



The view of Gulangyu Island, an island off the coast of Xiamen, Fujian province. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Scenic Fujian attracts teens from HK, Macao

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Fujian province, on China's southeast coast, has become a popular tourism destination for teenagers from Hong Kong and Macao who are keen on travel and study, according to the province's tourism development committee.

Thanks to its geographic advantages, natural environment and long history, the province is rich in tourism resources, from alluring landscapes to cultural heritage. Renowned scenic spots include the Wuyi Mountain Nature Reserve, the UNESCO-listed *tulou* or earthen houses, and global geoparks in both Taining and Ningde.

Fujian boasts the highest proportion of forest coverage in China, at 65.95 percent, as well as clean water, good air quality and a pristine natural environment. It has 3,752 kilometers of coastline, the second-longest in the country, and more than 80 percent of its land area is covered in mountains, hills and other landforms.

Last year, Fujian announced the first batch of tourism areas for teenagers from Hong Kong and Macao to use as study bases. These included a scenic spot in Fuzhou called Sanfangqixiang, or Three Lanes and Seven Alleys, and Gutian tourism zone in Longyan city.

This year, the province has added an additional three tourism zones — the China Museum for Fujian-Taiwan Kinship, Jimei study village and Meizhou Island in Putian — to be used as study bases by Hong Kong and Macao teens.

The tourism committee said it will continue to build study bases and boost cultural communication between both sides. Fujian plans to deepen cooperation with research institutes at home and abroad, optimize its advantages in tourism and academic resources and enhance the development of its tourism market, according to the committee.

In recent years, the province has

helped improve regional tourism by building study bases, initiating various study-themed tourism products and launching a series of incentives to tighten cultural bonds and attract more teenagers to visit Fujian.

Incentives include a 600 yuan cash award for each accompanying adult in a tour group of teenagers visiting Fujian, and a 20,000 yuan subsidy to colleges or study bases that take part in the province's study trips.

Fujian has also launched a variety of cultural study strips for teenagers, focusing on the Minnan, Kejia and Mazu cultures, and the maritime silk road. Gulangyu Island in Xiamen is regarded as one of the top 10 tourism destinations for teenagers from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

The province plans to continue launching study trips and cultural activities to expand the tourism market in Hong Kong and Macao in future.

One example is the "Refreshing Fujian" event, which shows the province's diversity and is aimed at giving teenagers a better understanding of its tourism market, through exhibitions, online platforms, television and outdoor activities.

Fujian serves as a gateway to the Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta regions, and joins the two sides of the Taiwan Straits. It also plays a key role in promoting the country's opening-up policy and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, part of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Last year, more than 1.69 million tourists from Hong Kong and Macao visited Fujian, up 6.1 percent year-on-year and accounting for 21.8 percent of the province's total visitors.

In the first half of this year, the number of tourists from Hong Kong and Macao reached more than 853,000, up 15.4 percent year-on-year and accounting for 23.29 percent of the province's total.

Key Fujian delegation embarks on landmark visit to Hong Kong

Both sides seek to boost important cooperation to new heights

By PAMELA LIN

pamelalin@chinadailyhk.com

An important delegation of officials from Fujian led by Yu Weiguo, Party secretary of the province, began a landmark four-day visit to Hong Kong and Macao on Oct 7 with the theme of "New Era, New Journey and New Development".

"The visit's aim was to further promote Fujian and strengthen the deep bond between the regions," said Yu.

Additionally, he expressed his desire that with the help of Hong Kong as a unique open platform to connect with the world, the two regions could achieve mutual benefits on a deeper, wider and higher level of cooperation and exchanges.

On Oct 8 the delegation visited the Hong Kong Science Park — the biggest innovation and technology base camp for research and development, testing, fund-raising and commercialization in the Special Administrative Region.

Hong Kong's Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Nicholas Yang Wei-hsiung, presented the science, technological and innovation achievements the SAR had made in recent years.

The Hong Kong government has strongly supported the development of technological innovation, investing some \$9.96 billion (HK\$78 billion) in the field, of which HK\$10 billion was used to establish two world-class technological innovation platforms focusing on medical technology and artificial intelligence.

The delegation next visited SenseTime, a new Hong Kong artificial intelligence company which is now the world's most valuable AI start-up with a valuation of more than \$4.5 billion.

The group is renowned for its advanced face and image recognition technology that can be applied to smart cities throughout China. According to SenseTime CEO Zhang Wen, the technology has already been widely adopted by several sectors including public transportation and finance as well as the entertainment industry.

In addition, Zhang introduced cutting-edge autonomous driving technology developed through cooperation with Japan's Honda Motor Company Ltd. Their system can be applied to AI vehicles and the appli-



HU MEIDONG / CHINA DAILY



HU MEIDONG / CHINA DAILY



Clockwise from top: Yu Weiguo, Party secretary of Fujian province visits the Hong Kong Science Park on Oct 8. Yu shares his views at a seminar during the event. Passengers take the first high-speed train from Fuzhou to Hong Kong on Sept 23. WANG DONGMING / CHINA NEW SERVICE Participants of the HK Federation of Fujian Association enjoy their day during the event.



The visit's aim was to further promote Fujian and strengthen the deep bond between the regions."

