

# BUSINESS

TWO SESSIONS

## TCL to expand global footprint

Electronics giant charts plans for more complete industrial chains worldwide

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Chinese consumer electronics giant TCL Technology Group Corp will speed up its globalization push, establish more complete industrial chains across the globe, and increase investment in next-generation display technologies, said Li Dongsheng, founder and chairman of the company.

Li, who is a deputy to the 13th National People's Congress, said Chinese enterprises should accelerate the construction of global industrial and supply chains, which is of great significance in improving their competitiveness.

He said that in the face of anti-globalization risks, TCL has adjusted the layout of its overseas industrial chain to effectively avoid trade barriers, ramped up localization efforts and continuously increased capital input in research and development.

For instance, the company has expanded overseas plants in Vietnam, Mexico and India, and established joint ventures with local partners in Brazil to jointly build production bases, supply chains and an R&D system.

"Looking ahead, we will also actively consider increasing industrial bases in Africa and strengthening our business in the Middle East," Li said. So far, TCL has established 42 research and development centers and 32 manufacturing bases around the world, with operations in over 160 countries and regions.

The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology said stabilizing industrial growth will be its top priority this year, and it will step up the promotion of industrial



Visitors check out TCL displays during an expo in Las Vegas in January. WU XIAOLING / XINHUA

### \$18.6 billion

TCL's revenue from overseas markets in 2021, according to its founder Li Dongsheng

chain upgrades and enhance the core competitiveness of manufacturing in the country.

Building global competitiveness has always been an important strategy for TCL, Li said, while noting the company's revenue from overseas markets stood at 117.4 billion yuan (\$18.6 billion) in 2021, up 60 percent on a yearly basis.

In his proposal to this year's two sessions — the annual meetings of China's top legislature and political advisory body — Li called for intensified efforts to support more home-grown companies to participate in

key fields in industrial chains and improve the industrial chain of the Chinese manufacturing sector.

He suggested the country should attract foreign high-tech manufacturing enterprises to invest and establish factories in China, as well as encourage and support leading Chinese enterprises to expand their manufacturing advantages to overseas markets, and set up R&D centers and production bases.

China has gained an upper hand in the liquid crystal display (LCD) field, accounting for about 60 to 70 percent of global production capacity, but it still lags behind in new display technologies, such as organic light-emitting diodes or OLED, Li said.

He noted the company is accelerating layout of next-generation display technologies, such as OLED, quantum dot and micro light-emitting

diodes. Compared with traditional LCD, the new display technologies show great improvements in terms of image contrast, brightness and color spectrum.

It has invested heavily in medium-sized displays, including laptops, tablets and vehicle-mounted displays, and started construction of a T9 production line, which mainly produces commercial display equipment, Li added.

Chinese enterprises should step up efforts for breakthroughs in key technologies through self-dependent innovation, and promote integration of the new generation of information technologies and intelligent manufacturing with the current industrial supply chain, said Zhang Qizi, deputy director of the Institute of Industrial Economics at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

## CATL chief calls for efforts to develop lithium resources

By CHENG YU  
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Accelerated steps should be made to drive the exploration and development of domestic lithium resources, and the establishment of China's carbon footprint system on batteries to boost China's competitiveness in the fiercer global new energy vehicle market, said a political adviser during the ongoing two sessions.

"With the current supply of lithium still tight, the exploration and development of domestic lithium resources should be stepped up to ensure the safety of the supply chain," said Zeng Yuqun, a member of the 13th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

Zeng said it is of strategic significance to ensure the supply of lithium, which is the core raw material of the latest generation of batteries for NEVs.

"At the same time, related departments and companies should speed up independent innovation and scientific research into efficient utilization of resource recycling to reduce reliance on resources," said Zeng, who is also founder and chairman of battery giant Contemporary Amperex Technology Co Ltd.

Since last year, prices of battery metals have risen sharply worldwide. Australian lithium and tantalum producer Pilbara Minerals startled the market when it announced it had secured an offer of \$2,240 per metric ton for a parcel of lithium-rich spodumene crystal.

The China Nonferrous Metals Industry Association said almost 60 percent of spodumene crystal consumed by the nation annually to produce lithium salts is imported. Spodumene crystal is a material used to produce NEV batteries.

The government is now working to help domestic enterprises withstand fluctuations in the raw materials market for NEVs.

Xin Guobin, vice-minister of industry and information technol-

ogy, said in a news conference that the ministry will speed up collaboration with other government departments to improve the supply system for key resources needed in NEV manufacturing, including lithium, cobalt and nickel.

"It is not only China but also other countries that are scrambling to build bigger reserves of core raw minerals, which are key to lowering the high cost of NEVs," said Roy Lu Yan, head of industrial research at battery giant Gotion High-Tech.

"Chinese companies should vigorously develop resource-friendly technological innovations and advanced battery recycling to reduce extreme dependence on such resources," Lu said.

At the two sessions, Zeng also suggested establishing a carbon footprint management system for NEV batteries to guide low-carbon development in the industry.

A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases released. The EU proposed that only rechargeable industrial and electric vehicles batteries, for which a carbon footprint declaration has been established, can be placed in the market.

"European nations and the United States have incorporated battery carbon footprint evaluation into their strategic plans and formulated relevant supporting regulations," Zeng said.

This also echoed the suggestion of Lei Jun, founder, chairman and CEO of Xiaomi Corp, who said that NEVs have become a key battlefield for global competition in the auto industry, and a complete, clear and accurate carbon footprint accounting system is the premise and foundation for the low-carbon development of NEVs.

Lei, who is also a deputy to the 13th National People's Congress, suggested establishing industrial standards and methods for carbon footprint accounting, as well as carbon footprint certification and incentive programs for emissions reduction.

Ma Si contributed to this story.

## Lawmaker says Guizhou ripe for new energy push

By ZHENG XIN in Beijing  
and YANG JUN in Guiyang

With advantages of abundant phosphorus ore resources and achievements in the phosphorus chemical industry, more efforts should be made in building a new energy material manufacturing innovation center in Guizhou province, said a deputy to the 13th National People's Congress.

By taking Guizhou as an important base, China is able to build a green industrial chain system with low carbon emissions — from upstream phosphate mining, phosphorus and fluorine chemical production to downstream applications, said He Guangliang, also president of State-owned Guizhou Phosphate Chemical Group, the world's largest purified wet phosphoric acid and anhydrous hydrogen fluoride provider based in the Southwest China province.

The deputy also suggested creation of a national new energy mate-

rials manufacturing innovation center in the region to incubate, test and apply new energy materials including phosphorus and fluorine, to accelerate the country's competitiveness in the global phosphorus chemical industry.

This can help Guizhou build a new energy power battery industry with distinctive characteristics and outstanding advantages, as the province bets big on emerging sectors including new energy for fresh points of growth, said He.

Luo Zuoxian, head of intelligence and research at the Sinopec Economics and Development Research Institute, said the new materials industry is one of the strategic emerging industries in the country and will have a significant impact on future development in China.

The country has been actively developing the new materials industry in recent years and its western regions are likely to embrace massive opportunities in developing the sector, Luo said.

Founded in June 2019, GPCG's core business mainly covers phosphate mining, phosphate compound fertilizers and the fine phosphate chemical industry.

While the country has made numerous achievements in the phosphorus chemical industry, it still has a long way to go in the innovation of the phosphorus and fluorine chemical industry with insufficient investment in technology, added He.

The official said the group's supply of wet-process phosphoric acid ranks first in the world, exceeding the combined volume of the next three largest holders, and the group plans to build itself into one of the world's biggest and most competitive fluoride-related resource suppliers.

Its production capacity of phosphate fertilizer, phosphate compound fertilizer with high-quality and high-concentration accounts for 40 percent of the national total.

The company also contributes to

China's grain planting and production, while also looking to transform the province into a producer of high-end refined chemical products to achieve more added value and expand presence in the global market.

With advanced technologies and management experiences, the company sees its contract value signed with economies participating in the Belt and Road Initiative exceeding 5.9 billion yuan (\$935 million) so far, including Egypt, Morocco and Saudi Arabia.

Its products have been sold to more than 30 countries and regions worldwide. The annual production capacity of the group's mineral resources ranks first in Asia and third in the world for phosphorus and the phosphorus chemical industry.

Zhao Yandi in Guiyang contributed to this story.

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A technician inspects equipment at a power storage facility in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, in April. LONG WEI / FOR CHINA DAILY

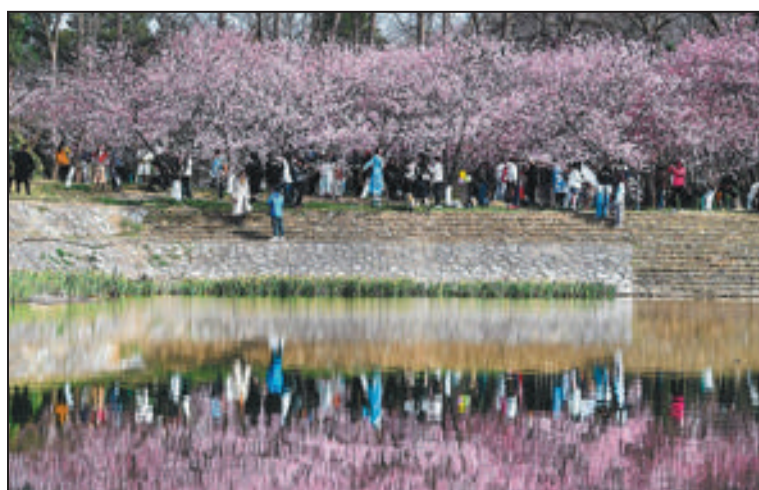
## Spring brings rush of domestic flower-viewing trips

By ZHU WENQIAN  
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With spring in full bloom in most parts of the country and temperatures rising, many are eager to hit the road for weekend getaways. What has become a popular choice for them this year is flower-viewing trips along with short-distance one-day tours and weekend voyages to nearby suburban areas, industry insiders said.

In early March, booking volumes by Chinese tourists of flower-viewing trips nationwide rose by 150 percent year-on-year. A high proportion were families who traveled with their children, said Qunar, a Beijing-based online travel agency.

For long-distance trips, the Tibet and Xinjiang Uygur autonomous regions have seen a 40 percent increase in booking volumes for



Tourists admire cherry blossoms at a park in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, on Monday. SHAO DAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

flower-viewing trips over the same period last year. Demand for private and custom group tours grew signif-

icantly compared to the time when there was no COVID-19 pandemic, Qunar said.

"With traveling abroad still stagnating, Tibet and Xinjiang boast unique natural sceneries, rich ethnic customs, and the regions are under good control in terms of the pandemic. Such features are in line with the aspirations of tourists. Correspondingly, the average price of a flower-viewing tour to Tibet recently has increased to 5,000 yuan (\$791) per person," said Yang Guanghui, director of vacation products operation at Qunar.

"Since the pandemic, travelers have shown a higher demand for privacy and safety, and they have posted higher requirements in the quality of accommodations and services such as cars, tour guides and photography," Yang said.

This year, a number of attractions have integrated new experiential elements into flower-viewing trips. For instance, Jiayang in Jianwei county, Sichuan province, intro-

duced options for travelers to admire views of flowers during steam train trips. In Tibet, taking some photos in local costumes and shooting aerial photos by drones have become increasingly popular. Many places in Tibet have also launched activities such as camping.

With more experiential activities and high-quality services available, an increasing number of travelers choose to stay one more night near flower-viewing spots. The trend has driven the booking volumes of hotels and bed-and-breakfast businesses, Qunar said.

Nationwide, some of the most popular destinations to view flower blossoms include Nyingchi, Tibet; Ili, Xinjiang; Wuxi, Jiangsu province; Wuyuan, Jiangxi province and Wuhan University in Hubei province, Qunar said.

Wuyuan, known for its rape flowers and countryside views, has seen a sharply growing number of visitors in spring. Between March 5 and May 10 and from 6 am to 10 pm, the local government of Wuyuan

usually implements traffic controls for better management of a large number of travelers.

Countrywide, rape flowers, cherry blossoms and peach blossoms have received the most attention, as the varieties are widely planted and their blooming seasons come relatively earlier. Tulips, jacaranda, and peach blossoms stand as the new favorites for visitors this year, according to Suzhou-based online travel agency Tongcheng Travel.

Among visitors, about 30 percent of the total were born after 1990, followed by the age group of those who were born in the 1980s. The proportion of visitors who were born after 2000 has grown rapidly, said Tongcheng Travel.

Meanwhile, a number of destinations and sightseeing spots such as Yuyuantan Park in Beijing have introduced options for travelers to view flowers during the night, especially since it is usually less crowded in the evening, Tongcheng Travel said.