and China have created a supportive environment for entrepreneurship and transnational cooperation. ""China-Kazakhstan exchanges are prospering with an active flow of goods and technologies,"" she said.

The Gen Zers recognized that one of the core characteristics of Chinese modernization is the balance between economic development and environmental protection. As a Jinan local, Guo appreciated the efforts the city has made to protect the Baotu Spring and conserve the groundwater. ""It helps create an atmosphere where the people voluntarily contribute to environmental protection out of their love for the living environment,"" she said.

Yelshibek also mentioned that eco-agricultural farms are a good way to achieve both economic and environmental benefits for rural areas. ""The countryside is equally important in the modernization process as cities,"" she said.

On their journey, the participants experienced the genuine hospitality of the Shandong people.

Walker shared his interactions with a community of Shandong people back in his hometown in west Massachusetts, US, and how their warmth, care and kindness had motivated him to come to China to study.

He believes that culture has a subtle but noticeable effect on the characteristics of the Shandong people, which can be found through their words and actions.

As a member of the Communist Party of the US, Walker was inspired by how the Communist Party of China has combined ancient philosophies with modern practices.

""For example, visits to the Niu Yunzhen Museum (a museum that commemorates Niu Yunzhen, an honest and upright official in China's Qing Dynasty) allowed me to see how the merit of the people-centered philosophy and the performance-oriented democracy has been passed down, which is enlightening for today's governance,"" he said.

Zheng appreciated the influence of Confucianism on Shandong. She witnessed the Confucian concept of harmonious co-existence in action through interactions with different people and the practicing of traditional activities. In such cases, she stressed the importance of communication.

""Through communication, we can form understandings over judgment, cooperation over division, and embrace diversity while maintaining our differences,"" she said.

At the end of the discussion, the global Gen Zers shared what aspects of Shandong they would recommend to others.

""I will recommend my friends in Kazakhstan to try the beer and the beaches in Shandong,"" said Yelshibek, with an element of humor.

""I will recommend my friends to visit the Confucius Temple in Shandong and compare it with other Confucius memorial sites in China,"" said Yailert.

""I will recommend people to come and experience Shandong in person rather than just learning about it online,"" said Nakahara.

The best means to learn about a culture is always through experiences. On their trip to Shandong, global Gen Zers experienced a modern province with historical significance, an innovative place with a beautiful environment, and a dynamic region with talented people. The youngsters developed a greater understanding of Chinese culture and deeper reflections on Chinese modernization.

It is hoped that with these experiences, the wisdom of the youth can set sail, and navigate the ship of humankind toward a better future.

The author is a freshman at Peking University in Beijing and was also the host of the roundtable at the dialogue."

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong was held in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, on July 7, with more than 200 young people from home and abroad participating in the event.

Xi Yanchun, head of the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government, invites young people from home and abroad to Shandong. [Photo/Sdchina News]

Xi Yanchun, head of the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government, invited young people from home and abroad to Shandong and get an unforgettable and unique experience exploring the mesmerizing delights of the province.

Wang Hao, deputy editor-in-chief of China Daily, delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong. [Photo/Sdchina News]

Wang Hao, deputy editor-in-chief of China Daily, delivered a speech at the opening ceremony of the event. He said young people are playing a driving force in deepening exchanges and mutual learning with other civilizations, better telling the stories of China's fine traditional culture and better presenting Chinese culture to the world.

Wang encouraged all young people to enhance understanding and cognition of fine traditional Chinese culture and Chinese modernization.

The youth attending the event embarked on a tour to many cities in Shandong, and appreciated the province's splendid natural sceneries and rich cultural heritage, as well as its rapid technological development.

This year's event was organized by the Information Office of the Shandong Provincial People's Government and China Daily. Running under the theme of ""New era, new civilization, new youth, and new mission"", the activity aimed to build a platform for the world's youth to learn from each other and grow together, and set to contribute to the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind.

The sub-event Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong kicks off in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, on July 7. [Photo/Sdchina News]"

"Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong concluded successfully on July 7 in Jinan city of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong, co-hosted by China Daily and the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government, concluded successfully on July 7 in Jinan, the capital city of Shandong province. The forum, themed ""Wisdom of Youth Sets Sail,"" aimed to foster mutual understanding and learning among global Gen Zers through cultural experiences and extensive communication.

During the event, nine young people from China and abroad took the stage to share their impressions of Shandong after a week-long journey across different cities in the province. They also discussed strategies for effectively sharing Shandong stories with the world.

Yulia expressed her Shandong surprise at Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Yulia, a Russian student currently studying Economics at Tsinghua University, expressed her amazement at how well Shandong has preserved the values of Confucianism, considering that it is the birthplace of the ancient philosopher. She highlighted how children in the province are taught the importance of humility from a young age through Confucius' quote - ""two heads are always better than one."" Yulia also noted that the warm hospitality of the local people can be traced back to another quote by Confucius - ""it's a pleasure to have friends coming from afar.""

""Shandong is a place where new areas are constantly being developed, while preserving the original cultural characteristics, so that the new and the old can blend together more harmoniously,"" she said.

Sherif shared his observations on the remarkable technological advancements he witnessed in Shandong. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Sherif, an Egyptian entrepreneur and MBA graduate, shared his observations on the remarkable technological advancements he witnessed in Shandong, particularly in transportation and agriculture. He commended the province for its highly developed infrastructure, including one of the most advanced high-speed rail networks. Moreover, he highlighted Shandong's adoption of precision farming techniques, such as smart irrigation, crop monitoring, smart greenhouses, and agricultural data analytics, which contribute to enhanced efficiency and sustainability in agriculture.

""I believe that Egypt should learn from China and have better cooperation in promoting and building smart agriculture. This would be a win-win situation for both Egypt and China,"" he said.

Global Gen Zer Dialogue with Shandong also served as a parallel forum to the 2023 Global Youth Conference, held from July 6 to 9. The conference, with its theme of ""New Era, New Civilization, New Youth, and New Mission,"" encouraged young people to share their wisdom and solutions to address global challenges, promote common values, and contribute to the establishment of a community with a shared future for mankind."

"[Video/Iqilu News]

Siyabonga Cyprian Cwele, South Africa's ambassador to China, will attend a livestreaming sales promotion event on media platforms Douyin and Kuaishou on July 6.

The sales promotion event will start at 2:30 pm and feature a wide range of famous South African products.

The sales promotion is a supplementary activity of the 2023 Global Youth Conference, which will take place in Jinan, capital of Shandong province from July 6 to 9. The conference will showcase the mission and responsibilities of young people in the new era and share China's stories with the world.

The conference organizers have invited youth representatives from 85 countries and regions."

"[Photo/IC]

As it enters the main flood season, Shandong province issued a notice on Monday listing emergency measures involving job suspensions, schools and transportation to ensure safety if necessary.

Heavy rain was expected in most parts of Shandong on Monday and Tuesday.

The notice, which was issued by the Shandong Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters, said rain in the province has the potential to cause flooding in small and medium-sized rivers, as well as geological disasters and waterlogging in urban and rural areas.

In response to the potential risks, the headquarters emphasized the importance of closely monitoring weather changes and strengthening the monitoring and forecasting of rainfall conditions.

It also called for enhanced collaboration and scientific analysis for the development of flood and disaster situations."

"The 2023 Global Youth Conference will kick off in Jinan city of Shandong province from July 6 to 9 - with branch venues in Dezhou, Dongying, Jining and Tai'an cities - demonstrating the mission and responsibilities of young people in the new era and sharing China's stories and its voice with the world.

With its theme of ""New Era, New Civilization, New Youth and New Mission"", the conference will encourage young people to share their wisdom and solutions to humanity's problems, promote common values and contribute to the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

The event is being co-hosted by the Shandong provincial government, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the All-China Youth Federation and the China Soong Ching Ling Foundation.

It will feature an opening ceremony, a main forum known as the Huanghewan International Youth Economic Forum, two parallel forums and seven support activities - including the World Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition, livestreaming sales by foreign ambassadors and an International Youth Gala.

What's more, a raft of supplementary youth exchange activities will also be held throughout the year, such as the 2023 Northeast Asia Youth Sustainable Development Study Camp and the ""My View of China - Colorful Folk Customs"" short video contest.

To date, the conference has invited youth representatives from 85 countries and regions, with about 1,000 participants due to be in the main venue.

The conference will highlight achievements such as the release of the Jinan Declaration of the 2023 Global Youth Conference, the launch of the I Want to Go to Shandong initiative, the establishment of the Global Youth Conference and the World Youth Entrepreneurs Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance.

In addition, it will feature three major brands - the Huanghewan International Youth Economic Forum, the World Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition and the GYC Youth Speak.

This year's conference will also focus on top-quality development, cultural inheritance and market operations.

It will invite young economists, experts and academics to interpret the trends of the global value chain reconstruction. Furthermore, the conference will concentrate on international communications and cultural exchanges, share the stories of Shandong and seek to enhance the power and influence of the young generation.

It will introduce market-oriented mechanisms and mobilize more social resources to participate in the negotiations."

"An exhibition highlighting Shandong's digital development achievements is now taking place alongside the World Internet Conference (WIC) Nishan Dialogue on Digital Civilization, which opened on June 26 in Qufu, Shandong province.

The exhibition displays Shandong's state-of-the-art technologies, products and applications in fields such as information technology, intelligent manufacturing, transportation, aerospace, far-reaching marine aquaculture, medicine and health, and digital economy.

Themed ""The Age of AI: Building a Digital World of Exchanges, Mutual Learning and Inclusiveness"", the Nishan Dialogue focuses on topics related to building secured AI systems, the use of AI to empower industries, and the future of the human civilization in the age of AI.

The models of the Fuxing bullet train and the 600-kilometer-per-hour magnetic levitation train are displayed at the exhibition. Developed by CRRC Qingdao Sifang Co Ltd, a Shandong province-based subsidiary of CRRC, the trains are contributing to the establishment of a multi-dimensional transportation system in China. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

The Long March 11 solid launch vehicle and Jielong 3 solid launch vehicle models of the Oriental Spaceport (Shandong) Development Group Co are exhibited. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

Cutting-edge products of Jinan Institute of Quantum Technology are displayed. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

A model of the snow wax truck with the largest floor area in the world is displayed. Independently developed by Chinese companies, the trucks were used during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

A model of the Conson No 1, the world's first 100,000-metric-ton, smart fish-farming ship is seen at the exhibition. The ship can handle 3,700 metric tons of fish, including yellow croaker, grouper and Atlantic salmon, annually. It is expected to boost the nation's deep-sea aquaculture industry. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

An ultrasound screening equipment for high-risk diseases at the exhibition. [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The 31st National Book Expo will be held at Shandong International Convention and Exhibition Center in Jinan from July 27 to 31, organizers announced at a news conference held on June 19.

The main venue will feature eight exhibition halls that cover nearly 10 hectares. A sub-venue will be set up in Linyi, and book fairs will be held at Xinhua Bookstore outlets across the province.

At the main venue, the No 3 exhibition hall will host an exhibition of quality books, Shandong publications and books by Beijing-based publishers such as China Publishing Group Corporation.

The No 4 and 5 exhibition halls will have exhibition areas for books from other provinces, autonomous regions, municipalities, and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.

The No 1 and 2 exhibition halls will have a special sales area and an exhibition area for special edition books by private publishing enterprises. The No 6 exhibition hall will have an exhibition area for rural libraries and an intangible cultural heritage creative and research-based learning exhibition area, and an art books exhibition area. The No 7 and 8 exhibition halls will have standard exhibition areas for private book publishing enterprises.

The event aims to display the achievements of China's publishing industry in the new era and promote exchanges and public participation."

"Athletes compete at the 2023 National Optimist Sailing Championship, which kicked off in Rongcheng, Shandong province, on Thursday. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

The 2023 National Optimist Sailing Championship kicked off in Rongcheng, Shandong province, on Thursday. More than 260 athletes, coaches and referees from around the country are attending the event, which will last seven days."

"Farmers, with the help of volunteers organized by the town government, dry wheat at the government courtyard in Wangmiao town of Pingyuan county, Shandong province. [Photo by Zhang Wei/For chinadaily.com.cn]

As wheat harvest comes into full swing in Shandong province, facilities including yards, squares and government courtyards in several cities of the province are open to the public to provide more grounds for drying wheat.

""Harvesters are collecting wheat at a faster speed and producing grains in a short time, so we need more safe and spacious ground to dry the grains,"" said Liu Hongzhang, who was drying grains at the government courtyard of Wangmiao town of Pingyuan county, Dezhou city.

The government staffers are advised not to drive cars to their work to make room for wheat drying, he added.

Ningyang county of Tai'an city has coordinated enterprises and cooperatives to provide their spacious outdoor sites for farmers to dry wheat.

The Jinfeng agricultural cooperative in Dongzhuang town of the county provides the villagers with 5,000 square meters of cement road which was used for wheat drying.

The Lanshan district of Linyi city coordinated a total of 20,000 square meters of ground from facilities including warehouses and idle factories for wheat drying, as well as helping to prevent the wheat from getting moldy because of the humid weather.

To solve the problems of drying and storing wheat, Shandong has been promoting the use of drying facilities and equipment. This year, 65 new drying centers were built in the province, which will help dry wheat during the harvest, according to the Shandong Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Farmers dry wheat at a cooperative in Dongzhuang town of Ningyang county, Shandong province. [Photo by Feng Jing/For chinadaily.com.cn]

An outdoor site at a town in Laoling, Shandong province, is open to farmers for wheat drying. [Photo by Zheng Tianqi/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers dry wheat at a cooperative in Fangcheng town of Linyi, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Farmers in Gaoqing county, Shandong province, harvest winter wheat on Sunday. [Photo by Wang Kejun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Villages along a section of the Yellow River in Shandong province have started to harvest winter wheat by machine.

In the Xiaoli subdistrict of Jinan, Shandong, more than 466 hectares of land in the Yellow River flood plain was reclaimed and sowed with wheat last year. Mechanical harvesters have started to collect the grain.

It is the first year the land has been used to produce wheat.

At Muli town in Gaoqing county, farmers are using mechanical harvesters to harvest wheat on more than 1,653 hectares of farmland that was reclaimed from river plain areas.

In Qingcheng town of Gaoqing, the harvest is basically completed.

""The grain is expected to be sold at a good price,"" said Zhang Minggang, Party secretary of Andong village of Qingcheng town.

The wheat harvest is in full swing across China. More than 16.9 million hectares of winter wheat in China had been harvested as of Monday, accounting for 80 percent of the total growing area, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Farmers prepare to harvest wheat in Gaoqing county, Shandong province, on Sunday. [Photo by Wang Kejun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers at the Xiaoli subdistrict of Jinan, Shandong province, harvest winter wheat last week. [Photo by Si Lixiao/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The coastal view of Yantai, Shandong province [Photo/IC]

Zhuwang village in Laizhou, Yantai city of Shandong province might be located right next to the sea, but it was not until recently that villagers were able to spot jellyfish in the waters.

The reason for this, said Yang Jingzhou, deputy Party secretary of Zhuwang village, is the relentless efforts provincial authorities have made in recent years to improve the marine environment.

""Jellyfish will only appear where the water quality is good,"" he explained.

Twenty years ago, the influx of marine aquaculture projects to the region brought wealth and prosperity to the villagers. But this also created extensive pollution and severely damaged the marine environment.

A few years ago, authorities implemented a slew of measures to tackle this issue. One of the measures was enhancing filtration, centralized water storage and sedimentation purification to ensure that all discharge from the industry is harmless to the environment.

Another measure is mandating aquaculture companies and breeders to adopt energy saving and emission reduction measures and pivot from single breeding to mixed farming.

Thanks to these measures, there are now 445 breeding ponds in the park that have achieved harmless discharge of tailwater, said Jia Hongsong, a member of the Party group of the Laizhou branch at Yantai ecological environment bureau.

In fact, 90 percent of the coastal waters in the province are now deemed to have excellent water quality.

Shandong has also been ramping up efforts to accelerate the restoration of the marine environment. The beach in Hailong Bay in Rizhao, for instance, is the first port shoreline in China to be turned into an ecological tourist destination."

"Students take special buses to see

gaokao exam venues on Tuesday. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Rongcheng, Shandong province, has pressed more than 50 buses into service for students who will attend the national college entrance exam, or gaokao, which will start on Wednesday.

More than 2,600 students took the buses for free on Tuesday to get familiar with the exam venues in advance, after which they were taken to their places of accommodation.

Families at a senior middle school wish their kids good luck on Tuesday as they depart for the national college entrance exam, or gaokao, which starts on Wednesday. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Buses in Rongcheng, Shandong province stand ready at a senior middle school gate to transport students to the national college entrance exam, or gaokao, which starts on Wednesday. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Shandong province has made significant strides in enhancing cooperation with Hong Kong and Macao in recent years, with the aim of establishing a new pinnacle for high-level opening-up and creating an internationally first-class business environment.

As of 2022, Shandong boasts an impressive count of 5,881 Hong Kong-invested enterprises, with the actual capital utilization from Hong Kong reaching a remarkable $80.45 billion. This constitutes a significant portion of the province's total overseas capital, accounting for 64.7 percent. January to April saw a surge in this trend, with Shandong attracting 274 new Hong Kong-invested enterprises, representing a notable year-on-year increase of 42.7 percent. The actual capital utilization during this period amounted to $5.14 billion.

Shandong advances the ""vegetable basket"" standard system for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area's entire industrial chain. [Photo/Dazhong Daily]

Among the noteworthy projects contributing to this cooperation is the Yihai Kerry (Qingdao) Food Industrial Park, established by Kerry Group Holdings Ltd. The first phase of this venture commenced operations in April, marking it as Qingdao's largest production and manufacturing project utilizing overseas capital. Upon completion, the annual output value is expected to reach 45 billion yuan ($6.36 billion), generating tax revenue of 910 million yuan and creating 1,500 job opportunities.

Recently, Shandong Humon Smelting Co Ltd exported 10 tons of silver ingots to Hong Kong after customs clearance at Yantai Customs. Wang Jun, manager of the company's international trade department, reported a year-on-year increase of 14.7 percent in silver exports to Hong Kong, amounting to nearly 1 billion yuan from January to April.

The total import and export value between Shandong and Hong Kong and Macao from January to April amounted to 19.07 billion yuan, indicating a substantial year-on-year increase of 53.9 percent.

Shandong promotes humanistic exchanges and cooperation with Hong Kong and Macao. [Photo/Dazhong Daily]

In a recent development, the first batch of six cold-chain logistics trucks loaded with high-quality agricultural products, including spinach, cucumbers, tomatoes, silk gourds, and zucchini, were directly supplied to markets in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area after 48 hours.

These products originated from Gaoqing county in Zibo city and marked a significant achievement under the strategic cooperation agreement signed between Shandong and Guangdong provinces in 2019 to construct the Greater Bay Area Vegetable Basket. Over the past five years, the project has identified 248 vegetable production bases and enterprises, solidifying its positive impact on regional agriculture.

Zhang Hongqi, head of the Shandong Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, has announced provincial plans for a series of promotional activities to raise awareness of local agricultural products. These activities will be held in Shenzhen, Hong Kong, and Macao throughout the year, aiming to strengthen the brand awareness of Shandong's agricultural offerings."

"A decorative plate is a highlight of the 38 artworks featuring imperial cultural heritage by the Beijing Eight Imperial Handicrafts Museum and the jewelry maker Mokingran. [Photo provided to China Daily]

A collection of 38 artworks, featuring imperial cultural heritage, was unveiled in Changle county, East China's Shandong province, in late May. They range from large decorative items to wearable accessories and are the result of combined efforts between the Beijing Eight Imperial Handicrafts Museum and Mokingran, a jewelry maker founded by Wang Zhongshan, a provincial inheritor of the traditional fine metalworking craftsmanship in Shandong.

""In the rise of consumption for domestic products and cultural confidence, the combination of traditional culture and modern craftsmanship is not only an innovative and developmental approach but also a major trend for the future,"" Wang says.

""It allows for the inheritance and promotion of excellent Chinese culture while making gold jewelry more diverse and personalized,"" Wang adds.

A master artist from the Beijing museum works on jewelry. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Li Zhe, Mokingran's brand director, says young people have become a major force in the overall consumer market in China, and they have shown a strong confidence and self-assurance about their own identity and country.

""It calls for an intellectual property with strong national characteristics for our products,"" Li says about the reason behind the cooperation between the museum and Mokingran.

Intangible cultural heritage can help modern brands enrich their connotations and culture, and better reach more consuming demographics, promoting cultural heritage in the process, says Bai Qun, curator of the Beijing museum.

Both sides will jointly produce more artworks in the future."

"A bird's-eye view of the Xiaoqing River in Jinan [Photo/WeChat account: jinanfabu]

A ceremony to mark the reopening of the Xiaoqing River was held in Jinan on May 23, local media reported.

The event was organized by the Shandong Provincial Department of Transportation and the Shandong Maritime Safety Administration to showcase the progress of the project, introduce related policies and build a communication platform for stakeholders.

As one of the major rivers located in the central area of East China's Shandong province, the Xiaoqing River originates from the springs in the city of Jinan, the provincial capital.

Over 200 representatives from transport and logistics enterprises, research institutions, universities and media outlets attended the event, during which several companies signed cooperation agreements with Shandong Marine-River Port Co.

Xiaoqing River was excavated from 1130 to 1137 for the purpose of transporting salt. Operations on the river were then suspended in 1997 before the Shandong provincial government decided to reopen the waterway in 2020 as part of its efforts to construct a comprehensive transportation system.

The reopening of the 169-kilometer river is estimated to cost 13.6 billion yuan ($1.93 billion) and will be completed by the end of June.

The river, which will be able to accommodate 2,000-metric ton vessels, is expected to boost the local economy and provide infrastructure support for inland cities such as Jinan and Zibo to develop maritime industries.

The river will also create new opportunities for production, innovation, logistics and trade in the region and reduce transportation costs."

"[Photo/IC]

Three men convicted of raping minors were executed on Tuesday after China's top court approved their death sentences.

The three rapists were Ni Duqun, Wang Xiaoshan and Sun Baochang, and their death penalties were executed by courts in the provinces of Hubei, Shandong and Henan, respectively, according to a statement released by the Supreme People's Court.

In China, death sentences handed out by lower courts must be submitted to the top court for review. After it approves the capital punishment, the lower courts can carry out the execution.

On Tuesday, the top court summarized the cases of the three men, underlining that Chinese courts prioritize the protection of children, with harsher punishments handed out to those that harm the legitimate rights and interests of juveniles.

It revealed that the convicts tricked their victims through the internet, and then took them, most from primary and middle schools, as targets for rape.

In the case in Hubei, Ni, who ran a company in the province, was found to have raped seven girls, including six under the age of 14, by luring them to meet him through QQ, an instant messaging app, from January 2017 to August 2019.

Of the victims, four were raped multiple times, and two became pregnant and miscarried.

Ni was discovered to have mentally controlled these victims and instigated them to seek other girls around 10 years old for him to rape.

In the case in Shandong, Wang was found to have raped five girls, including three under the age of 14, molested 14 others and assembled a crowd to engage in promiscuous activities, from late 2017 to January 2019.

Wang first asked the girls to send him naked photos and videos through QQ, and then told them that he would disclose the pictures if they refused to go out with him. He took the victims to hotels and raped them.

Sun, the convict in Henan, committed similar acts from October 2017 to August 2018.

In addition to luring girls and asking them to send naked pictures online, Sun was also found to film the rapes and use the content to threaten the victims to continue to have sex with him.

Before these cases, Sun had a previous rape conviction.

The top court said that the three rapists had seriously harmed the victims' physical and mental health, adding that their behaviors have had a great negative effect on society.

""Chinese courts never tolerate people damaging children's legitimate rights and interests, and for those who should be sentenced to death for extremely serious acts in line with the law, we'll give the capital penalty without hesitation,"" it added.

The execution of the three rapists demonstrated the country's judicial determination and effort to protect children, it said, and called for juveniles to enhance their awareness of self-protection.

Teachers, parents and cyberspace departments should strengthen supervision of the internet behaviors of juveniles, providing them with a safer online environment, it suggested."

"China (Jinan) 17th International Tea Industry Expo will take place from May 26 to 29 in Jinan, Shandong province.

This year's expo aims to promote tea culture, technology, and industry integration. Utilizing Jinan's prosperous historical and cultural resources, the expo will help facilitate the efficient circulation of tea commodities, boost the recovery and robust of tea consumption, as well as propel the high-quality development of tea industry in Shandong province and China as a whole.

The expo, covering 3 hectares, will feature 2,600 booths. It plans to set up seven major exhibition areas to display a large slew of products, such as six major categories of tea, tea pots, tea-related furniture, and tea packing machines. The event will bring together high-quality tea industrial resources from across the country to meet the diverse needs of consumers and showcase the development and the unique cultural charm of China's tea.

This year's expo will highlight springs, which is a signature of Jinan, to hold a series of activities.

Incorporating the digital science and technology, this year's expo will feature innovations both online and offline. The opening ceremony of the expo will be streamed live online, and major tea brands and mainstream media will hold livestreams."

"A farmer in Pingyi county of Linyi, Shandong province, picks honeysuckle flowers on Wednesday. [Photo by Li Wenzhang/For chinadaily.com.cn]

As honeysuckle flowers bloom, farmers in Pingyi county of Linyi, Shandong province, pick and dry them for market.

Pingyi now has more than 44,530 hectares planted in honeysuckle. It produces 60 percent of total honeysuckle flower products in China, making it the country's No 1 honeysuckle planting, processing and distribution base, the county government said.

The honeysuckle sector provides jobs for more than 300,000 people in the county."

"Editor's note: We have asked expats living in China to share their own stories about the cities they work and live in. Alberto Casartelli is from Italy and he is the secretary for the Italian side of the Shandong Chamber of Commerce.

Considering how much Jinan, the city where I lived for more than a year between 2015 and 2016, has changed in recent years, it seems like much more time has passed, but it has only been eight years.

I have been back living in China for a few months now. Although, I am living in the city of Tianjin now, I have not missed a chance to revisit Jinan, the city which hosted me for more than a year and in which I had a very happy time in my life.

Alberto Casartelli samples the art of the guqin, an ancient stringed instrument, in Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

I still found the same city: hospitable, open and full of social and cultural activities. I was able to immerse myself in art at the International Biennial at the Shandong Museum, still breathe in the atmosphere of nature at Baotu Spring and Daming Lake in Lixia, go shopping in Tianqiao, dine at a local traditional restaurant, and much more.

But at the same time I saw a different city as I visited completely new areas, with a horizon of new skyscrapers, with offices as far as the eye can see and enormous shopping malls. This is the sign of a city and a province that have always moved forward, that have never thought of stopping, and that record some of the highest economic growth in all of China.

Already Confucius taught us that ""loving one's work enables us not to feel its burden"". And now, just as it was eight years ago, I still met people who love their work and who convey enthusiasm for it.

In 2015, working in Jinan as an English teacher at a Montessori institute and as an Italian teacher in a language school, I observed the effort and desire my colleagues had for providing serenity to children and students, and to help them grow as individuals as well.

Now, as the secretary for the Italian side of the Shandong Chamber of Commerce, I have met companies eager to make contributions to China's restart and growth, and to take their excellence outside China and around the world.

Alberto Casartelli receives the Rose Global Partner award during the 2023 Rose Products Expo in Jinan. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

In particular, the 2023 Rose Products Expo has just concluded in Jinan, which I had the pleasure of attending and the honor of receiving the Rose Global Partner award.

Pingyin's roses are the perfect example of how a specialty in Shandong has great potential, and represents China's constant effort to improve and lead the way in a wide variety of fields.

In fact, the technologies for growing and processing these roses are unique in the world, managing to create dozens of different varieties of roses, from healing roses to cosmetic products to drinking water, tea and sweets.

But Shandong province is also much more. It is a pearl nestled in the middle of the Bohai Sea and the Yellow Sea. With over 3,000 km of coastline, it boasts striking seascapes, from Qingdao to Yantai to Weihai.

You can climb Mount Tai, one of the most fascinating and magnificent mountains in China, with its strong spiritual aura.

It is the home of Confucius and Confucianism. With an ancestor of this importance, it could only be a province that is also very attentive to its cultural roots.

This September, it will host a very important event: the ninth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations, in which I will participate as deputy secretary of the ICCX (Italy-China Cultural Exchange) and which will also be attended by the president of this association Zhang Changxiao and the government of Regione Lombardia, the most industrialized province in Italy.

Shandong is also a land of great hospitality. As Confucius himself liked to reiterate, ""is it not a pleasure to welcome friends who come from afar""?

It is also an economic powerhouse, which has been recognized as a province with the greatest potential for development in China. If we exclude the four special municipalities, it is already the third richest province.

Jinan boasts technology-intensive industries – so much so that it is considered a ""hi-tech zone"". It epitomizes the excellence of the new ""hi-tech"" made in China and innovation, with more than 20,000 enterprises focused on important sectors, such as next-generation IT, quantum science and technology, as well as culture and tourism.

All these sectors are growing very fast in importance in Shandong, and we hope they will continue to do so, boosting the real economy of this beautiful province and of all China."

"Elderly people have lunch in a canteen at Nanliuzhuang village of Zhongzhuang town in Yiyuan county of Zibo, Shandong province on Wednesday. [Photo by Zhang Kuifa/for chinadaily.com.cn]

At noon on Wednesday, some elderly people gathered in a canteen for lunch at Nanliuzhuang village of Zhongzhuang town in Yiyuan county of Zibo, Shandong province.

In the county's other village---Jijiayu village of Lucun town -- there is also such a canteen where more than 100 elderly people have lunch every day.

""We come here earlier than the lunch time to have small talks together,"" said Yan Xisheng, a Jijiayu villager who is in his 80s.

Elderly people have lunch in a canteen at Nanliuzhuang village of Zhongzhuang town in Yiyuan county of Zibo, Shandong province on Wednesday. [Photo by Zhang Kuifa/for chinadaily.com.cn]

The senior canteens are part of the functions of the livelihood complexes built in Yiyuan county.

Yiyuan has built 353 livelihood complexes across the county to provide elderly care services including dining, bathing, medical care, entertainment and shopping. These livelihood complexes cover a population of 85,000 elderly residents in the villages of the county.

Local governments and the collective cooperatives in the villages subsidize the meal fees. With the subsidies, people aged between 60 and 79 pay two yuan （$0.28） for each lunch on their own, and for those older than 80, one yuan for each lunch, according to the county government."

"The Xiling village gold mine in Laizhou, Shandong province, said it discovered 200 tons of gold reserves recently, bringing the cumulative gold reserves in the mine to 580 tons — a potential economic value of more than 200 billion yuan ($28.5 billion), Dazhong Daily reported on Thursday.

With the new discovery, the Xiling gold mine is said to have become the largest single gold deposit in China."

"Gao Zengyou, an inheritor of the Meihua boxing, teaches students the martial art in Guanxian county, Shandong province. [Photo provided to China Daily]

More than 40 primary and middle school students utilized the Meihua boxing at Chongwen Street, Guanxian county of Shandong province on May 13.

They practiced the art form with panache under the instructions of Gao Zengyou, an inheritor of the martial art and owner of a Meihua boxing training center.

""The street authorities helped me to find the site, which is close to the downtown area and is convenient for transportation,"" Gao says.

A dozen of solar street lamps have also been installed, which make things easier for students to practice the art in the open air during nighttime.

Gao is one of the beneficiaries who engage in local intangible cultural heritage practices.

Liang Yunchao, an inheritor of the local opera Hamaweng, has been encouraged to integrate modern themes to the opera and deliver a series of new shows that prove popular among local residents.

More support will be given to rural culture development in the future and help realize rural vitalization, according to local authorities."

"Workers make clothing for customers in the Middle East at a company in Juye county, Heze. ZANG DONGMING/FOR CHINA DAILY

Employees at a clothing company in Juye county, Heze, Shandong province, have been busy making Arabic pants, with the business receiving its fourth such order this year valued at more than 10 million yuan ($1.45 million) from customers in the Middle East.

In the first quarter, Heze Zijin Clothing Co exported more than 260,000 items of clothing, a year-on-year rise of 30 percent. Based on demand, its number of orders this year is expected to surpass expectations, the company said.

Chen Li, deputy general manager, said: ""The steady growth in our orders is partly due to the combined impact of a series of export policies in China, such as optimized tax refunds. By making our deliveries on time, we have also won the trust of many overseas customers.""

Originally established as a poverty alleviation workshop, the company has provided jobs for more than 3,000 workers in the region, with an average monthly salary of more than 4,500 yuan. Every day, these workers make some 35,000 woven pants, with all the products exported to the Middle East.

One of those to benefit from the company's success is Wang Zhenzhen, who used to be a farmer earning an income mainly from traditional crop planting. Since the clothing company was established near her home, she has become a sewing machine operator.

After two years of learning and training, Wang became a group leader, with a monthly income of more than 6,000 yuan.

""Many women in my village start working at the factory after a short period of training. The work provides opportunities for us to make more money, and the flexible hours enable us to take care of the elderly and children,"" Wang said.

The company, founded in 2018, and other 11 clothing companies in the county mainly produce abaya (full-length garments worn by some Muslim women), woven pants and underwear.

Their products are exported to more than 20 countries and regions, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Jordan.

The companies' business has not been affected greatly by fluctuations in the international market, or the COVID-19 pandemic, as it has built a long-term stable strategic partnership with customers in the Middle East.

Their clothing exports account for 65 percent to 70 percent of the market share in the Middle East, where the company enjoys a stable leading market share in Saudi Arabia.

Contact the writers at zhuwenqian@chinadaily.com.cn"

"Mount Tai [Photo by Xie Jiujiang/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

Since its launch in 2007, the renowned brand ""Friendly Shandong"" has forged a strong reputation nationwide to become an effective calling card for the region's tourism market.

With a long history and profound cultural legacies, Shandong is a cradle of Chinese civilization and the birthplace of Confucianism. Its beautiful mountains and seas offer a pleasant natural environment, boasting a mixture of harmony and flexibility.

The province is home to Mount Tai, Laoshan Mountain, and Nishan Mountain where the great ancient Chinese thinker Confucius was born. It is also home to the Yellow Sea, the Bohai Sea, the Yellow River, the Grand Canal, Daming Lake, and Dongping Lake. Among them, Mount Tai, the Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion, the Qi Great Wall, as well as the Grand Canal are listed as world cultural heritage sites.

Shandong has 721 museums, which trace the region's historic charm and magnificence.

Rizhao green tea [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]

As the hometown of ancient philosophers Confucius and Mencius, Shandong boasts Qilu culture that has shaped the overall image of local people as sincere, honest, emotional, as well as trustworthy.

The humanistic qualities of respecting guests and being hospitable, magnanimous, and sincere have been passed down to the modern day. ""How happy we are to have friends from afar"" is one of the classic idioms from The Analects of Confucius, a collection of idioms reflecting Confucius' political views, moral principles, and educational ideas. It is the best interpretation of the hospitality of Shandong people.

The province also attracts visitors with its famed cuisine and local specialties, such as Zhangqiu green onions, Zhoucun pancakes, Qingdao beer, large hairy crabs, Yantai's apples, Feicheng peaches, Rushan oyster, as well as Rizhao green tea.

Other culinary highlights include Dezhou braised chicken, which boasts a unique crispy and tender texture, Dong'e Ejiao, which has been passed down for more than 2,000 years, as well as Jimo wine.

Zhangqiu green onions [Photo/WeChat account: sdswltwx]"

"Guests had the opportunity to enjoy a photo exhibition featuring the scenic beauty of East China's Shandong province at an event promoting tourism in Shandong province at the China Cultural Center in Madrid, Spain. [Photo provided to China Daily]

An event promoting tourism in East China's Shandong province was recently held in China Cultural Center in Madrid, Spain.

Guests had the opportunity to enjoy a photo exhibition featuring the scenic beauty of Shandong and visit booths where inheritors of intangible cultural heritage showcased their handicrafts.

Wu Haitao, China's ambassador to Spain, said at the event that Shandong province, as the birthplace of Confucius, boasts rich cultural and tourism resources.

He expressed his belief that the event would contribute to enhancing the understanding of Shandong among Spanish citizens and showcasing the captivating allure of Chinese culture.

Shandong Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration and Shandong Museum signed cooperation agreements with two Spanish museums during the event, solidifying collaborative ties between the two nations in the realm of cultural heritage."

"A special event introducing culture and tourism resources from East China's Shandong province is held at the China Cultural Center in Madrid, Spain, May 9, 2023. [Photo/Chinaculture.org]

A special event introducing culture and tourism resources from East China's Shandong province was held at the China Cultural Center in Madrid, Spain on May 9.

More than 200 guests attended the event, including Bai Yugang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Provincial Party Committee, Wu Haitao, the Chinese ambassador to Spain.

Bai pointed out in his speech that tourism spreads civilization, exchanges culture and enhances friendship. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Spain, and it is also the ""China-Spain Culture and Tourism Year"". He continues and took the opportunity to jointly strengthen open cooperation in the fields of culture and tourism.

Wu emphasized that Shandong, as the hometown of Confucius, is rich in cultural and tourism resources. It is believed that the Shandong Cultural Tourism Promotion Conference will open a window for Spanish people to understand the history and culture of Shandong and China, show the unique charm of Shandong and Chinese culture, and further promote the mutual understanding and friendly exchanges between the people of China and Spain.

Yang Changqing, director of the China Cultural Center in Madrid, said that through the promotional meeting, he could see the new achievements of the exchanges and cooperation between China and the West in the field of culture and tourism led by the People's Government of Shandong Province.

At the event, Shandong Provincial Bureau of Cultural Relics signed cooperation agreements with Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum of Spain, Shandong Museum and Lazaro Galdiano Museum respectively.

The guests enjoyed the Shandong cultural tourism photo exhibition, participated in tea culture performances, on-site incense making, Hanfu experience and other intangible cultural heritage experiences.

The activity belongs to the worldwide event “Tea for Harmony: Yaji Cultural Salon” launched by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China, in cooperation with international organizations and Chinese embassies, consulates and missions abroad, and by means of overseas China Cultural Centers and China National Tourist Offices."

"East China's Shandong province held a cultural tourism promotional event titled ""Hometown of Confucius, Hospitable Shandong"" in Madrid, Spain on May 9.

Nearly 200 guests attended the event, including government officials, representatives from the Asia-Pacific Department of the World Tourism Organization, as well as representatives from media outlets, travel agencies, airlines, hotels, overseas Chinese communities, and culture and art circles.

Guests attend the Shandong cultural tourism promotional event in Madrid, Spain on May 9. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Spain, as well as the ""China-Spain Year of Culture and Tourism"".

Bai Yugang, head of the Shandong provincial publicity department, noted in his speech that tourism helps civilizations spread, facilitates cultural exchanges, and promotes friendship.

""We would like to take this opportunity to work closely with Spanish counterparts to pursue common development that produces mutual benefits and win-win results, strengthen cooperation in the fields of culture and tourism, and write a new chapter in the exchanges between the two places,"" said Bai.

A Nishan bookstore plate is presented to the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Chinese Ambassador to Spain Wu Haitao said that the Shandong culture and tourism promotional event will open a window for the Spanish people to understand the history and culture of Shandong and China, showcase the unique charm of Shandong and China, as well as further promote people-to-people exchanges and friendly exchanges between China and Spain.

A tea promotional event and the Meeting the Sea along the Yellow River: Shandong Painting and Calligraphy photo exhibition were also held.

The Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism presents a replica of Shandong's representative cultural relics to the Chinese Cultural Center in Madrid. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Locals enjoy a tea art performance in Madrid, Spain. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong promotes its unique culture in Madrid, Spain. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"China is building an innovation center to study and utilize saline-alkali land with a focus on conducting observation of the soil, vegetation, groundwater and climate across the country to provide data support for land management and utilization, according to Shandong Provincial Department of Science and Technology.

""China is the third-largest country in the world in terms of the distribution of saline-alkali land, with approximately 36.67 million hectares of usable saline-alkali land resources of various types, which presents enormous development potential,"" Liang Kailong, deputy director of the department, said at a news conference on Monday.

The headquarters of the center is at the Agricultural High-tech Industrial Demonstration Area of the Yellow River Delta in Dongying, Shandong province, while sub-centers will be set up in Changchun, Jilin province, for soda-containing land; in Changji, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, for arid land; and in Handan, Hebei province, for land in which salt is sporadically scattered.

In addition, 16 stations will be built in cities including Daqing in Heilongjiang province, Yinchuan in the Ningxia Hui autonomous region, Bayannuur in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region and Kashgar in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region to carry out the experiments and applications of integrated technology.

In the near future, the center aims to resolve a series of critical core issues on the biological breeding of salt-tolerant crops and improve the quality of saline-alkali land between 2023 and 2025.

It will cultivate more than 80 new salt-tolerant strains of crops, including grains, oilseeds, forage, and economic crops over the next three years, and plant these new cultivated crops on 2 million hectares of land, Liang said.

The center will also improve the quality of over 866,660 hectares of salt-containing arable land by means such as efficient use of water sources.

To achieve the aims, 50 innovation teams of 18 relevant research institutes of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences will participate in the center's major tasks of biological breeding, increasing production capacity and ecological utilization of the land, said Yi Keke, deputy director of the Institute of Agricultural Resources and Regional Planning of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

The center is supported by 18 domestic universities, research institutes and enterprises including China Agricultural University and the Institute of Genetics and Developmental Biology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

These organizations have strength in innovation and development of saline-alkali land agriculture, said Bi Jianming, deputy director of the management committee of the Agricultural High-tech Industrial Demonstration Area of the Yellow River Delta."

"A cultural tourism promotion event titled ""Hometown of Confucius, Hospitable Shandong"" opened in Rome, the ""Eternal City"" of Italy, on May 6.

Hosted by the Shandong Provincial Department of Cultural and Tourism, the event's opening ceremony was attended by more than 100 guests, including government officials from both sides, media outlets, as well as representatives from Italian travel agencies, airlines, hotels, overseas Chinese communities, and culture and art circles.

Shandong hosts a cultural tourism promotion event in Rome, the ""Eternal City"" of Italy, on May 6. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong is a large province in terms of population, economy, culture, and tourism along the east coast of China. It has a population of more than 100 million and is the third largest economy in China. It boasts rich cultural tourism resources as it is where Mount Tai raises, the Yellow River flows into the sea, and Confucius was born. ""Friendly Shandong"" has become an influential tourism brand.

China and Italy are outstanding representatives of the Eastern and Western civilizations, with both exerting great and far-reaching influence on the history and development of the East and the West.

An artist performs Chinese martial arts at the opening ceremony. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong and Italy have a long history of exchanges. From the ancient Silk Road to Marco Polo's tour in Jinan to the missionary Matteo Ricci's translation of The Analects of Confucius, local exchanges between the two sides have had a great and far-reaching impact on the course of Eastern and Western history.

Shandong is willing to work with Italian counterparts to strengthen dialogue, enhance mutual trust, and deepen cooperation, drawing a new chapter in the cultural and tourism cooperation and exchanges between the two places, said a senior official from the Shandong Provincial Department of Cultural and Tourism.

During the opening ceremony, Riccardo Busi, president of the International Federation of Photographic Art (FIAP), announced the decision to establish the China Coordination Office of the FIAP in Shandong province, signing a strategic cooperation framework agreement with the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

The Meeting the Sea along the Yellow River: Shandong Painting and Calligraphy photo exhibition also opened.

The Chinese painting ""Confucius"" is presented as a gift to a local official. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The International Federation of Photographic Art (FIAP) signs a strategic cooperation framework agreement with the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"People take photos in front of a local barbecue restaurant in Zibo, Shandong province, May 3, 2023. [Photo/VCG]

Zibo, Shandong province, achieved a total gross domestic product of 105.77 billion yuan ($15.65 billion) in the first quarter, growing 4.7 percent year-on-year, according to the city's bureau of statistics on Saturday.

Primary industry, with agriculture at its core, reported an added value of 2.50 billion yuan, an increase of 4.4 percent year-on-year. Secondary industry, mainly manufacturing, registered an added value increase of 4.6 percent to 50.74 billion yuan, while tertiary industry, represented by the service sectors, reported an added value of 52.52 billion yuan, rising 4.7 percent.

The consumer market showed strong recovery momentum in the first quarter. Total retail sales of consumer goods in the city reached 31.36 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 8.3 percent.

The city has recently been trending on Chinese social media for its barbecue, and saw a sharp increase in tourists over the recent May Day holiday."

"The CNS Shandong carrier battle group sails in the Western Pacific. It undertook training in different combat scenarios during its recent mission. [Photo by An Ni/For China Daily]

Ship had close encounters with foreign vessels during mission

The People's Liberation Army Navy's CNS Shandong aircraft carrier has completed monthlong training and exercises and has returned to its home port of Sanya, in Hainan province, according to the Navy.

During the operation, the Shandong carrier battle group sailed into the Western Pacific and took part in combat patrols and ""Joint Sword"" exercises around Taiwan, which were organized by the PLA Eastern Theater Command in early April.

The carrier battle group trained in different combat scenarios such as search and strike against submarines, anti-ship assault and the elimination of enemy aircraft in a designated airspace.

They also cooperated with other fleets, ballistic missile forces and land-based aircraft units on joint exercises in the Western Pacific, the Navy said in a news release, adding that this is the first time the Shandong carrier battle group has trained in the Western Pacific.

During the voyage, the group had numerous encounters with foreign warships and planes that attempted to make close-up reconnaissance. Commanders handled the encounters in an effective, secure manner and used the encounters to hone combat skills, the Navy noted.

A J-15 fighter jet takes off from CNS Shandong during the battle group's recent training in the Western Pacific. [Photo by Li Jinghan/For China Daily]

According to pictures released by the Navy, the carrier battle group consists of several Type 055 and Type 052D guided-missile destroyers and Type 054A guided-missile frigates, as well as a large supply ship.

The Shandong — China's second aircraft carrier and the first to be wholly designed and built domestically — displaces 50,000 metric tons of water. Commissioned in December 2019 by the South Sea Fleet, it is the largest and most sophisticated naval ship currently in any Asian navy.

Song Zhongping, a military affairs commentator and retired PLA officer, said the fact that the Shandong carrier battle group was on combat duty during the training period indicates that all of its vessels, especially the carrier, have combat capability and are able to engage in actual battle.

""The PLA's carrier battle groups are tasked with operating in waters far from our shores to thwart enemy forces. They will play an important role in military operations against 'Taiwan independence' and foreign interference in the future,"" he said.

Song also said that the encounters with foreign air and naval forces provided the Shandong group precious opportunities to hone and test its operational capabilities and accumulate experience."

"Wang Liling (right), a villager from Cuibali village, Shandong province, introduces local farm produce during a livestream session. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Wang Liling had a busy May Day holiday as she was promoting her hometown farm specialties to customers online.

The woman from Cuibali village, Chongwen street, Guanxian county of Shandong province was enthusiastically interacting with her customers online, introducing in detail a local new variety of sweet potato during the holiday.

Villagers at her e-commerce facility were quickly sorting and packaging, preparing to ship to various parts of the country.

Local farm produces have enjoyed sharp rises in sales since local authorities explored an e-commerce mode that integrates farmland production and farmers.

A leadership group for rural e-commerce work at the street and village levels has been founded. Efforts have been made to actively cultivate rural e-commerce talent, and moved various distinctive local agricultural products to online platforms.

To date, more than 2,000 villagers have engaged in rural e-commerce. In the first quarter, the online retail sales exceeded 115 million yuan ($16.7 million)."

"This illustration photo shows big data and clouding computing technologies. [Photo/VCG]

Shandong province has encouraged local enterprises to increase investment in artificial intelligence as AI is increasingly perceived as a major driver to increase revenue and accelerate business transformation that is increasingly integrated into the real economy.

At present, there are nearly 1,000 AI backbone enterprises in the province, nearly 70 percent of which are located in the Jinan-Qingdao AI innovation and application pilot zone. The output value of the zone's core industry exceeds 10 billion yuan ($1.45 billion), and the scale of AI related industries exceeds 100 billion yuan.

The establishment of the AI innovation and application pilot zone is a strategic measure of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology for the development of the intelligent economy.

Shandong has the advantages of a leading manufacturing industry, as well as big data resources and application scenarios. In recent years, AI technology has been promoted and applied in various economic and societal areas at an accelerated pace.

Jinan, capital of Shandong province, has launched an AI empowerment campaign, which forms AI application scenarios and solution resource pools focusing on manufacturing, medical care, education, and other key industries. The scale of the AI core industry in Jinan reached 27.1 billion yuan last year, up 17.6 percent year-on-year.

In February, the Qingdao AI Industrial Park opened. It was the first to start operation among 15 professional parks dedicated to emerging industries in the city.

According to the Implementation Plan for Integrated Development of the Jinan-Qingdao AI Innovation and Application Pilot Zone, Shandong will preliminarily establish the AI industrial ecological chain with Jinan and Qingdao as the leading cities in the province. In addition, the output value of the AI core industry in the pilot zone will reach about 30 billion yuan by 2025."

"With mountains and seas and beautiful scenery all round, here is an alluring fairy land. It is a bright pearl shining on the coast of the Huanghai and Bohai seas. The city boasts mountains, seas, islands, rivers, and springs. And its coastline stretches 1,071 kilometers. Take a glimpse of beautiful China here in Yantai, Shandong province.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, Yantai has made its ecological environment the center of its economic development and people's wellbeing.

In order to protect the ecological wellbeing of local people, the city launched rectification campaigns to fight against dust pollution, clean up the beaches, and crack down on environmental violations.

Yantai's ecological environment has been gradually improved year-by-year. It has won several honorary titles, such as the National Forest City and the National Water-Eco Civilization City,and also won the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour Award."

"The number killed by an explosion at a chemical plant in Liaocheng, Shandong province, on Monday morning has increased to nine, with one remaining missing, local authorities said.

The accident happened in an area for hydrogen peroxide production at Luxi Chemical, a subsidiary of Sinochem Holdings.

Five people were found dead soon after the blast, and another four bodies were removed from the debris during the rescue operation after the fire caused by the explosion was put out, according to a statement on Wednesday from the management committee of Liaocheng high-tech zone, where the plant is located.

The accident also injured one worker, it added.

The cause of the explosion is still under investigation, but preliminary analysis shows that it may have been caused by violent chemical reactions triggered by impurities in a recovery facility, a statement from the Ministry of Emergency Management said on Tuesday.

The blast broke a tank of a neighboring company and ignited chemical liquid that leaked from the storage facility and some pipes, it added.

The ministry cautioned companies in the chemical sector across the country to learn a lesson from the accident and immediately screen their facilities to rule out safety hazards.

""They should take concrete actions to beef up the management of major risks and resolutely prevent and curb the occurrence of extraordinary accidents,"" the ministry stressed.

These companies should rigidly restrict the number of workers in chemical facilities with high explosion risks, it added.

An investigation team has been set up to look into the accident.

Consisting of members from the Liaocheng government and five provincial government bodies, including the departments of emergency management and public security, the team will identify the cause and determine who has liability for the accident as soon as possible, a statement from the Shandong provincial government said on Wednesday.

The team will provide suggestions for the punishment of those liable for the accident and the measures that should be taken for rectification, it said. The result of the investigation will be made public in a timely manner."

"Total fatalities in the deadly explosion at a chemical factory in Liaocheng, Shandong province, have risen to nine after the discovery of four more dead at the site, according to a statement from the administrative commission of the Liaocheng High-tech Industrial Development Zone on Wednesday. The blast left one person injured and one is still missing.

The blast occurred at a hydrogen peroxide production area of Luxi Chemical Group. A State-owned enterprise, the company joined Sinochem Holdings Co in 2020, according to its website.

The fire had been extinguished as of Monday afternoon.

The injured person is being treated at a local hospital while rescue work is still underway. An investigation on the blast's cause is also ongoing."

"An epergne, a stand with holders for sweetmeats, fruit and flowers, was popular in the 18th-century Europe. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A collection of treasures from Europe dating from the 17th to 19th centuries will be displayed at the Shandong Museum in Jinan, Shandong province, starting on Friday. It will run to Aug 31.

The 90 rare pieces include snuffboxes, micromosaic art and gold and silver vessels, which vividly reflect the lifestyle and social etiquette of the European court and nobility of the period.

The exhibition is sponsored by the Shandong Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

A snuffbox with an image of French Emperor Napoleon I. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A vessel for cooling wine. It was used at the end of 18th century in London. [Photo by Liu Chuan/For chinadaily.com.cn]

A range of wine vessels used in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries. [Photo by Liu Chuan/For chinadaily.com.cn]

A series of micromosaics from Europe will be displayed at Shandong Museum. [Photo by Liu Chuan/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Locals stage opera performance at Chongwen street. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Residents danced enthusiastically on a square in Chongwen street, Guanxian county, Shandong province, on April 20.

The dance has been organized regularly by local authorities to spice up residents' life.

In addition, traditional Yuju and Peking Opera performances have been staged for local residents, including in more than 30 villages.

Reading, intangible cultural heritage performance and folk activities have also been hosted at communities.

They are all part of the local authorities' efforts to extend cultural benefits to the grassroots level.

The goal is to further enrich rural culture, meet the growing needs of urban and rural residents for a better life, and promote cultural vitalization, according to the authorities.

Residents engage in a dance at a local square. [Photo provided to China Daily]"

"People read ancient Chinese classics during the first Hanfu Huazhao Festival in Yutai county. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The first Hanfu Huazhao Festival was held in Yutai county of Jining, Shandong province in early April, with participants wearing traditional Chinese clothing to go sightseeing, take photographs and read ancient Chinese classics.

The local government has introduced policies to promote consumption and carry out culture and tourism activities this year. Five tourist routes have been set up, including cycling, self-driving and hiking tours, providing visitors a wide range of options.

As Yutai county is located at the west bank of Weishan Lake, the local crayfish and rice are well-known. To boost awareness of Yutai's food, the first beer festival was also held, offering barbecue, country cuisine, crayfish, beer and live shows.

People wear hanfu during the first Hanfu Huazhao Festival in Yutai. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The first Hanfu Huazhao Festival is held in Yutai county. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

A cycling event is held in Yutai county of Jining, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Performances with distinctive national features and vivid regional characteristics were presented at the opening gala of the 13th China Folk Art Festival in Qingdao's West Coast New Area on Thursday. [Photo by Yu Fangping/For chinadaily.com.cn]

The 13th China Folk Art Festival kicked off in Qingdao's West Coast New Area in Shandong province on Thursday.

Twenty folk performance teams from 18 provincial-level regions, along with experts and artists, provided an audio-visual feast with distinctive national features and vivid regional characteristics during the opening gala.

The four-day event will include song and dance shows, seminars and art exhibitions displaying the development of folk art and cultures across China.

Held biennially, the festival is the most high-profile event in terms of folk art in the country."

"The Forum on the International Communication of the Yellow River Culture was held in Dongying, Shandong province on April 18, in which participants enhanced the cultural connotations of the Yellow River and explored the contemporary values of Yellow River culture, as well as the development path for its protection and inheritance.

Xi Yanchun, head of the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government [Photo/Jinan Daily]

The event successfully opened a new chapter for disseminating Yellow River culture on the global stage.

Xi Yanchun, head of the Information Office of Shandong Provincial People's Government, said during the forum that the Yellow River is the mother river of China and that its culture is the root and soul of the Chinese nation.

""Carrying forward the Yellow River culture and telling stories nurtured by the Yellow River in better ways are historical missions and tasks in modern times. Today, we gather at the estuary of the Yellow River to share the historical mission and jointly open a splendid chapter for the international dissemination of Yellow River culture,"" Xi said.

Yellow River flows into the Bohai Sea in Dongying. [Photo/Jinan Daily]

The Yellow River begins on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and rushes eastward into the sea. As an age-old witness to the profound history of China over thousands of years, it has served as a cradle for Chinese civilization over generations.

Shandong, where the Yellow River meets the sea, boasts abundant cultural resources. The province has taken the lead in promoting ecological protection and high-quality development of the Yellow River Basin, enhancing Yellow River culture, as well as telling stories nurtured by the Yellow River in better ways.

Shandong is bolstering cultural tourism by building the cultural experience corridor along the Yellow River and the Yellow River National Cultural Park, launching exhibitions on handmade crafts, as well as creating the ""Friendly Shandong"" brand.

An aerial photo of the Yellow River Delta [Photo/Jinan Daily]

The province is also spreading Yellow River culture on the global stage by holding events like the Nishan Forum on World Civilization and establishing international sister-city relationships.

Another key measure for Shandong to vitalize Yellow River culture is launching diverse activities. Those include the Yellow River Culture Conference, ""Meeting the Sea along the Yellow River"" promotion event, and a digital culture application development conference to empower the cultural industry.

Shandong also promotes the Yellow River through a multichannel approach. The province has made a documentary recording the natural landscapes, humanistic beauty, and life along the Yellow River, carried out travel-themed interviews on the cultural heritage and regional development along the Yellow River, as well as focused on practicing high-quality development to interpret the Chinese-style modernization from multiple angles."

"Visitors browse through handicrafts on display at the Yellow River spring bazaar exhibition in Dongying, Shandong province. [Photo by Wang Jing/chinadaily.com.cn]

Scholars, experts and officials gathered in Dongying, Shandong province where the Yellow River meets the sea on Tuesday to discuss the international communications of the Yellow River culture at a sub-forum, a major part of the Yellow River Culture Forum.

Snaking through nine provinces and autonomous regions across North China, the 5,464-kilometer river is an age-old witness to the nation's history.

Over the course of 5,000 years of Chinese civilization, different regions along the river have served as important political and cultural centers. Cultural heritage sites along the river comprise about 40 percent of the national total, Liu Lianghai, director of the History Study Institute of Shandong Academy of Social Sciences, said at the forum.

""To make full use of these historical and cultural relics is to promote the development of the culture and tourism sector and, in a profound way, to carry over the culture and nurture the root and soul of our nation,"" Liu said.

There are bright prospects in spreading the Yellow River culture overseas and promoting ecological tourism. This will not only attract a large number of foreign tourists but also help establish a more comprehensive image of China, said Burkhard Risse, a German language expert for Foreign Languages Express.

""The Yellow River culture not only includes ecology but many other aspects, including folk arts,"" Risse said.

Shandong has been putting great effort toward promoting the Yellow River culture overseas. The province has been developing the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations to build a high-end platform to promote exchanges and mutual learning among world civilizations.

It has also published works including documentaries and short videos of the Yellow River culture in multiple languages to make the culture better known.

During the forum, the Yellow River spring bazaar showcased the rich cultures cultivated along the Yellow River basin. It attracted intangible cultural inheritors and folk artists from nine provinces and autonomous regions along the river.

The bazaar will last throughout the year with different themes."

"Zibo city in Shandong province has unexpectedly gone viral on Chinese social media since late February for its local barbecue specialty, and continues to trend as the local government takes the opportunity to spur tourism and spending.

The latest promotion gives visitors free admission to 10 scenic spots in the city with their train ticket as long as their final destination is Zibo, according to the city's culture and tourism bureau.

This move follows another on March 31 under which the Jinan bureau of China Railway added a weekend special round-trip ""barbecue tour"" train between Jinan, the capital city of Shandong and Zibo.

Passengers who board the train are greeted by a banner reading ""Welcome to the Special BBQ Train ""at the entrance of the carriage. They also receive items including leaflets about Zibo's culture and tourism draws, as well as small souvenirs and snacks. Many also took videos and posted them on social media, drawing more visitors.

""The high-speed trains are packed with passengers and the air smells of cumin,"" wrote one netizen.

Barbecue is popular in China, but Zibo's barbecue is different on three counts; it's made on a stove, and is served with flatbread and dressings. The skewers are 70-80 percent cooked before they are brought to the table, where diners can finish cooking them on their own stoves, which lends a sense of participation. Diners are served flatbreads, scallions and other dressings at the table so they are able to assemble their own barbecue parcels, in much the same way Peking duck is eaten.

The barbecue suddenly went viral after a group of college students shot videos of themselves enjoying a meal and posted them on social media in late February.

Since then, many people, mostly young, have flocked to the city from all over the country to try the dish.

According to local media reports on Wednesday, searches for ""barbecue"" increased by 370 percent in March, and searches for ""Zibo barbecue"" on the platform as a whole have increased by 770 percent year-on-year.

On several streets, lines can be seen outside barbecue restaurants, which stretch for more than 100 meters on the weekend.

""Zibo barbecue is bringing more and more people to the city, and the local government needs to think about how to promote the city as a whole, its culture and tourism, as well as its living and business environment,"" said Sun Xiaorong, a member of the expert panel of tourism marketing and promotion that is supervised by the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

The trend will eventually end if the local government doesn't take proper follow-up measures, he added."

"Huanghekou flower-shaped steamed buns are popular in the Yellow River mouth region of Shandong province. [Photo by Wang Jing/chinadaily.com.cn]

Intangible cultural inheritors and folk artists from nine provinces and autonomous regions along the Yellow River gathered in Dongying, Shandong province, at a festival to showcase the rich cultures cultivated along the Yellow River basin.

Handicrafts and performances were on display in booths and on stages along the banks of a downtown lake, when the city hosted a two-day Yellow Cultural Forum which started on Tuesday.

The Yellow River Festival from Sunday to Tuesday attracted citizens and tourists.

At the booth of Huanghekou Huamo, a flower-shaped steamed bun, the craftswoman, Bi Wenjing, placed a huge flower bun weighing 30 kilograms in the booth, attracting tourists to watch and take photos. Bi said she started work at 9 am and saw the visitors soaring as darkness fell.

In addition, more than 100 characteristic agricultural products were on sale, while delicious foods were also available, including barbecue from Zibo, Shandong province, which recently trended on Chinese social media.

Sun Zhaohai, a resident of Dongying said people could taste delicious food while learning about folk customs at the festival, making it perfect for children.

The Yellow River, the second-longest river in China, originates on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and flows through nine provinces and autonomous regions from west to east, eventually reaching the Bohai Sea. It is often called the cradle of Chinese civilization.

An exhibition at the festival featured handicrafts and folk customs from nine provinces and autonomous regions along the Yellow River. [Photo by Wang Jing/chinadaily.com.cn]

Colored glass from Boshan, Shandong province, was on display. [Photo by Wang Jing/chinadaily.com.cn]

A vendor at the festival dressed in a frog costume. [Photo by Wang Jing/chinadaily.com.cn]

The festival was packed with visitors. [Photo by Wang Jing/chinadaily.com.cn]

The festival was packed with visitors. [Photo by Wang Jing/chinadaily.com.cn]

A folk artist performed Shandong Kuaishu, also known as ""bamboo clapper Kuaishu"", a traditional folk art that originated in southwestern Shandong. [Photo by Wang Jing/chinadaily.com.cn]"

"JINAN -- Italian chef Federico Bianchini rises with the first rays of spring sunshine, puts on his white work jacket and heads into the kitchen. A few hours later, the appetizing aroma of dessert fills the house.

This is the fourth year that Bianchini, 61, has lived in Dongying in East China's Shandong province, running a restaurant with his Chinese wife, partly in remembrance of their deceased daughter.

In 2004, Bianchini married Dong Yan, a Chinese national living in Verona, Italy. However, the couple were plunged into grief when a car accident took away their only daughter. For years, the couple struggled to move on.

""Our daughter once told us that she wanted to open an Italian restaurant in Dongying,"" Bianchini said. ""We found this city in the Yellow River Delta on the map, and we felt a kind of predestination.""

Their daughter had visited Dongying and became attached to the city. ""We wanted to see the place my daughter was thinking of, to fulfill her unfulfilled dream,"" said Bianchini.

In 2019, having finally mustered the courage to start a new business in their 50s, the couple made the move to Shandong.

""On the plane, we encouraged each other, saying that at least one person in 100 would like our dishes. To our surprise, we received a lot of help in opening our restaurant from the government and local people,"" said the husband.

The first Chinese words he learned after landing in Dongying were ""beautiful"" and ""delicious,"" followed closely by ""love."" Such were the sentiments aroused by this inclusive and amiable city in the estuary of China's second-longest river.

The restaurant built a fan base with its Italian menu. Among their regular customers are many local parents, who chat with the couple while bringing their children to enjoy Italian food.

The restaurant has a signature dish called Wangwang Pizza, which Bianchini designed for a 9-year-old boy called Wangwang. The child's mother was among the couple's first local customers and friends, and helped open a social media account to spread the word about the restaurant.

""I like talking with them. It feels like they're my daughter's friends and neighbors,"" said Dong.

While most chefs keep their recipes secret, Bianchini shares them on a large board displayed in the restaurant. The couple have also joined in activities to introduce authentic Italian dishes to schools and communities, offering free culinary training.

""We feel that life in Dongying is full of love, and sharing is a kind of happiness,"" Bianchini said, adding that his Chinese friends have introduced him to Chinese traditions like acupuncture and taught him to make Chinese snacks such as steamed buns.

Last year, Bianchini received a senior citizen's ID and a free public transport card. Looking ahead, he is content to continue running his restaurant in Dongying.

""We'll stay in China and in the Yellow River estuary, where we have our family and love,"" said Bianchini."

"Kite enthusiasts fly their kites at the 40th Weifang International Kite Festival in Weifang, Shandong province, on April 15, 2023. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The 40th Weifang International Kite Festival opened on Saturday in Weifang, Shandong province, attracting 622 kite enthusiasts from 59 countries and regions.

Apart from kite flying, the festival includes cultural performances, exhibitions, lantern fairs, concerts and food stalls serving local delicacies, providing a platform for opening-up and exchanges, as well as creating an international gala featuring traditional cultures and Chinese characteristics.

This year's festival will last until May 21.

Andreas Agren from Sweden prepares his kite at the 40th Weifang International Kite Festival in Weifang, Shandong province, on April 15, 2023. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

Stanislav Kolbintsev from Russia shows his kite at the 40th Weifang International Kite Festival in Weifang, Shandong province, on Saturday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

Kite enthusiasts demonstrate four-string controlled kites at the 40th Weifang International Kite Festival in Weifang, Shandong province, on Saturday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/chinadaily.com.cn]

Kites are seen flying in the sky at the 40th Weifang International Kite Festival in Weifang, Shandong province, on Saturday. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Farmers paint peonies in the Luxi Painting and Calligraphy Institute in Juye, Shandong province, on Sunday. [Photo by Zhao Ruixue/China Daily]

Known as the ""Peony Capital of China"", Heze in Shandong province has been cultivating the delicate flower for over 1,400 years, and thanks to this local specialty another industry has bloomed into life.

The painting of peonies in many rural areas of Shandong, but especially in the counties around Heze, has become a profitable industry supplementing the incomes of many farm workers during the off-season.

In the village of Liuguantun, a group of more than 30 women, accompanied by their children, regularly gather to paint peonies at the Luxi Painting and Calligraphy Institute.

Xu Qian, 33, holds a pair of brushes in her right hand — one with pigment and the other with water — as she carefully paints peony flowers in the Chinese realist style known as gongbi.

It takes her a week to finish a 1.8-meter-long painting, she said, adding that working at the institute can supplement her regular income to the tune of around 3,000 yuan ($440) a month.

""This is a decent income. More importantly, I can still take care of my two children,"" she said.

The promotion of the peony painting industry is proving a success in Liuguantun and the wider county of Juye, where more than 2,000 farm workers have taken to painting to make a bit of money on the side and to enable them to remain locally based rather than traveling away from their homes to make money.

The building of specialized industry is also used in places such as Weifang, which itself specializes in the making of kites.

""We've been teaching farmers traditional Chinese painting for free, and the skills can be acquired usually within a year, or half a year for fast learners,"" said Xu Fengqiu, the institute's founder.

In recent years, Juye county Party committee and the county government have been attaching great importance to the development of the painting and calligraphy sector, in a bid to boost the rural vitalization strategy.

""The women don't have to travel far from home for work now that they can earn an income while being able to take care of their children and parents at home,"" said Gao Sujuan, director of the county's publicity department.

In total, there are more than 20,000 farmers in Juye doing painting and calligraphy. Their paintings have been sold to more than 40 countries and regions, according to the county's statistics."

"The Dongying Economy and Technology Development Zone of Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Entitled ""Focusing on the Power of Innovation to Seek Coordinated Development"", the 2023 China Offshore Wind Turbine Technology Innovation Conference (Dongying) was held at the Dongying Economy and Technology Development Zone of Shandong province on April 7. Around 350 participants, including wind power industry experts and business representatives from all over the country, gathered in Dongying to cooperate on building an industrial chain of offshore wind power equipment and accelerating the development of the offshore wind power industry.

Dongying is a central city in the Yellow River Delta, a national strategic energy base and where the Shengli Oilfield is located, as well as an important base for the ecological protection of the Yellow River Basin and the national strategy of high-quality development. The Dongying Economy and Technology Development Zone is the first national development zone in the Yellow River Delta and boasts a favorable geographic location, an elegant ecological environment, rich natural resources and a solid industrial foundation.

The 2023 China Offshore Wind Turbine Technology Innovation Conference (Dongying). [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Within the context of China's carbon peak and neutrality efforts, Shandong province has planned an offshore wind power base of 35 million kilowatts. As one of three offshore wind power equipment industry bases planned by Shandong, Dongying has planned and constructed the Dongying Offshore Wind Power Equipment Industrial Park with a total investment of 48 billion yuan. By fully accelerating the development of a complete industrial chain of offshore wind power equipment manufacture, it aims to build a base of offshore wind power equipment with an output value of hundreds of billions of yuan and a headquarters for wind power in the north of China.

The Dongying Offshore Wind Power Equipment Industrial Park is located at the coast of the Bohai Sea and Guangli Port, a mature port for the transport of offshore wind power equipment and port hinterlands with complete supporting facilities. With a solid industrial foundation and strong collaboration potential, it can cover all offshore wind power bases in the Bohai Sea and Yellow Sea regions and extend its influence to countries and regions such as Japan and South Korea. So far, the park has implemented 25 industrial chain projects with a total investment of 24.7 billion Yuan such as CSSC and Shanghai Electric. It's predicted to achieve an output value of 5 billion yuan within the year, and an output value of 50 billion yuan by the end of the 14th 5-Year Plan period."

"The People's Liberation Army Navy's CNS Shandong aircraft carrier has taken part in the ""Joint Sword"" exercises around the Taiwan Island on Monday, according to the PLA Eastern Theater Command.

The Shandong carrier battle group, which consists of at least one Type 055 guided-missile destroyer and several other types of destroyers and frigates, was shown in a video clip published by the command on Monday afternoon.

J-15 fighter jets took off from the carrier to participate in the drills, according to the clip.

The Shandong — China's second aircraft carrier and the first wholly designed and built in the country — displaces at least 50,000 metric tons of water. Commissioned in December 2019 to the South Sea Fleet, it is the largest and most sophisticated naval ship now in any Asian navy.

Other naval vessels involved in the exercises simulated port blockade and attacks on enemy ships. They maneuvered to ""favorable positions"" and then closed in on their adversaries in a move of deterrence.

In a separate video, a PLA Navy sailor was seen observing a Taiwan naval ship that was very close to his own.

Air units under the command sent dozens of fighter jets and bombers, which were loaded with real missiles, and early-warning and electronic warfare planes to conduct air blockade and mock missile assaults against key targets on the Taiwan Island.

On the ground, ballistic and cruise missile forces tracked enemy ships and then simulated several rounds of saturation bombardments.

Monday is expected to be the last day of the three-day ""Joint Sword"" exercises organized by the PLA Eastern Theater Command. The military operations are a serious warning to the collusion and provocations by ""Taiwan independence"" separatists and external forces and a necessary move to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, Senior Colonel Shi Yi, spokesman for the command, said on Saturday."

"A peony garden in the downtown area of Heze, Shandong province, attracts visitors on Saturday. [Photo by Zhang Xiao/for chinadaily.com.cn]

The Heze Peony International Communication Forum was held in Heze, Shandong province, on Sunday, aiming to strengthen the international communication of peony culture and building a platform to boost cultural exchanges and mutual learning.

Activities including one theme forum, an exhibition, keynote speeches and a round table discussion were held during the forum. A Cooperation Base of Innovation on Cultural Communication, which also serves as the Center for International Communication of Peony Culture, was unveiled.

Peony gardens will be constructed overseas to enhance the inclusive coexistence, exchanges and mutual learning among different civilizations, according to information from the forum.

Javier Garcia from Spain who teaches at the Renmin University of China said at the forum that the peony symbolizes beauty, love, affection and good fortune which is certainly a good representative of Chinese culture, and everybody can understand its language and its powerful communication power.

Known as the ""Peony Capital of China"", Heze currently has a peony planting area of about 26,667 hectares, with 1,280 varieties.

The peony business in Heze has evolved from sightseeing to manufacturing a variety of high-value peony-related products, such as seed oil, tea, cosmetics, and healthy food.

Statistics show Heze has developed into the country's largest base for peony cultivation, research, sales, and exports, with its peony-related products exported to more than 30 countries and regions around the world.

Visitors enjoy peony flowers at a garden in Juye county of Heze, Shandong province, on Saturday. [Photo by Zang Dongming/for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Yellow River Tower in Binzhou's Puhu Lake Scenic Area [Photo by Liu Chuan/chinadaily.com.cn]

East China's Shandong province, where the Yellow River flows into the sea, is promoting the deep integration of culture and tourism, as well as empowering local economic and social development in an all-round way.

Over the years, Shandong has launched an array of cultural tourism projects, making great strides in digging into the cultural connotations and value of the Yellow River to boost the high-quality development of the region.

One example is the Yellow River Tower in Binzhou's Puhu Lake Scenic Area, which was open to the public last year. It has become a cultural landmark of the Yellow River Basin where visitors can enjoy panoramic views of the river passing through the city, as well as watch exhibitions showcasing the river's profound history and culture.

Shuihu Film Studio in Yuncheng county, Heze [Photo by Liu Chuan/chinadaily.com.cn]

Liu Shumin, head of Shandong Binsheng Scenic Area Management Service, said the tower has offered more than 20 courses on traditional Chinese culture, including movable-type printing and willow weaving.

""The tower also offers various types of activities, such as research tours, and undertakes Yellow River-themed photography exhibitions and video competitions. We have also developed more than 30 kinds of cultural and creative products,"" Liu added.

One of the most influential tourism brands in Yuncheng county, the Shuihu Film Studio is another key complex integrating film and television shooting, research, as well as performances. There are 36 courtyards, 72 landscape sites, and 108 scenic spots displaying the diverse cultures of the Chinese classic novel Shuihuzhuan, or Heros of the Marshes. During the Spring Festival this year, it received 30,000 to 40,000 visitors per day.

Peonies bloom in April in Heze. [Photo/Caoxian news]

Abundant resources

Shandong is home to 622 A-level scenic spots along the Yellow River, accounting for half of the total in the province, including the Caozhou Flower Garden in Heze's Mudan district, as well as the Aishan Mountain scenic area and the ""Ejiao World"" experience workshop in Liaocheng's Dong'e county.

Relying on its unique natural endowment of wormwood, the plant used to cure malaria patients, Aishan village has accelerated the integrated development of the ""planting, processing, and service"" model for the wormwood industry. Local villagers have also developed businesses, such as farmhouses and homestays, to speed up rural tourism.

Walking into the ""Ejiao World"" experience workshop, visitors can learn about the production process of Ejiao, a gelatin used in traditional Chinese medicine, from boiling to laying and cutting to packaging. The site is the first ejiao-themed tourist attraction in China that combines industrial tourism with healthcare, science, interactions, and entertainment.

Folklore performances at a century-old street in Lijin county, Dongying [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Rebirth of cultural heritage

Yellow River culture is a product of the material and spiritual advancement of the people living by the river throughout time, reflecting their long-term social practices, which have become profound cultural heritage items, as well as inspirations for local artistic creations and handicrafts.

Lyu Opera, a unique genre of the Chinese art form, is rooted in Dongying's Shijia village. Wang Lingling, an inheritor of the intangible cultural heritage item, said that Dongying has established a center for the protection, inheritance, and development of Lyu Opera.

In Nanling village in Dongying's Lijin county, a century-old street lies on the north bank of the Yellow River and boasts a series of intangible cultural heritage items, such as ancient yangqin, a hammered dulcimer, Nanling tofu, as well as Beiling meatballs."

"Pear blossoms in a garden in Xiazhang town, Tai'an, Shandong province. [Photo by Fu Cunhua/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong province has been revving up efforts to promote the integrated development of culture and tourism, stimulate tourism market vitality, cultivate new growth drivers and boost tourism consumption.

On the recent weekend, the 100-year-old Guangxingli building in Qingdao was crowded. Various fancy music bars, coffee shops, restaurants, bookstores and trendy shops around attracted many tourists near the building.

The Liyuan buildings were built by Germans for local Chinese residents during Germany's administration of Qingdao from 1898 to 1914. Their style resembles an elevated quadrangle courtyard that combines the structure of traditional Chinese courtyards with a western architectural style.

""The creative design of some cultural creation shops is very trendy, attracting consumers to the downtown area of Qingdao. With the local government's unremitting efforts in citywide protection and redevelopment, the city's historic areas will take on new looks,"" said a local resident surnamed Li.

Driven by various activities and measures to promote tourism consumption, short-tour rural trips in suburban areas and rural tours have also seen a rise in tourism in Shandong.

In 2022, Shandong organized the ""Shandong Culture and Tourism Consumption Season"", the ""Touring Shandong in Winter"" and other tourism promotional events. A total of 110 million yuan ($15.96 million) in cultural and tourism coupons were issued, which brought in 507 million yuan in revenue.

From Jan 21 to March 31 this year, a total of 132 State-owned A-level tourist attractions in Shandong exempted entry fees to revive the tourism industry that was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic."

"The third Conference of Great Business Partners is held in Jinan from March 28 to 30. [Photo/Dazhong News]

Shandong has been working to attract more talented returnees, with efforts made to improve the green channel for overseas students to find a job in the province or to start businesses.

Cities in Shandong have launched their own housing policies for overseas graduate returnees. For example, under the related policy in Qingdao, an economic powerhouse in Shandong, returning Chinese students can enjoy a rental allowance within two years of obtaining an overseas postgraduate degree. The rental allowance ranges from 800 yuan ($116.64) to 1,500 yuan a month.

To encourage overseas returnees to start their own businesses, Qingdao has introduced a series of preferential policies, covering entrepreneurship park office space renting, medical services, social security, and other aspects.

The innovation and entrepreneurship forum for talented returnees is held on March 29 during the third Conference of Great Business Partners. [Photo/Dazhong News]

To date, Shandong has introduced more than 100,000 returnee graduates, among whom 158 have won the Shandong Province Overseas Returnees Entrepreneurship Award.

There are 36 pioneer parks and 676 entrepreneurial enterprises for overseas students in the province, which generated a total revenue of 81.35 billion yuan in 2022.

To further optimize the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem of overseas returnees in Shandong, as well as to improve service quality and effectiveness, the Shandong Province Service Alliance for Overseas Graduates was established on March 29, during the third Conference of Great Business Partners in Jinan."

"Pear blossoms in a garden in Xiazhang town, Tai'an, Shandong province on Saturday [Photo by Fu Cunhua/For chinadaily.com.cn]

As spring arrives, flowers bloom across the rural areas of Shandong province. Pink peach blossoms, white pear blossoms and canola flowers draw visitors, creating a special economy of flower sightseeing to help vitalize the countryside.

""We have been receiving a large number of visitors recently, and the number of diners has increased by about 50 percent compared with the same period last year,"" said Huo Yuxin, an owner of an agritainment base in Xiazhang town, Tai'an, Shandong province.

Visitors take a selfie among canola flowers in Wenshangji town, Chengwu county of Heze, Shandong province in last week. [Photo by Guo Yanfang/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Tourists walk through flowers in Linshu county of Linyi, Shandong province in last week. [Photo by Zhuo Congjie/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Visitors enjoy the peach flowers in Yucheng town, Yutai county of Jining, Shandong province, on Tuesday. [Photo by Gu Wei/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Visitors stop to smell the flowers in a wetland park in Ningjin county of Dezhou, Shandong province. [Photo by Wang Danfeng/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Musicians stage a flash mob performance in the old town of Qingdao in Shandong province. WANG XIAOLI/FOR CHINA DAILY

Shandong province, the home of ancient philosophers Confucius and Mencius, is making a great effort to leverage its many natural and cultural resources to boost the development of tourism and turn itself into an international tourism destination, according to officials at a high-profile conference recently.

""The tourism sector, which is a critical contributor to socioeconomic development, will play a major role in bolstering market consumption and accelerating economic growth,"" said Lin Wu, Party chief of the province, during the 2023 Shandong Tourism Development Conference, which concluded on Monday in Qingdao.

Lin said that Shandong has an abundance of cultural and tourist resources and that it's the right time to roll out favorable policies to stimulate the sector, as the implementation of new COVID-19 controls at the beginning of the year has laid a solid foundation for economic recovery.

According to the province's department of culture and tourism, 10 measures have been taken to promote tourism in Shandong. Given the fact that travel was difficult, if not impossible for much of last year, the number of visitors to State-owned scenic areas in the province in January and February of this year alone increased by nearly 200 percent.

Shandong is considered a key region in Chinese civilization, having nurtured many preeminent philosophers, writers and inventors during the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC) and the Warring States Period (475-221 BC).

It is home to four UNESCO World Natural and Cultural Heritage sites, including Mount Tai, and has 244 4A and 5A tourist scenic spots and 45 tourist resorts at the provincial level or above, as well as famous annual events such as the Qingdao International Beer Festival.

Lin stressed that more effort should be made to develop a number of leading tourism projects, and companies should be encouraged to become conglomerates.

He said these are two examples that could improve tourism in the province.

During the conference, Shandong launched 18 key projects with a planned investment of 44.96 billion yuan ($6.53 billion). They cover sectors such as leisure and vacations, nighttime sightseeing, ecotourism and cultural creativity.

Wang Lei, head of the province's department of culture and tourism, said that Shandong will deepen cooperation with other provinces to develop tourist brands, share resources, create new products and hold special events to showcase the scenery and customs of the nine provincial-level areas along the Yellow River and work together to boost the development of the cultural tourism industry.

Since March 15, a series of performances and exhibitions have been held in streets, museums and squares in Qingdao's old town to celebrate the conference.

Some 160 performances are scheduled through mid-May, as part of efforts to revitalize Qingdao's historic areas.

Zhao Haozhi, the city's mayor, said that Qingdao is continuing efforts to protect historical areas.

""The city has also established an a smart platform, 'Cloud Tour in Qingdao', to make tourism and leisure more convenient for residents and tourists,"" he added.

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"The 2023 Shandong Tourism Development Conference kicks off on March 26 in Qingdao. [Photo/Dazhong News]

The 2023 Shandong Tourism Development Conference that was held at the Qingdao International Conference Center on March 26 served as a key platform for visitors from all walks of life in China and abroad to strengthen exchanges and seek win-win solutions for the high-quality development of the cultural tourism industry.

Since the beginning of this year, Shandong has made great strides in building national parks and four cultural corridors along the Yellow River, the Grand Canal, the Great Wall of Qi, and the Huanghai and Bohai seas, as well as one cultural experience route along the Qingdao-Jinan high-speed railway.

The province is boosting the in-depth integration of culture and tourism, creating a top tourist destination with an international style, Chinese characteristics and local charms to promote the brand of ""Friendly Shandong"".

Participants at the opening ceremony of the 2023 Shandong Tourism Development Conference [Photo/Dazhong News]

Zhang Xu, chairman of the World Tourism Alliance, said that after the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism industry has ushered in both new opportunities and challenges.

""The recovery of the tourism industry is not a simple return to the past, but the unleashing of the domestic demand and the cultivation of new momentum,"" he said.

""The WTA will continue to leverage its advantages as an exchange and cooperation platform and work with Shandong to fuel its internationalization of cultural tourism,"" he added.

During the post-COVID-19 period, Shandong has introduced a series of favorable policies to stimulate the recovery of the tourism industry.

The province has recruited ambassadors around the world to expand the influence of ""Friendly Shandong"" and the Qilu culture.

At the opening ceremony, 10 people were awarded the honorable title of ""'Friendly Shandong' Tourism Ambassadors"". ""Shandong boasts natural scenery and abundant cultural relics and historical sites. I will speak for 'Friendly Shandong' in my hometown,"" said a tourism ambassador from Minsk, Belarus.

During the event, 10 counties and districts including Lixia, Qingdao West Coast New Area, Tengzhou, Penglai and Qingzhou received the 2022 Shandong Advanced Counties for Culture and Tourism Industries award, and another 10 counties and districts received the Fourth Batch of Demonstration Areas for All-for-One Tourism in Shandong award, which include Huaiyin, Shinan, Gaoqing, Longkou and Shouguang.

The 2023 Shandong Tourism Development Conference is held in Qingdao. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong also launched 18 key projects with a total planned investment of 44.96 billion yuan ($6.53 billion) during the conference that covers such sectors as leisure and vacation, nighttime sightseeing, Red tourism, eco-tourism and cultural creativity.

Wang Lei, director of the Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, said at the launch ceremony of the global promotional activity ""Traveling in China, A Better Life - Meeting the Sea along the Yellow River"" during the event that Shandong will further deepen cross-province cooperation in aspects of building tourism brands, sharing resources, creating new products and holding special events to showcase the natural scenery and local customs of the nine provinces along the Yellow River and jointly boost the high-quality development of the cultural tourism industry."

"The China (Shandong) – Indonesia Investment, Trade, Culture and Tourism Exchange Week, which kicked off on March 23, provided opportunities for Shandong province to deepen exchanges and cooperation with Indonesia in related fields, according to local officials.

The week-long event, held in Dezhou city, Shandong, is designed to serve as a high-level platform for exchanges between Shandong and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, and further strengthen cooperation between 16 Shandong cities and Indonesia, with an array of activities.

These activities involve a business contact fair, the China (Shandong) – Indonesia University Exchange Meeting, an exhibition of Indonesian paintings and photos, and the Indonesian Featured Products Exhibition.

An opera performance is staged at the opening ceremony for the China (Shandong) – Indonesia Investment, Trade, Culture and Tourism Exchange Week in Dezhou city, Shandong province on March 23. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

""Indonesia and China have set an example for major developing countries collaboration that brings win-win cooperation,"" said Djauhari Oratmangun, Indonesian ambassador to China, ""As comprehensive strategic partners, Indonesia and China have established a number of cooperation, such as the synergy between the Belt and Road Initiative.""

He hoped that a regular cooperation event like the exchange week will be held in the future ""to promote the economic and people-to-people relation between our two countries"".

An Indonesian dance is performed on March 23. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong government has maintained close exchanges with Indonesia in recent years, said Deng Yunfeng, vice-governor of Shandong, at the opening ceremony. In 2022, foreign trade value between the two sides was valued at 72.6 billion yuan ($ 10.6 billion), 45 percent higher than the previous year.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Indonesia. Indonesia is the largest economy in ASEAN, with rapid development in agriculture, manufacturing and services.

Shandong hopes to bolster cooperation with Indonesia in the fields of trade, modern agriculture, energy and mineral resources, and industrial park development, and foster new growth areas such as green, low-carbon and digital economy in the future, according to Deng.

The China (Shandong) – Indonesia Universities International Cooperation Alliance is estiblished on March 23. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The China (Shandong) - Indonesia Universities International Cooperation Alliance was estiblished during the event. The alliance proposals to hold annual meeting regularly and promote various forms of exchanges and cooperation between universities of both sides, including personals, scientific research projects, and educational resources and platforms.

Dezhou University, one of member of the alliance, will carry out jointly training programs for master's and doctoral students with Indonesian universities and promote practical cooperation in the fields of chemical materials, electronic information, biopharming, biophysics, as well as textiles and clothing, according to Li Yongping, vice-president of Dezhou University.

According to Li, the two sides will also jointly build an international education practice base to carry out long- and short-term exchange programs among mutual students, and customize summer vocation programs, for Indonesian students, focusing on Dezhou's intangible cultural heritages, such as local operas, acrobatics and handicrafts."

"Aerial view of the Zhaojia Xuyao site [Photo/Official WeChat account of the China Cultural Relics Daily]

Located in the east of Linzi, Shandong province, the Zhaojia Xuyao site, dating from 11 to 15 thousand years ago, is confirmed to be a site from the transition period between the Paleolithic Age and Neolithic Age.

The pottery shards excavated from the site are among the earliest of their kind found in northern China and are the most numerous in China. The discovery of this site has filled the gap in the cultural sequence of prehistoric archaeology in Shandong. The scorched soil found at the site indicates the interaction between humans and the land, providing clues for the research on the origin of agriculture.

Relics and scorched soil found at the Zhaojia Xuyao site [Photo/Official WeChat account of the China Cultural Relics Daily]

Pottery shards unearthed from the Zhaojia Xuyao site [Photo/Official WeChat account of the China Cultural Relics Daily]

Tree pit burning experiment at the Zhaojia Xuyao site [Photo/Official WeChat account of the China Cultural Relics Daily]"

"Qingdao expands its sea tourism with new and popular routes. [Photo by Wang Lei/Guanhai News]

Qingdao is gearing up to host the 2023 Shandong Tourism Development Conference from March 26 to 27 as part of its ambitious plan to boost its tourism quality.

With a focus on marine tourism, Qingdao is implementing innovative formats to drive growth and consumption.

One major initiative is the integration of major coastal tourist terminals, which will help expand sea tourism routes and accelerate the development of key islands. A partnership agreement has been signed between two local companies to facilitate this process.

Currently, the city has opened seven core routes to different islands, with one more route about to launch and four others advancing in an orderly manner. The routes provide visitors with diverse options for island tourism and a variety of marine activities, such as sailing, yachting, scuba diving, surfing, as well as parasailing.

The ""tourism+"" initiative, which integrates sectors like healthcare, agriculture, hot springs, and traditional Chinese medicine, has been implemented. Furthermore, a campaign to distribute consumer vouchers has been initiated to stimulate consumption.

Explore the beauty of marine tourism and enjoy a variety of exciting activities in Qingdao. [Photo/VCG]

The city has allocated 80 million yuan ($11.62 million) to support cultural and tourism consumption and attract more visitors. More than 40 tourism-related performances are scheduled to break ground in the tourism and performing arts sector. To encourage tourism, 12 State-owned A-level tourist attractions are offering free entry from Jan 21 to March 31, while 23 non-State-owned A-level attractions are providing at least a 50 percent discount.

Qingdao has been incentivized by the State Council for its cultural and tourism industries. It is cultivating key enterprises, projects, and parks to enhance industries like film and television culture, as well as marine tourism. Projects, such as the Qingdao Mediterranean Club Project and Jiaozhou Film Park, are progressing.

To provide convenient and efficient tourist services, Qingdao launched the ""Tour Qingdao with One Mobile Phone"" platform in January. Construction of six municipal-level tourist service centers and 23 small and medium-sized tourist service stations is also being accelerated.

Qingdao is striving to have a cultural and tourism industry scale of over 350 billion yuan by 2025, aiming to become a vibrant, livable, and maritime city by enhancing tourism quality."

"The 11th National Acrobatics Show kicks off on March 16 in Jinan, Shandong province. [Photo by Liang Ben/Chinanews]

The 11th edition of the National Acrobatics Show kicked off on March 16 in Jinan, capital of Shandong province.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Shandong Provincial People's Government, the event will last until March 29, with a total of 50 acrobatic performances, magic shows, as well as eight acrobatic operas from all over the country to be staged in the cities of Jinan, Jining, and Dezhou.

As a State-level acrobatics event, the National Acrobatics Show has produced a large number of outstanding acrobatic works and talents, playing an important role in promoting the prosperity and development of acrobatic art and enhancing the spiritual strength of the public, said Ming Wenjun, an official from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in his speech at the opening ceremony.

Excellent acrobatic shows from across the country are staged during the event. [Photo by Liang Ben/Chinanews]

In recent years, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has implemented such projects as the ""China Acrobatic Art Innovation Project"" and the ""National Magic Talent Training Program"" to improve acrobatic creation and performance, as well as to promote the innovative development of acrobatic art.

""Shandong acrobatics has a long history and profound impacts. After thousands of years of inheritance and development, it has now become an important force in the province's literary and artistic stage,"" said Deng Yunfeng, vice-governor of Shandong, adding that in recent years, Shandong has launched a large number of excellent works at home and abroad.

The 11th National Acrobatics Show lasts until March 29. [Photo by Liang Ben/Chinanews]"

"Apricot trees bloom in Waiyu village in Xintai, Shandong province, attracting visitors and their cameras. [Photo by Chen Yang/For chinadaily.com.cn]

Thousands of apricot trees are blooming in Waiyu village in Xintai, Shandong province, nurturing hopes of a good harvest.

Nestled in a range of mountains, residents once struggled with poverty, as soil in the village is rocky and can barely produce grain.

To find a way to make a living, Fang Lizhang, the former director of the village committee, spent 10 years cross-breeding a new variety of apricot from local varieties. The new variety proved to be sweeter and yields more fruit.

Guided by Fang, villagers planted thousands of apricot trees on the mountains within three years. The trees have not only dressed up the village but enriched residents' lives.

Every March, the village is inundated by a puffy ocean of apricot flowers, heralding that spring in the air.

Blooming apricots dress up households in Waiyu village in Xintai, Shandong province. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"An acrobatic performance, part of the 11th China Acrobatic Exhibition, is held at the Shandong Grand Theater in Jinan on March 21, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

A form of performance art that exists to challenge and explore the limits of human body, acrobatics seldom fail to wow audiences and leave them flabbergasted.

From March 16 and 29, the 11th China Acrobatic Exhibition, the country’s top acrobatic festival, showcases more than 50 acrobatic shows, including 8 acrobatic plays, in Jinan, Jining and Dezhou, three cities of East China’s Shandong province.

The event is co-organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the People’s Government of Shandong Province."

"Tourists pose for photos at the cole flower field in Chongwen residential district, Guanxian county, East China's Shandong province, March 13, 2023. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

In recent years, the local government has adopted the model of ""Party branch plus cooperatives and farmer"", providing ""one-stop"" services such as ""unified supply and seeding, unified management and protection, and unified acquisition"". It allows more poverty-stricken people to participate in the cole flower industry chain and has broadened the income increase channels for the village and its people.

Large fields of cole flowers bloom in Chongwen residential district, Guanxian county, East China's Shandong province, March 13, 2023. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Tourists enjoy cole flowers in Chongwen residential district, Guanxian county, East China's Shandong province, March 13, 2023. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Farmers drive tractors to spread pesticide over a wheat field in Rongcheng, a county level city of Weihai, Shandong province on Thursday. [Photo by Li Xinjun for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers across Shandong province have been busy with spring farming in winter wheat fields recently to lay a solid foundation for the year's grain production.

Farmers in Gaoqing county of Zibo city, Shandong province, irrigate winter wheat on Friday. [Photo by Shi Xiaojing for chinadaily.com.cn]

An agricultural drone spreads pesticide over the wheat in Chengwu county of Heze city, Shandong province, on Saturday. Photo by Wang Zebin for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"As a cradle for the Chinese civilization, Shandong province is striving to build four cultural corridors along the Yellow River, the Grand Canal, the Great Wall of Qi, and the Huanghai and Bohai seas and one cultural experience route along the Qingdao-Jinan high-speed railway to boost the region's economic and social development and cultural tourism in the new era.

Daming Lake in early spring [Photo/IC]

The ""four corridors and one route"" plan covers 16 cities, 93 counties, 1,200 townships, 50,000 villages, and a total population of more than 70 million.

Shandong is not only constructing infrastructure in transport, the ecological environment and supporting facilities, but also setting up 10 exhibition belts in rural vitalization, transportation, cultural creation, moral integrity, cultural relics and archaeological research protection, and deepening the integration of culture and tourism to enrich visitors' sightseeing experiences.

The Jiaoji (Qingdao-Jinan) Railway Museum is a typical example of the cultural projects along the Qingdao-Jinan high-speed railway. The German-style architecture features a steam locomotive in front of the door, stairs hanging in the air and gorgeous glass windows, which have attracted numerous tourists from China and abroad.

A visitor dressed in hanfu, a traditional Chinese style of clothing, poses for a photo at a scenic area in Jinan. [Photo/IC]

Shandong has gotten off to a good start this year by promoting cultural self-confidence and self-improvement and speeding up the construction of a green, low-carbon and high-quality development pilot zone.

To accelerate the recovery of the tourism industry, Shandong issued the Policies and Measures to Vigorously Boost Culture and Tourism Consumption before Spring Festival this year and introduced a package of policies that benefited enterprises and people.

Many places in Shandong have attracted a number of tourists and become popular scenic spots. The Chaoran Building by Daming Lake and Shandong Science and Technology Museum offer immersive multimedia spaces, three dimensional printing and virtual reality demonstrations of the ancient city of Taierzhuang in Zaozhuang.

People visit the Chaoran Building by Daming Lake at night. [Photo/IC]"

"A large expanse of wheat in Mazhuang town of Daiyue district in Tai'an city of Shandong province has turned green this week. [Photo by Chen Yang for chinadaily.com.cn]

Farmers of an agricultural cooperative in Mazhuang town of Daiyue district in Tai'an city of Shandong province are taking care of wheat, which is turning green in winter.

The cooperative is managing 100 hectares of wheat this year.

Farmers in Mazhuang town of Daiyue district in Tai'an city of Shandong province check the conditions of winter wheat this week. [Photo by Chen Yang for chinadaily.com.cn]"

"The 11th China Acrobatic Exhibition will kick off in Shandong province on March 16, featuring a series of high-quality acrobatic performances and magic shows, according to a news conference held by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Beijing on March 9.

From March 16 to 29, about 47 performances and magic shows as well as six plays starring acrobats will be staged at six theaters in major cities, such as Jinan, Jining and Dezhou, in Shandong province. These acrobatic and magic performances cover a variety of skill forms, including juggling, lifting, suspension, balance, riding, and contortion.

The opening performance will be Railway Heroes produced by Shandong Acrobatics Troupe. It's adapted from a well-known Chinese novel The Railway Guerrillas, which tells the story of a group of guerrillas who sabotaged Japanese forces during World War II.

""The Railway Guerrillas is a perfect combination of plot and acrobatic skills. It has been staged for more than 30 times and all tickets were sold out,"" said Sun Lei, deputy director of Shandong province's Culture and Tourism Department.

All the works presented at the 11th China Acrobatic Exhibition were all produced after 2019. They have been enhanced to meet audiences' demand for modernity while applying traditional acrobatic skills."

"Tourists visit a night town themed on the Song Dyansty (960-1279) in Dongping of Shandong province on Feb 27. Opened since Jan 7, the night town, a new tourism project, has attracted over 1.1 million tourists, fueling local consumptions and the night economy. [Photo/Xinhua]

Tourists watch dance performances at a night town themed on the Song Dyansty (960-1279) in Dongping of Shandong province on Feb 27. [Photo/Xinhua]

A bird's eye view of the night town in Dongping of Shandong province on Feb 27. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"The fully automated container terminal at Qingdao Port of Shandong Port Group is the first of its kind in Asia. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Shandong Port Group, the world's largest port conglomerate by cargo capacity, is accelerating its efforts to build a world-class port, as its bold and innovative measures of integrated processes have borne fruit in recent years, top executives said recently.

In January, port areas in the Shandong Port Group reported a good start with strong performance. Its subsidiary Qingdao Port launched four shipping routes to North America. Another subsidiary, Yantai Port, saw its transport of commercial vehicles grow 51.5 percent year-on-year.

The achievements are some of the continuing benefits of an integration process ""in which ports in Shandong province have gained new growth momentum and complemented each other's advantages and capacity"", said Huo Gaoyuan, chairman of Shandong Port Group.

The group was established in August 2019 and is based in Qingdao, Shandong. It integrated the major ports in the province, including Qingdao Port, Yantai Port, Rizhao Port and the Bohai Bay Port Group.

Before the Shandong group's establishment, port areas in the province developed in their own ways, leading to low-efficiency construction and competition for similar work.

""The integration reform unites more than 60,000 workers and staff members in 21 port areas from seven cities, turning competition into cooperation,"" Huo said.

For example, Qingdao and Rizhao ports established a platform to jointly operate the ore and coke business, and tugboat resources are shared by Dongjiakou port area of Qingdao Port and Shijiu Port area of Rizhao Port.

Digitalization and innovation have also gained steam in Shandong ports.

""The technology of fully automated container terminals developed by Qingdao Port has been expanded to other port areas,"" said Li Fengli, general manager of Shandong Port Group.

During the three years or so since its establishment, Shandong Port Group has launched a transportation service network, including shipping routes, freight trains and inland ports. The group launched 127 new shipping routes, bringing its total to 327. It has also built 32 inland ports and connected them with 82 freight train lines.

The port group's transportation service covers areas along the Yellow River, including Shandong province, Central Asia, Europe and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

In 2022, Shandong Port Group registered its cargo handling capacity as more than 1.6 billion metric tons. Its container handling capacity exceeded 37 million twenty-foot equivalent units — respective increases of 6.4 percent and 8.7 percent year-on-year, both higher than the national average."

"Attracted by the improved rural environment and promising agricultural development, more young people in Shandong province, a major agriculture base in China, have returned to their hometowns to seek work.

In Nandawu village in the Chiping district of Liaocheng, Wu Qianyuan — who was born in the 1990s — started his strawberry-growing business in two greenhouses in 2017. Supported in part by local poverty alleviation policies, he now has eight greenhouses, which have also provided jobs for his fellow villagers.

""As a young person, I'd like to contribute my part in revitalizing rural areas,"" Wu said.

[Video by Chiping district media convergence center]"

"Tai'an in Shandong province generated a total output value of 127.29 billion yuan ($18.4 billion) in the construction industry last year, an increase of 8.8 percent from that in 2021, according to official data.

The growth rate was 1.8 percentage points higher than that of the rest of Shandong and ranked first among other cities in the province.

The added value of the construction industry was 43.8 billion yuan, and accounted for 13.7 percent of the city's regional gross domestic product. The industry has created 291,000 jobs, which plays a preeminent role in economic and social development.

Feicheng, a county-level city in Tai'an, is well-known for its construction and installation industry.

In 2022, the output value of Feicheng's construction industry totaled 89.32 billion yuan, an increase of 10.6 percent year-on-year, and the installation output value accounted for more than 80 percent.

Tai'an has gradually developed into a gathering place for many professional installation companies, such as those specializing in electromechanics and pipelines. Up to now, 80 percent of construction enterprises in Feicheng are engaged in the installation industry, and there are more than 130,000 employees employed in the sector.

""The ropeway of Taijian Group"" is another advantage in Tai'an. The group is currently the largest passenger ropeway installation contractor in China, ranking first in the country in terms of ropeway construction, safe operations, and maintenance services. Among the nearly 1,100 ropeways in China, Taijian Group has contributed to building more than 800, and has a market share of 75 percent.

The city has taken the philosophy of ""going global"" as a strategic measure to boost the construction industry. It has contracted projects in 36 countries such as Russia, Algeria, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

In addition, Tai'an has rolled out a batch of beneficial policies and provided ""one-stop"" services for prefabricated building manufacturers to promote the development of prefabricated buildings. So far, it has completed a total of 289 prefabricated buildings with a total area of more than 10 million square meters."

"The Grand Canal National Cultural Park (Dezhou) Forum kicked off in Dezhou, Shandong province on Feb 18, which promoted the preservation and good usage of the original and ancient appearance of the Dezhou section of the Grand Canal.

The Grand Canal National Cultural Park (Dezhou) Forum kicks off in Dezhou, Shandong province on Feb 18. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Themed on ""Original Ancient Appearance, Innovation and Inheritance"", the two-day event attracted government officials, experts and scholars as well as more than 100 well-known domestic cultural tourism enterprises.

""We should fully understand the strategic position of the Grand Canal as a vital cultural, economic and ecological corridor in China and improve the level of protection and management of its global cultural heritage. We adhere to the people-centered concept, give full play to the fulcrum role of cultural relics and promote the sustainable development of regions along the canal,"" Guan Qiang, deputy director of the National Cultural Heritage Administration, said at the forum.

Dezhou section of the Grand Canal [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Bai Yugang, head of the Information Office of the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee, said that being located in the middle section of the canal, the province shoulders great responsibilities to cooperate with surrounding provinces and cities to preserve the canal. Shandong should showcase the canal's cultural connotations by building an all-for-one tourism belt and launching characteristic projects.

Sun Ying, president of China Construction Technology Consulting Co Ltd, said that coordinating the economic and social development of the regions along the canal is of great significance to further enhancing self-confidence and helping Shandong become a modern and powerful province in the new era. ""The company will do a good job in the protection, inheritance and utilization of the canal,"" he said.

Tian Weidong, Party secretary of Dezhou, said the city is creating a leisure tourism destination and a new highland for cultural innovation.

Dezhou promotes the preservation and good usage of the original and ancient appearance of the Grand Canal. [Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]"

"Zhang Xinqi, former deputy head of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Provincial People's Congress, was given a life sentence by a court in Jiangsu province on Monday for taking bribes worth more than 155 million yuan ($22 million).

The Nanjing Intermediate People's Court in Jiangsu also stripped Zhang of his political rights and decreed all his personal property be confiscated. Additionally, his illicit gains will be turned over to the State treasury.

Zhang said he accepted the ruling and would not appeal to a higher court.

From 2001 to 2019, Zhang took advantage of his work positions, including mayor of Weifang and Qingdao, two major cities in the province, to seek benefits for individuals and departments in business operations, project launching, construction development and personnel promotion, according to the court's ruling, adding he received remuneration for these acts between 2006 and 2021.

The court said Zhang should be penalized for the crime of bribery, as the sum of money he received was large and his behavior also brought great loss to the country and people.

""But considering he provided evidence of some other influential cases and confessed to most of the bribes that the investigators hadn't known about during interrogation, with recovery of the illicit gains, we've decided to leniently punish him,"" the court said.

Zhang, 66, a native of Shangdong, started his career in 1974 and joined the Communist Party of China in 1977.

He was placed under investigation for alleged violations of discipline and law in February 2021. Nine months later, he was prosecuted by the Nanjing procuratorate.

In July, Zhang pleaded guilty when his case was heard by the Nanjing Intermediate People's Court."

"China's largest crude oil commercial reserve project, located in Dongying, East China's Shandong province, started commercial operation on Thursday according to operator China National Offshore Oil Corp, China's top offshore oil and gas driller.

The Dongying crude oil commercial reserve project has received investment of up to 6.4 billion yuan ($930 million). Including 50 crude oil storage tanks, each with a storage capacity of 100,000 cubic meters, the project is capable of storing around 4.25 million tons of crude.

The project will further strengthen the country's crude supply capacity while promoting the rapid growth of energy trade and ensuring domestic energy security.

It will also rely on the refining capacity and public supporting facilities of Dongying Port and store offshore oil from the Bohai oilfields through the submarine pipeline and short-distance ocean carriers. It will further facilitate the country's domestic offshore oil to be stored, refined and transported at a more efficient rate."

"Tourists visit Baotu Spring in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province on Feb 14. From Jan 21 to March 31, 132 State-owned scenic spots in Shandong, including Baotu Spring and Taishan Mountain, open their gates for free to facilitate tourism recovery. [Photo/Xinhua]

Cities in Shandong province have unveiled a package of measures to invigorate inbound tourism — including rewards for chartering a plane and subsidies for promoting the province in overseas markets.

The provincial capital Jinan will resume inbound tourism and increase its efforts to attract tourists from home and abroad, said Su Wen, deputy head of the Jinan bureau of culture and tourism.

The city will host a series of activities to attract tourists and provide subsidies to boost local tourism operations, Su said at a news conference on Tuesday.

Qingdao saw 23 tourists from Hong Kong arrive on Monday for a five-day tour — the province's first inbound tourist group after the Chinese mainland resumed normal travel with Hong Kong and Macao on Feb 6.

Shandong will arrange 10 million yuan ($1.46 million) of awards to subsidize tourism-related sectors, including chartering a plane, taking a cruise and organizing field-research tours to the province, according to the provincial department of culture and tourism.

The province will also set aside 20 million yuan to support tourism promotion work in overseas markets."

"A nuclear plant is seen in Yantai, Shandong province, Feb 2, 2023. [Photo/VCG]

Construction of a nuclear heat transmission pipe network started on Wednesday to further facilitate expansion of nuclear power-based heating projects to more areas nationwide, said its operator State Power Investment Corp.

As the support facility of the third phase of the 900-megawatt nuclear power-based district heating project in Shandong province, the pipeline will connect Shandong province's Yantai with Weihai with a 23-kilometer main transport pipe, it said.

Total investment in the project has reached up to 700 million yuan ($102 million). The project also includes a heat source distribution center that will apply intelligent scheduling management and a control platform for parameter monitoring, the company added.

An analyst said the application of nuclear power-based district heating will help reduce heating costs for consumers while improving the efficiency of the nuclear power plant.

Despite nuclear heating still being in the infancy stage of development, the project will provide valuable experience to further promote such heating modalities nationwide, said Lin Boqiang, head of the China Institute for Studies in Energy Policy at Xiamen University.

The efforts in nuclear heating illustrate China's ambitions at decarbonizing its energy-intensive heating sector, he said.

The Haiyang nuclear power plant in Shandong has a heating system connected to two traditional nuclear units, making it the first commercial attempt in China to supply heat from traditional nuclear power.

The system extracts nonradioactive steam from the secondary circuit of Haiyang unit 2, which is then fed through a multistage heat exchanger in an on-site heat exchange station.

State Power Investment Corp has been stepping up efforts to expand its nuclear power-based heating projects to more areas across the country in recent years.

The company started its first-phase of nuclear heating in 2019 in Shandong, which has provided 700,000 square meters of carbon-free heating, followed by the second phase that covered 5 million sq m in 2021.

The third phase of nuclear heating, the country's largest single-unit steam extraction heating project, is currently under construction and is expected to start providing clean heating during this year's heating season. It will cover 30 million sq m and is expected to meet heating demand of 1 million residents and carbon reduction is expected to increase several times over, SPIC said.

The company plans to expand the heating area to the entire Jiaodong peninsula, as nuclear-based heating alternatives are likely to be more widely embraced, thanks to the steadily accelerating development of nuclear power plants."

"Tourists visit Baotu Spring in Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong province on Feb 14. From Jan 21 to March 31, 132 State-owned scenic spots in Shandong, including Baotu Spring and Taishan Mountain, open their gates for free to facilitate tourism recovery. [Photo/Xinhua]

Tourists visit Confucious scenic area in Qufu, East China's Shandong province on Feb 10. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"Farmers in Juye county, Shandong province, use a machine to press a wheatfield on Wednesday. [Photo by Xiao Shouxiang/For chinadaily.com.cn]

As the weather warms up with the ""Start of Spring"" solar term, farmers in Shandong province have begun managing their wheat, whose seedlings are undergoing a key transition period.

Agricultural technicians have arrived in the wheat fields to check the wheat growth situation and help farmers with management techniques, in a bid to secure a bumper harvest in summer.

Agricultural technicians and farmers in Juye county, Shandong province, check wheat growth. [Photo by Xiao Shouxiang /Forchinadaily.com.cn]

Wheat with lush growth is more sensitive to freezing, as wheat has little resistance to low temperatures after it begins growing in the spring. To reduce injuries of lush growth wheat, farmers in Juye county, Shandong, are using machines to press the field in recent days and keep proper humidity to help the wheat seedlings grow steadily to survive the spring freeze.

""About 90 percent of wheat grows well. We need to take some measures to prevent spring drought and freeze,"" said Jiao Dechang, an agricultural technician in Juye."

"Containers at a port in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Jan 22, 2023. [Photo/VCG]

East China's Shandong province plans to ramp up efforts to stabilize foreign trade and investment and expand opening-up this year, according to officials from the Department of Commerce of Shandong.

Official data showed that in 2022, the total value of Shandong's foreign trade reached a record high of 3.33 trillion yuan ($491.18 billion), with a year-on-year growth of 13.8 percent.

This year, Shandong aims to make all-out efforts to expand the international market, upgrade the development of new business formats and models, and strengthen services and policies to support the development of enterprises.

It is fostering new growth areas for exports and expanding the new energy vehicle market, energy conservation and environmental protection equipment, green chemicals and other high-tech mechanical and electrical products in Europe, the United States, Japan and South Korea.

Shandong is also stepping up efforts to explore emerging markets involved in the Belt and Road Initiative and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The province will make all-out efforts to innovate import models and optimize import structure.

Adjusting and optimizing the provincial-level importation of technologies and product catalogues, and increasing interest discounts on key technologies, important equipment and components needed for green and low-carbon transformation in the steel, building materials, chemical and other industries are also on the province's agenda.

Ensuring the success of regional import expos between Japan, South Korea and the RCEP member countries, and building platforms for high-end cooperation in commodity procurement, industrial exchanges and investment promotion is also a top priority for the province.

Shandong is continuing to strive to improve the quality and efficiency of new forms of foreign trade.

With a focus on textile and clothing, bearings, fitness equipment and other characteristic industrial belts, the province plans to hold the Shandong Cross-border E-commerce Ecological Conference and the China (Shandong) Cross-border E-commerce Trade Expo, and carry out the ""industrial cluster + cross-border e-commerce"" cultivation action plan.

In 2022, the actual use of foreign capital in Shandong province increased by 6.3 percent year-on-year, reaching $22.87 billion and ranking fourth in China for four years in a row.

This year, Shandong is planning to host a series of business promotional activities, including the fourth Qingdao Multinationals Summit and the third Conference of Great Business Partners, to attract investment and facilitate cooperation.

Great efforts are also being made to attract foreign investment in the manufacturing industry, extend the industrial chain and strengthen the weak links in the industry.

The province is continuing to improve the foreign investment environment, strengthen regular communication and exchanges with foreign-funded enterprises and foreign business associations, listen to opinions and suggestions, and provide maximum convenience for foreign businessmen to engage in trade and investment negotiations in China."

"Photo taken on Feb 8, 2023, shows the China Movie Metropolis in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

China Movie Metropolis, a mega movie and television industry center, located in Qingdao of East China's Shandong province, provided support to The Wandering Earth I & II, two sci-fi blockbusters.

It's 10,000 square-meter high-tech monomer soundstage, Asia's largest underwater stage, and advanced digital video and audio equipment can realize motion capture, virtual shooting, 3D scanning, DIT (digital imaging technician), and real-time rendering cluster.

Moreover, the center also provides props, costumes, and special effects services to satisfy the whole film industry production process needs.

Currently, the China Movie Metropolis has attracted more than 800 film and television enterprises and provides services to nearly 300 film crews. The total box office output has exceeded 22.4 billion yuan ($3.3 billion).

A staff introduces micro-expression capture technology at the China Movie Metropolis in Qingdao, Shandong province, Feb 8, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Two workers demonstrate motion capture technology at the China Movie Metropolis in Qingdao, Shandong province, Feb 8, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Photo taken on Feb 8, 2023, shows a prop locomotive at the China Movie Metropolis in Qingdao, Shandong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

People visit the China Movie Metropolis in Qingdao, Shandong province, Feb 8, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"A group of expats paid a visit to Dong-E E-Jiao City, a popular scenic spot highlighting local Ejiao culture in Dong'e county, Liaocheng, Shandong province on Feb 3.

Expats tour Dong-E E-Jiao City on Feb 3 in Liaocheng. [Photo/Liaocheng Daily]

Ejiao, a traditional Chinese medicine made from donkey hide, is a national-class intangible cultural heritage, which has a 3,000-year history in Shandong. It is known to improve blood circulation and boost energy levels. Dong'e county is widely known as its birthplace.

""Ejiao has a long history. Today, I watched the process of making it up close. The traditional Chinese medicine culture is really extensive and profound,"" said an expat from Cote d 'Ivoire.

An expat learns about health effects of traditional Chinese medicine. [Photo/Liaocheng Daily]

""Dong-E E-Jiao City is full of traditional Chinese flavor. Shops along the streets are decorated with festive lanterns and lights and there are hordes of tourists. I really enjoyed touring this place, and have learned a lot about traditional Chinese medicine and gained health knowledge,"" said an expat from Tanzania.

The expats also learned how to make yuanxiao, the sweet glutinous rice dumplings Chinese people usually eat during Lantern Festival.

Expats sample yuanxiao at Dong-E E-Jiao City. [Photo/Liaocheng Daily]"

"Researchers and local governments in the Yellow River Delta have designed tailor-made techniques for restoring wetland by removing cordgrass, an invasive species, to prepare for the establishment of a national park in Shandong province.

Spartina alterniflora, more commonly known as smooth cordgrass, is an invasive species to China. It was first introduced from the Atlantic coast of the United States to shore up earthen dams, according to Xie Baohua, an associate researcher at the Yantai Institute of Coastal Zone Research at the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

He said that from 2010 to 2020, the area of cordgrass multiplied by 25 percent on average every year in the delta.

""Cordgrass stretching tens of kilometers across low water flats created a dam, blocking intertidal water, creating temperature differences and harming the coastal wetland ecology. Birds were not seen in tall grass areas before treatment because they couldn't rest there,"" Xie said.

Since 2020, the marine development and fisheries bureau of Dongying city, which lies in the delta, has begun treating the grass. It cut it down, then plowed and flooded the area to prevent its return.

The Dongying municipal government oversees the delta's nature reserve and by the end of last year, it had eradicated about 10,547 hectares of cordgrass and said that after treatment, the number of bird species nearly doubled from 187 to 371 species.

""The treatment does not mean the grass has been completely eradicated from the delta, so an early warning and monitoring system should be put in place to prevent the plant from reestablishing itself,"" Xie said.

In June, the Shandong provincial government applied to the National Forestry and Grassland Administration to establish the Yellow River Estuary National Park to protect the fragile delta environment.

The province has completed preparatory work and will start the project soon.

According to the management committee of the reserve, 3,518 square kilometers have been designated for the national park.

The reserve is a breeding ground for oriental white storks and black-billed gulls.

To prepare for the establishment of the park, the reserve has allowed thousands of hectares of farmland to revert to wetlands and beaches.

China is in the process of creating its national park system, which will eventually cover about 10 percent of the country's surface area."

"A worker assembles vehicles in a factory in Weifang, Shandong province, Jan 28, 2023. [Photo/CFP]

Shandong province plans to speed up efforts to achieve greater self-reliance and strength in science and technology this year, local authorities said at a recent work conference.

In 2023, the province plans to increase investment in research and development by more than 10 percent, and the number of high-tech enterprises is set to surpass 30,000. The output value of high-tech enterprises above designated size is expected to account for 49 percent of all industrial enterprises above designated size.

In 2022, the province organized and implemented 121 major scientific and technological innovation projects, and made breakthroughs in a number of key core technologies. More than 6,000 new high-tech enterprises were established and four enterprises were listed on the science and technology innovation board, bringing the total number to 21. Five Shandong cities, Zibo, Weihai, Rizhao, Linyi and Dezhou, were selected as national innovative cities.

This year, Shandong aims to focus on developing strategic scientific and technological advancements and create a solid foundation for innovation by reinforcing the principal role of enterprises to innovate, give full play to the guiding and supporting roles of key high-tech enterprises, create an enabling environment for the growth of micro, small, and medium technology enterprises, and promote the deeper integration of the innovation, industrial, capital, and talent chains, according to local officials."

"Snow, swans and houses thatched with sea grass combined for scenes that attracted tourists to Rongcheng, Shandong province, during Spring Festival. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]

In Rongcheng, Shandong province, whirling snow and whooper swans created beautiful winter scenery that attracted visitors, amateur shutterbugs and professional photographers during the Spring Festival.

With its favorable geographical location and wetlands, Rongcheng is an important stop for migratory waterfowl, with more than 10,000 birds staying at the site annually.

The swans stick around for around five months, making Rongcheng one of the largest wintering grounds for whooper swans in the world.

In Rongcheng, Shandong province, whirling snow and whooper swans create beautiful winter scenery recently. [Photo by Li Xinjun/For chinadaily.com.cn]"

"[Video provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

Leaders of multinational companies sent their Spring Festival greetings to Shandong province via videos ahead of the Year of the Rabbit. They wished everyone a very happy new year in 2023 and a wonderful Spring Festival holiday. They also thanked Shandong for hosting the Qingdao Multinationals Summit, which has helped demonstrate the province's determination to turn itself into a highland for opening-up, build bridges of communication and understanding, and strengthen the bond of mutually beneficial cooperation between Shandong and the rest of the world."

"2023 Serbia “Happy Spring Festival”, which celebrated Shandong culture, was held at Kalemegdan Castle in Belgrade, capital of Serbia on Jan 18.[Photo provided to chinadaily.com.cn]

The first leg of the 2023 Serbia “Happy Spring Festival”, which celebrated Shandong culture, was held at Kalemegdan Castle in Belgrade, capital of Serbia on Jan 18.

Shandong’s intangible cultural heritage was presented during the celebration, including lion dances, cuju (an ancient Chinese football game), silhouette art, and new year woodblock prints. Hands-on activities engaged the participants and onlookers, and later the night was lit up by fireworks.

Shandong province has gained prominence for its culture and tourist resources overseas. The event will be held in four other cities in Serbia in the days to come."

"As Spring Festival is just around the corner, Liaocheng in Shandong province is immersed in a dense festive atmosphere.

Nalika Kodikaranv (middle), commercial counselor of the Sri Lankan Embassy in China, promotes Sri Lankan products via livestreaming in Liaocheng on Jan 18. [Photo/Liaocheng Daily]

Nalika Kodikaranv, commercial counselor of the Sri Lankan Embassy in Beijing, paid a visit to Liaocheng from Jan 17 to 18, just ahead of Spring Festival, to explore the city's unique culture and to promote the mutual understanding and friendship between the two sides.

Nalika visited a traditional market fair and a historical building in Liaocheng. During the trip she experienced the intangible cultural heritage items of Liaocheng, learned about the city's folk customs, sampled the local special snacks, and participated in a livestreaming sales event to promote Sri Lankan specialties.

Nalika Kodikaranv visits the ancient town area in Liaocheng on Jan 17. [Photo/Liaocheng Daily]

""Liaocheng is very charming city, with rich cultural tourism resources and specialties. We have a large number of special products such as black tea, printing and dyeing products and sapphire. We look forward to more business cooperation and cultural exchanges with Liaocheng,"" said the commercial counselor.

Nalika Kodikaranv learns about Liaocheng's intangible cultural heritage items. [Photo/Liaocheng Daily]

Nalika Kodikaranv promotes Sri Lankan products to domestic customers. [Photo/Liaocheng Daily]"

Liaocheng city in East China's Shandong province gets increasingly festive as Spring Festival draws nearer. From going to fairs and markets, enjoying traditional delicacies, appreciating intangible cultural heritage products, writing couplets, to lighting up fireworks, people are engaging in a wide range of activities to celebrate the upcoming Spring Festival.[Photo by Wang Bin/For chinadaily.com.cn]

"Promoting the construction of a pilot zone involving green, low-carbon, high-quality development across Shandong province will be among the key projects for the province over the next five years, according to a senior government official.

The zone is the country's first strategic arrangement that focuses on green, low-carbon and high-quality development, and it marks a milestone on the province's development, Zhou Naixiang, governor of Shandong said in the government work report delivered during the first session of the 14th Shandong People's Congress, which opened in Jinan, the provincial capital on Friday.

The province released a three-year (2023-25) action plan for building a green, low-carbon, high-quality development pilot area on Jan 3, including policies, projects and construction targets.

Shandong will promote the use of hydrogen vehicles and integrate resources in vehicle manufacturing to forge advantages in the auto sector this year, according to the government work report.

The province will also expand its energy conservation and environmental protection sectors this year by promoting at least 100 techniques on energy conservation and environmental protection and constructing 10 new industrial parks with environmental protection features.

Shandong has set a goal of 5 percent GDP growth for 2023, according to the work report."

"Shandong province and its Weifang city have jointly sent investigators to Changle county on Saturday in response to a claim by the founder of Letin, an automobile group, that a senior county official had forced local enterprises to overstate their industrial and sales output value.

The team will deal with the case based on regulation and law, said Weifang Release, the WeChat public account of the local government.

On Saturday, the official WeChat account of Letin published its founder Li Guoxin's public letter and video, saying that last year Wang Xiao, Party chief of the Changle county, had forced his company to report 4.68 billon yuan ($698.6 million) more than its real sales output value.

Li said that Wang did so to make the county's economic situation appear better to highlight his personal achievements and get promoted. Li said since March Wang has forced large local enterprises to falsify output values.

Letin, founded in 2008, designs and sells electric cars."

"Shandong government recently released a regulation stating that the province will complete the construction of a water sample network by the end of 2025.

According to the regulation, the coverage rate of the water network in the province is expected to reach 88.2 percent, and the total annual water consumption of the province will be limited to 24.11 billion cubic meters.

According to Huang Hongguang, head of the water resources department of Shandong province, Shandong is one of the two water network pilot areas at the provincial level in China, and has the most complex water regime, so it is important for Shandong to build a water sample network.

By 2025, the water consumption per 10,000 yuan ($1455.6) of the gross domestic product and per 10,000 yuan of the industrial added value is expected to decrease by 16 percent and 10 percent, respectively, compared with that in 2020.

Due to the uneven distribution of water resources in cities, Shandong plans to build a great number of large and medium-sized reservoirs to gather water during rainy seasons and redistribute its water resources.

During the 14th-Five-Year-Plan (2021-25) period, Shandong is expected to invest a total of 385.5 billion yuan into the construction of a water sample network, which consists of around 400 projects."

"Market fairs in East China's Shandong province are filled with the Chinese New Year atmosphere as the Spring Festival holiday approaches, as well as the optimization of pandemic prevention and control measures. The market fairs offer a place to buy Chinese New Year decorations, as well as promote cohesiveness within the community.

People buy local specialties at the Zhonggong market fair in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. With a history of more than 2,000 years, the Zhonggong market fair is the closest southern mountain market to Jinan's downtown area. Customers can find a variety of original ecological agricultural products at the market fair. [Photo/Dazhong Daily]

A vendor sells Zhoucun sesame seed cakes, a traditional snack originating from Zhoucun village in Zibo, Shandong province, at the Zhoucun market fair. [Photo/Iqilu News]

People select traditional decorations for Chinese New Year at the Xuzhuang market fair in Zaozhuang, Shandong province. The Xuzhuang market fair was established during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), and dates back more than 300 years. [Photo/WeChat account: sdxcweixin]

Customers can buy various kinds of seafood at the Andongwei market fair in Rizhao, a coastal city in Shandong province. [Photo/WeChat account: sdxcweixin]

People select traditional handicrafts at the Licun market fair in Qingdao, Shandong province. With numerous stalls and stands, the Licun market fair is one of the most bustling outdoor marketplaces in Shandong. According to a chronological record from the early 17th century, the village fair was one of the most important large-scale fairs in the county, and in the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), it impacted surrounding areas for a hundred miles. Now, Licun village fair has transformed from a food trading bazaar to a comprehensive market, occupying an area of over 300,000 square meters. [Photo/WeChat account: sdxcweixin]

Customers buy dried fruit at the Huangwu market fair in Yantai, a coastal city in Shandong province. With a history of more than 100 years, the fair is famous for its large scale and full range of goods and low prices. [Photo/WeChat account: sdxcweixin]"

"People buy sugar-coated haws on Furong Street in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, Jan 2, 2023. Furong Street, a 500-meter-long old street with more than 150 food and beverage shops, is getting back to its hustle and bustle these days. [Photo/Xinhua]

People buy food on Furong Street in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, Jan 2, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

A man buys food on Furong Street in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, Jan 2, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

People line up in front of a food stand on Furong Street in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, Jan 2, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

People saunter on Furong Street in Jinan, East China's Shandong province, Jan 2, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]"

"Workers assemble recreational vehicle components at a factory of Rongcheng Compaks New Energy Automobile Co Ltd in Rongcheng, Shandong province, in November. [LI XINJUN/FOR CHINA DAILY]

Rongcheng aims to grow sector into pillar by building complete export supply chain

On the production lines run by a recreational vehicle producer in Rongcheng, a county-level city in Shandong province, workers were busy assembling camper trailers in late November. These campers will soon be shipped to overseas markets including the United States and South Korea.

During the first 10 months of 2022, over 1.3 billion yuan ($186.2 million) worth of RVs were exported via Rongcheng Customs, a year-on-year increase of 20.9 percent, said the department.

Good performance overseas

Liu Shaoxun, general manager of Rongcheng Compaks New Energy Automobile Co Ltd, said the company was scheduled to produce a total of 6,000 RVs in 2022 according to placed orders, including self-propelled vehicles and trailers.

""Around 95 percent of RVs we produce, mainly trailers, are for overseas markets,"" Liu said.

Founded in 2014, Compaks has developed into a major trailer exporter in China thanks to supportive local government policies.

""Rongcheng aims to build the RV sector into a pillar industry by developing a complete RV industrial chain, which benefits us in sectors ranging from parts purchasing and marketing,"" he said.

The city, which has a population of 714,000, is now home to 10 RV producers. The RV industry provides jobs for over 4,000 people in the city. There are also more than 50 RV accessories and parts suppliers as well as production enterprises running businesses ranging from steel materials to air conditioners and wood floorboards and panels, according to statistics provided by the city government.

RV producers in Rongcheng make 30 percent of all RVs in China and its RV exports account for 70 percent of total RV exports by unit volume nationwide. The city was named an export base for RVs in 2017 by the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers.

Located on the easternmost tip of the Shandong Peninsula, Rongcheng faces Japan and South Korea across the sea. Both seaports and the China-Europe Railway Express freight trains provide convenient access for products produced in the city to reach overseas markets.

The convenient shipment process and comfortable and pleasant living environment offer Rongcheng advantages to develop the RV industry, which caters to tourism and recreational sector participants, Zheng Yuewen, mayor of Rongcheng, said at an RV promotion conference held in the city in October.

A total of 21,000 RVs, including self-propelled models and trailers, rolled off production lines in Rongcheng in 2021, generating total sales of two billion yuan. Trailers produced in the city are sold to countries including Australia, New Zealand, the US, South Korea and Japan, said the city's bureau of industry and information technology.

In countries like the US, Canada and Australia, trailers usually account for 90 percent of total RV sales, Cui Dongshu, secretary-general of the China Passenger Car Association, said in a recent article about the RV market.

Cui said trailers are preferred by people in those countries mainly because there are more vehicles that can be used to tow trailers, and in addition, trailers are more afford-ably priced.

To expand overseas markets, Compaks has built a warehouse in Australia and a production plant in South Korea.

""The overseas facilities have been playing an important role in ensuring steady product supply and after-sale service for offshore markets,"" said Liu.

The RCEP Certificate of Origin, which offers preferential tariff treatment, has given RV producers in Rongcheng a boost to expand overseas markets.

Molin Automotive Technology Co Ltd in Rongcheng sold more than 2,150 RVs to overseas markets during the first 10 months of 2022.

Molin had applied for 180 certificates of origin, which had saved 10 million yuan in tariffs for the company, according to an article published on the official website of Qingdao Customs, which oversees Rongcheng Customs.

Qingdao Customs has been using smart systems to verify certificate applications submitted by companies to ensure companies get certificates in a timely fashion.

Innovation-driven technologies

RV producers in Rongcheng are building state-of-the-art production lines to increase productivity.

Rongcheng Mingjun Outdoor Leisure Products Co Ltd spent more than 80 million yuan building two workshops that cover a total area of 10,000 square meters to produce RVs.

The automated welding workshop and assembly workshop will boost RV productivity in Rongcheng, said Xiu Chuanyi, executive supervisor of the company.

Mingjun has teamed up with Harbin University of Science and Technology to jointly develop welding technology, a major process used in trailer production.

To meet consumer demand for personalized designs, Compaks has been using an industrial internet system through which consumers can select customized options.

""For example, consumers can choose furniture according to their needs, a bunk bed or a single-person bed, an outside cooking facility or an inside one,"" said Liu.

Compaks spends 6 percent of its sales income on innovation annually, in a bid to provide more comfortable and reliable products for consumers, Liu added.

For example, it took the company one year to find a way to replace its steel chassis with an aluminum alloy alternative to make the trailer lighter and thus more fuel efficient, he said.

An aerial view of an RV campsite in Rongcheng, Shandong province. [LI XINJUN/FOR CHINA DAILY]

Eyes on the homefront

In China, RVs are favored by consumers. A total of 12,582 RVs were sold in China in 2021, a year-on-year increase of 43.2 percent. Meanwhile, 3,543 trailers were sold over the same period, according to statistics released by the China Automobile Dealers Association.

The International RV and Camping Expo held in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, in June attracted over 100 companies. During the four-day expo, more than 300 RVs were sold.

""There is a big potential to develop the domestic RV market as more and more people would like to experience RV tours,"" Liu said.

This past summer, more than 20 campers at a campsite along the coastline in Rongcheng were fully booked for several months, showcasing that RV-themed tourism is welcomed by tourists, he said.

Rongcheng also has a few projects in its development plans to boost the RV industry, including the building of an international campsite and holding an international conference on RV tourism.

The RV market is supported by national policies. The 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) for the development of cultural and tourism sectors calls for creating an overall RV-centric tourism industrial chain and building new campsites and tourist centers.

""More camping sites need to be established in our country to provide convenient services for people, such as facilities used to charge and get water,"" said Liu.

""RV demand will increase with more campsites and support facilities being built in the near future,"" he added."