Yu Weiguo, Party secretary of Fujian province

ation scenarios will be tested firstly in Shanghai.

Afterwards, the delegation visited The Smart City Innovation Centre — the first 5G innovation lab in Hong Kong spearheaded by Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Hong Kong Applied

Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited.

Ever since China began its reform and opening-up policy in 1978, Fujian and Hong Kong have maintained a positive cooperative relationship. In the 40 years, the province has employed \$84.9 billion in capital from Hong Kong and Macao, comprising two thirds of its total foreign investment. To date, around 80 Fujian companies have listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, raising more than HK\$100 billion.

"Hong Kong is the largest source of foreign investment to Fujian and quite a large number of Fujian companies have taken advantage of Hong Kong as an international financial hub to go abroad," said Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, chief executive of Hong Kong, making remarks during the 11th inauguration of council members of the Hong Kong Federation of Fujian Associations on Oct 7.

Yu said during the inauguration that new council members would

continue increasing cooperation between Fujian and Hong Kong in terms of trade, business and culture. Paving the way ahead for that is the new Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express rail Link, which went into operation on Sep 23.

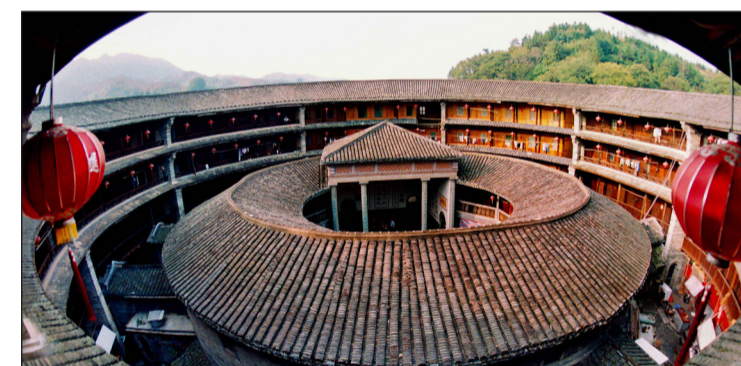
The new link takes about five hours to go from West Kowloon to Fuzhou, and only four hours to Xiamen, and officials said that as a result the economic, business and cultural exchange between the Hong Kong and Fujian would be substantially enhanced.

In recent years, Fujian has been approved as a pilot Free Trade Zone and as a core region of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, creating great opportunities for Fujian, Hong Kong and Macao.

Officials added that during the visit the delegation would sign a batch of important economic and cultural cooperation projects, which would put greater efforts into building a "new" Fujian.



The view of the Dongdu port in Xiamen.



Tulou, or earthen houses, are widely scattered in Yongding and Nanjing counties, Fujian province.

Highlights in 2017

GDP: In 2017, Fujian's GDP reached some 3.23 trillion yuan (\$469 billion), up 8.1 percent year-on-year. Its GDP per capita was 83,000 yuan, ranking it sixth in China. In the first half of this year, the province maintained stable economic growth, with its GDP and fixed assets investments increasing 8.2 percent and 13.4 percent, respectively.

Industries: Last year, the added value of the high-tech industry in Fujian province was up 12.5 percent. The added value of the service industry including logistics, finance, tourism and modern services accounted for 45.6 percent of the province's GDP. In total, 40 3A logistics enterprises were added and the added value of logistics grew by 9 percent. The tourism industry's revenue increased 29.2 percent thanks to the profound influence of its "Refreshing Fujian" tourism brand. This emerging industry has shown an upward trend of development with its industrial value surpassing 327.1 billion yuan, accounting for 11.5 percent of the province's GDP.

Infrastructure: By the end of 2017, Fujian was operating 3,300 kilometers of railway, including 1,570 kilometers of high-speed railway. At the ports, 520 million tons of cargo was loaded and unloaded, with container throughput reaching 16 million TEUs.

Innovation: Fujian boasts 2,600 technological innovation platforms. The province has also implemented its first batch of 18 innovation and reform measures across the region. Its elect iconic-certificate sharing initiative

is listed as a demonstration project for "internet plus and e-government service". The scale of the province's digital economy and information integrated index all rank among the top in the nation.

Opening-up: Last year, the import and export revenue of Fujian reached more than \$171 billion yuan, up 9.1 percent year-on-year, with export revenue at \$104.9 billion, a 1.2 percent year-on-year increase. The province is home to 2,041 foreign-aided enterprises with about 57.3 billion yuan of foreign capital invested, up 8.2 percent year-on-year. It has built a core area to expand economic and cultural ties with the countries and regions involved in the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and has 30 associated projects worth \$2.29 billion in investment. The province is on 138 international container-ship trade routes and is connected to the world with 53 international flights.

Poverty alleviation: Fujian has lifted 200,000 people out of poverty and relocated 112,000 people in poverty-stricken areas. The number of new jobs in cities and towns has reached 604,900. Per-capita disposable income in urban areas was 39,001 yuan in 2017, up 8.3 percent year-on-year. The figure in rural areas was 16,335 yuan, up 8.9 percent year-on-year.

Environmental protection: Fujian has some 89,266 hectares of trees with forest coverage of 65.95 percent, ranking first in China. The province's sewage treatment rate in cities and counties, and harmless treatment rate of domestic refuse has reached 91 percent and 95.8 percent respectively.