

Ancient wisdom inspires modern success

When emperors of old would climb Taishan Mountain, China's holiest mountain, they'd reach the 1,532-meter peak and kneel before heaven to pray for a more fertile land.

Thousands of years later, I cross into the East China province of Shandong at over 300 kilometers per hour aboard a state-of-the-art bullet train with my own mountain to climb. Sadly, not Taishan Mountain. Instead, I want to understand the modern identity of Shandong itself, an area shaped by its spectacular geography and rich cultural heritage and history.

As the train begins its approach to the provincial capital Jinan, factories and oil wells pop up out of the rugged landscape like intricate industrial trinkets of progress across a land that has learned not just to rely on its history, but move with the times too.

Today, Shandong is the third-richest province in China, after Guangdong and Jiangsu, and is an industrial leader in oil, minerals and energy.

From the peak of Taishan Mountain, stretching across expansive plains to the Yellow and Bohai seas, Shandong is a place of contradictions and vast differences which somehow exist in harmony.

It is a place where Confucian proverbs stand side-by-side with high-tech industry and innovation.

It is a place of deep natural beauty and fierce industrial competition. And yet, seemingly, a balance is struck between the two sides, like the husky tones of the Yellow River blending with blue water as it empties into the ocean.

Perhaps this see-saw act can best be embodied by Shandong's two most famous sons, Confucius and Sun Zi.

Born in Shandong in the fifth century BC, Confucius was a teacher and philosopher who taught people how to live according to moral virtues and selflessness — themes which recur in the province's many temples and historic sites.

Sun Zi was a general and military strategist born 10 years after Confucius and who is famous for writing the widely influential book *The Art of War* — which today has a deep impact on businesses in the province.

Both men have had a profound influence on Shandong — Confucius's teachings extolling the benefits of altruistic wisdom and learning, and Sun Zi inspiring businesses in the region to get an edge, push forward, be creative and achieve success in the battlefield of business.

After visiting enterprise after enterprise across Shandong, I realize just how important the history and culture of the province have been in the success of many.

From heavy vehicle manufacturer Sinotruk's headquarters in Jinan, where the production line works as efficiently as a squadron of a highly-trained soldiers, to a solar farm in Dongying where the panels play a symbiotic role with nature, aiding the growth of sea cucumbers.

When those emperors prayed for fertile lands all those centuries ago atop Taishan Mountain, little would they have known just how fertile that land would become.

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Reporters from Asian media outlets capture a fascinating moment of Lyuju Opera, a traditional opera style thriving in Dongying, Shandong province. MA XIAOQIAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

SHANDONG PREPARES FOR SHOWCASE

Expo 2017 Astana to house special exhibit dedicated to eastern Chinese economic powerhouse, its growing commercial advantages and resources

By YANG CHENG and YANG MIN

Shandong province will participate in the Expo 2017 Astana from Sept 6 to 8 and stage a "Shandong Week" to display the province's innovations in the energy sector, as well as share its experience in energy utilization and technological development to enhance cooperation with countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative.

The news was announced during a press conference held for a special press tour by Asian media organizations by the head of the Shandong Council for the Promotion of International Cooperation in Shandong's capital city of Jinan on July 3.

Expo 2017 Astana, with a theme of "Energy of the Future", kicked off on June 10 and will end on Sept 10. There are 115 countries and 20 international organizations participating in the event.

Shandong province will take full advantage of the expo platform to boost economic and trade cooperation, as well as to promote business negotiations and cultural exchanges, said Ma Guangwei, deputy director, Legal Affairs



Asian reporters interview Linuo Group, a Jinan-headquartered solar energy company to take part in the Expo 2017 Astana. WANG QIAN / CHINA DAILY

Department, Shandong branch of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade.

According to an implementation plan released by the province, Shandong Week will be mainly composed of three parts: activities, exhibitions and performances.

The event is expected to hold more than 10 major activities and several supporting activities in Astana and Almaty, including a promotional fair for B&R cooperation, the "All Products in Shandong" activity, the Shandong Tourism Cooperation Conference and the International Construction Materials and

Kazbuild Exhibition.

In addition, Shandong Week will highlight the characteristics of Shandong's most promising cities. The last two days of Shandong Week will be designated Qingdao Day and Dongying Day, to showcase Qingdao's functions as a hub city and Dongying's rising reputation as an oilfield city.

Major cities in Shandong, including Jinan, Weihai, Dezhou, Liaocheng and Binzhou, will take part in a commodities expo. Dezhou, Liaocheng and Binzhou will hold investment seminars with Kazakhstan's investors. Exhibitions of two of

Shandong's major brands — Hoping Shandong, for local leading products, and Hospitality Shandong for local sceneries — will be displayed during the event, according to Ma.

As a warm-up activity for Shandong Week, the province held a special event for media organizations from South, Southeast and Central Asia to visit Shandong from June 3 to 8.

During the week-long event, journalists and reporters were shown some of Shandong's most promising businesses involved in solar power, wind power, oil equipment manufacturing, wine making and heavy-truck production and assembly in three Shandong cities — Jinan, Dongying and Yantai — allowing the visitors to learn more about the industrial and economic development of Shandong.

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What they say

Editor's note: A group of Asian media reporters share their insights on Shandong province during their Discover Shandong trip on July 2-8 in Jinan, Dongying and Yantai. Apart from the reporters, we also want to express our sincere thanks to **Talgat Galimov**, photojournalist, Delovoy Kazakhstan, **Otabek Muratov**, photojournalist, Jahon Information Agency based in Uzbekistan, **Amitha Thennakoon**, photographer, Ceylon Today based in Sri Lanka, **Jirawatt Ngamsoponsookkoon**, producer, Nation Multimedia Group, based in Thailand, for their dedication, professionalism and hard working spirit during the Asian media's Discover Shandong trip from July 2 to 8.

We interviewed several petroleum equipment manufacturers including Kerui and Jerell and new energy companies in Shandong, which have strong ties with Kazakhstan. Cooperation on the Belt and Road Initiative is expected to become a new spotlight of media in our country.

Serik Korzhumbayev, editor-in-chief, Delovoy Kazakhstan.

I fell in love in Penglai, thanks to its scenery, wine and the hospitality of local people. If I could have an offer in Penglai, I would accept it soon.

Kunsaya Kurmet, social media specialist and editor, JSC Khabar agency based in Kazakhstan

Dongying is really impressive, incredible in its new energy sector and has magnificent scenery in its wetlands and its Yellow River estuary.

Kanat Auyesbay, columnist, Kazinform based in Kazakhstan

I was impressed by Yantai's rapid economic growth and grand tourism resorts. If Yantai reporters could go to Pakistan for an interview, I will be proud to be a guide for them and present the best of Karachi to them.

Zahid Karani, senior staff reporter, The Times of Karachi based in Pakistan

The industrial park association established by the Sino-Russian High-tech Industrialization Cooperative Demonstration

Base is looking for a Pakistani member and we will help the association to find it in our country.

Shumaila Aslam, reporter, The Finance based in Pakistan

I learnt about Sun Zi (545-470 BC), the great military strategist, during my university period and obtained in-depth knowledge in the Sun Zi cultural park set up in his hometown Guangrao, Dongying. It was really a great experience for me!

Gulayim Nurjanova, editor, Jahon Information Agency based in Uzbekistan

Sun Zi's theory has had a grand impact on the commercial world in Asia, especially Malaysia. After interviewing its home town, I will continue to make research in the field.

Teo Say Gek, reporter, Sin Chew Daily based in Malaysia

After interviewing the executives of Changyu, I learnt its legendary founder Zhang Bishi's ups and downs in his career and he has a residence in Penang. I will make further reports on the group's global reaches in the future and ask my Malaysian colleagues to do further coverage on it.

Beh Yuen Hui, reporter, The Star based in Malaysia

I appreciate the Western style chateau in Yantai and the ancient Penglai Pavilion built more than 1,000 years ago. I think I have stepped into two centuries in China.

Sunali Warnakulasuriya, journalist, Ceylon Today based in Sri Lanka

Thailand is rich in sunshine. I hope to introduce more solar energy information discovered on our trip in Jinan and Dongying to Thailand.

Kittitit Thanaditsuwana, reporter, Nation Multimedia Group based in Thailand

Province seizes opportunities of the Belt and Road Initiative

By YANG CHENG yangcheng@chinadaily.com.cn

East China's Shandong province is playing a pivotal role in implementing the country's Belt and Road Initiative.

The province is targeting the marine economy, industrial upgrade, transport facilities, energy and resources, said Liang Wenyue, deputy director, regional integration promotion office under the Shandong Development and Reform Commission.

The province aims to become the nation's modern logistics hub and a center for marine economic cooperation, international industrial upgrades and human exchange as well as a regional cooperation center along the Belt and Road routes.

To this end, the province has established a leading group to coordinate involvement in the B&R Initiative and issued a series of government policies to strengthen customs services, quality supervision, inspection and quarantine.

Nine cities in the province have implemented B&R action plans. Since the initiative was announced three years ago, the province has seen its international trade with countries

involved in the B&R surge significantly.

In 2016, foreign trade with those countries reached 413.4 billion yuan (\$60.7 billion), up 8.4 percent, and accounted for 26.7 percent of the province's overall foreign trade.

Eight industrial parks have been set up along the B&R routes, including four national-level trade cooperation zones in Pakistan, Hungary and Russia.

The province's investment in B&R projects reached 29.42 billion yuan, accounting for 16.7 percent of the province's total foreign investment.

Turnover of contracted projects hit 42.59 billion yuan, up 45 percent year-on-year.

Qingdao-based Haier Group invested in and built household electrical appliance manufacturing enterprises in Pakistan.

Jining-based Ruyi joined hands with State-owned Huaneng Group to build a coal-fired power station in Sahiwal, Pakistan, a highlight along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Some breakthroughs have also been made in establishing transport connections, Liang said.

To date, 279 trains transited between Europe and Asia and



Sinotruk, a Jinan-based truck producer, has taken the lead in the Belt and Road Initiative, attracting Asian reporters. WANG QIAN / CHINA DAILY

rail freight handled by railways reached 299,000 tons last year, up 162.8 percent and 128.8 percent year-on-year, respectively.

To date, 31 container trains combining ocean and railway transportation have been set up in the province.

The Qingdao B&R cross-border container inter-model transport project has been incorporated into China's first batch of 16 inter-model transportation demonstration projects.

The province aims to make further headway in B&R construction, Liang said.

It is committed to building the East Asia Marine Platform, which has become a key part of the "10 plus 3" marine coopera-

tion network covering ASEAN members and three countries including China, Japan and South Korea.

In terms of cultural cooperation, Shandong has cooperated with 47 cities in 23 countries, and established friendly cooperative relations with 31 cities in 14 countries.

It has supported overseas Confucius Institutes and 28 Confucius classrooms, boosting the culture of Confucius — who was born in Shandong — worldwide.

Challenges

Local companies in Shandong have taken the lead in China in their forays into the B&R markets.

One of China's top heavy vehicle manufacturers, Sinotruk, has vowed to keep forging new paths into the international market along the Belt and Road routes, according to a senior spokesperson at the company.

The comments were made by Li Gonghai to reporters from South, Southeast and Central Asia during a fact-finding trip and a tour of the manufacturer's headquarters and production line in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province, on July 4.

Li said that Sinotruk is making great strides in toverseas markets, particularly in the emerging economies of Central Asia, Africa, the Middle East and South America.

In Central Asia alone, since 2011, the company has sold more than 8,000 heavy duty trucks in Kazakhstan, exported some 2,000 vehicles to Uzbekistan, and more than 3,000 of its HOWO heavy trucks are currently used in Turkmenistan.

Apart from vehicle sales and exports to Central Asia, Sinotruk also wants to develop local assembly lines in the region, particularly in Kazakhstan. The company is currently working to establish the assembly lines, with a

memorandum of understanding signed by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Kazakhstan's Prime Minister Bakhytzhan Sagintayev during a visit to the oil-rich nation in December 2014.

Another B&R pioneer in Shandong is the Jinan-based Linuo Group, which has become the world's leading solar energy group.

Tubes produced by the group account for 65 percent of the country and 90 percent of its photovoltaic products have been exported overseas.

Its exports hit 800 million yuan in 2016 to more than 100 countries and regions.

Zhang Beiweng, the company's vice president, indicated that China, the United States and India are the major consumers of solar energy, while Southeast Asian countries are sufficient in solar energy.

"Linuo's product presence in B&R countries is facing challenges from their national governments failing to support solar energy. To help boost their solar energy and reduce traditional power use, we expect overseas countries to issue more preferential policies to boost the market."

Owen Fishwick and Yang Min contributed to the story.