



With climate and natural conditions similar to Southeast Asia, Zhanjiang is an attractive destination for businesses from the region. ZHANG XIAO / CHINA DAILY

High-tech zone targets ASEAN investment

Fluency of locals in Southeast Asian languages is a major asset for development, **Xu Jingxi** reports.

Having the only industrial park targeting the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Guangdong province, the Fenyong High-Tech Industrial Development Zone in Zhanjiang has built close connections with Thailand and Indonesia and has made it a priority this year to attract investment from Southeast Asian countries.

Zhanjiang, the port city that is the southernmost on the Chinese mainland, is recognized by the National Development and Reform Commission as a strategic fulcrum city in the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road initiative.

The Fenyong zone is designated to pioneer the city's participation in the initiative, said Zou Yongbing, director of the zone's administrative committee.

The high-tech zone grew out of the Fenyong Overseas Chinese Farm, which was established in 1952 to offer resettlement opportunities for returning overseas Chinese.

Most of them returned from Southeast Asian countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Myanmar and Thailand, which are all along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

About 66 percent of the zone's current residents are returned overseas Chinese and their relatives. Because of their fluency in Southeast Asian languages, they are especially welcomed by enterprises from ASEAN members, said Chen Anming, who was the high-tech zone's Party chief from June 2013 to January 2015.

"Fenyong has natural ties with ASEAN countries and

“It is of utmost priority in our work in the forthcoming period to attract ASEAN enterprises to Fenyong.”

Zou Yongbing, director of the zone's administrative committee

we will rely on returning Chinese to develop the zone into an important platform for Guangdong to cooperate with ASEAN," Zou said.

The zone focused on forging partnerships with Thailand and Indonesia in the first half of this year and has achieved significant results, he said.

Thailand's Trade Development Commission of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises will soon set up an office in the zone and is discussing with the zone's administrative committee on establishing a China-Thailand industrial park in Zhanjiang.

The committee is also talking with major Indonesian companies including PT AKR, a leading company for logistics, supply chain and infrastructure, on setting up a China-Indonesia industrial park in the city.

"It is of utmost priority in our work in the forthcoming

period to attract ASEAN enterprises to Fenyong. Our goal is to have three to five such enterprises in our industrial parks early next year," Zou said.

With a similar climate to Southeast Asia, Zhanjiang is suitable for growing many of the region's typical agricultural products and has a bright future for cooperation in the intensive processing of farm produce, he said.

The strength of ASEAN enterprises in the pharmaceuticals industry is also what the high-tech zone wants as its industrial plan gives priority to the development of such industries as food production, pharmaceuticals and machinery, he added.

"Fenyong speed"

The Fenyong high-tech zone was officially founded in 2013 and has been developing "in the fast lane" for the past two years, Zou said.

The zone had signed deals with 15 enterprises by the end of 2014, attracting total investment of 2 billion yuan (\$322 million), and introduced another nine projects in the first five months of this year, adding investment of 4.4 billion yuan.

Seven of the first 15 enterprises were operational on June 8 and are expected to create total output value of 2.3 billion yuan annually.

Another seven are expected to be in operation by the end of this year and the remaining one next year. Construction of the nine new projects is also expected to start this year.

Zhanjiang Far East Steel Structure, a subsidiary of Baosteel Construction, started trial production in early June. Its



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first batch of high-end steel products, which weighs 1,000 metric tons and is worth 6 million yuan, will be exported to Indonesia in mid-July, said Chen Sheng, the company's general manager.

As a supporting enterprise for the Baosteel plant in Zhanjiang, the steel structure manufacturer was one of the first to enter the Fenyong high-tech zone.

It took only a little more than a year for the manufacturer to complete all construction and preparation for production after signing a deal with the zone's administrative committee in May 2014, thanks to

the committee's highly efficient service.

The zone is also building a living compound to accommodate the staff of all businesses in the zone, which will ease the companies' financial burden, Chen said.

The general manager is optimistic about the steel plant's business prospects, eyeing annual output value of 1 billion yuan within three years, 60 percent of which is forecast to be from exports.

"The Belt and Road Initiative will bring large demand for steel structures, especially the high-end products, for the emerging economies in South-

east Asia," Chen said.

"There is no large-scale steel structure manufacturer within a radius of 300 kilometers. Through the Zhanjiang Port, we are able to cut the shipment distance to Southeast Asian countries by half, compared to our parent company in Shanghai."

Chen compares Zhanjiang to the next Zhuhai, a special economic zone in Guangdong. However, Zou, the director of Fenyong's administrative committee, said Zhanjiang is not copying any other city's development pattern but setting inspiring examples.

"Fenyong has made a mirac-

ulous transformation from a farm to a high-tech industrial zone, for which we couldn't find a precedent in China to follow," he said.

"The zone is developing at 'Fenyong speed' and I'm confident that by 2017, it will generate output value of 10 billion yuan and bring taxes of 300 million yuan every year."

To go full steam ahead, the Fenyong zone and Zhanjiang city still need preferential fiscal and tax policies to help them draw more investment, Zou added.

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Zhanjiang plans Haidong as new business heart for city

By **XU JINGXI**
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Zhanjiang plans to make Haidong New District the new business heart of the city, taking a role similar to that of Pudong New Area in Shanghai.

Local officials said it is necessary for a city to develop its rural areas when the city proper is saturated with residents and industries. There are too many examples to enumerate in the fast-developing China, such as Shanghai's Pudong New Area and Tianjin's Binhai New Area.

They said Zhanjiang, a city famous for its agricultural and aquatic indus-

tries, aspires to achieve economic takeoff with three new engines — Donghai Island that features heavy industries, the Fenyong high-tech zone targeting economic cooperation with Southeast Asia and Haidong New District that focuses on modern service industries.

The provincial government of Guangdong has attached much importance to the development of Haidong New District, listing it as one of the four key new districts to "expand the capacity and improve the quality" of cities in Guangdong.

The development of the 228-square-kilometer area, includ-

ing 48 sq km on the sea, started in 2013. Hu Chunhua, Party chief of Guangdong, demanded high-level planning of the new district and has high hopes it will become a highlight of the province's move to upgrade its cities by 2017.

"We have drawn a long-term plan for the future of Haidong New District until 2030," said Liang Pei, the new district's Party chief.

"Whoever takes the district government's leadership should stick to the plan and develop it step by step into a prosperous business center and a beautiful seaside town on the east of Zhanjiang Bay."

Three stages

The development plan for the district is in three stages.

In the first stage, infrastructure construction is forecast to be completed by 2016, with highways linking the district to the high-speed railway and the new airport of Zhanjiang.

Businesses will then be introduced into the district with many such enterprises expected to be operational by 2020.

During the remaining 10 years, more people and businesses will settle in the well-developed district with beautiful landscapes featuring

“Haidong New District will become an international business center of Zhanjiang and the showcase of the city's new image.”

Liang Pei, Party chief of Haidong New District

blue sea, white beaches and green trees.

Local officials said traffic convenience is an essential precondition for an area's development.

A ferry used to be the only transportation means between the prosperous western bank of Zhanjiang Bay and the underdeveloped eastern bank, where Haidong New District is located, until 2006 when the Zhanjiang Bay Bridge was opened to traffic.

Another three bridges and a sea-crossing tunnel will be built to fur-

ther increase the efficient flow of people and goods, according to the plan.

The district will also become an important traffic hub of Zhanjiang to the outside after highways are built to link Haidong to the city's new airport and to the high-speed railway connecting the city and the Pearl River Delta.

Promising land

These facilities will make Haidong a promising choice for investment, with bustling construction sites all over the district, according to local officials.

"However, developing a new district must not be simply building high-rises and developing real estate," Liang said.

"We must introduce industries that are good for the district's sustainable development and go after high-quality investments, including those from large State-owned enterprises and private businesses, to bring more dynamics to the market."

Haidong New District has sealed deals of 96 projects with total investment of more than 52 billion yuan (\$8.4 billion), including the Zhanjiang branch of the Bohai Commodity Exchange and

a comprehensive hospital that will be larger in area and number of beds than any other in Guangdong, Hainan province or the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, according to Liang.

As the location for the upcoming provincial sports games of Guangdong in August, Haidong New District is ready to host tens of thousands of visitors and amaze them with three shell-shaped stadiums by Zhanjiang Bay, Liang said.

He said the new district has more surprises on its blueprints for tourists and residents, including a man-made beach, a yacht club, a greenery corridor along the bay and a wetland park.

Underground there will also be a pipeline tunnel integrating public utilities such as water, electricity and telecommunications, which Liang said is an advanced city-planning concept globally for tidier landscaping and more efficient management of public utilities.

"Haidong New District will become an international business center of Zhanjiang and the showcase of the city's new image. I believe it will become a must-go place for visitors to Zhanjiang just as Pudong New Area is for visitors to Shanghai," Liang said.



Construction of infrastructure such as roads has been stepped up in Haidong, making the zone ready to accommodate more investments from home and abroad. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY