

Rich and diverse development potential lauded

Province, with a history of more than 3,000 years, draws on cultural heritage and natural resources for high-quality growth



Lou Yangsheng,
Party secretary of Shanxi province

Located at the Bohai Bay-rim economic circle, Shanxi province has huge development potential, abundant natural resources, diverse cultures and convenient transportation. Taiyuan, its capital, is some 500 kilometers from Beijing and Tianjin Port. The 156,700-square-kilometer land is home to 37 million people.

Shanxi is a cradle of Chinese civilization, with a written history of more than 3,000 years. The early Chinese emperors Yao, Shun and Yu all established capitals in the southwestern part of Shanxi, which opened the first chapter of Chinese civilization. The province boasts magnificent natural scenery and landscapes with three World Cultural Heritage sites, including Wutai Mountains, one of the four famous Buddhist mountains in China, Pingyao ancient city and the Yungang Grottoes.

Shanxi has 531 national cultural relics, ranking first in the country. There are 120 wooden buildings dating back to before the three co-existing Song (960-1279), Liao (916-1125) and Jin(1115-1234) dynasties, which account for more than 70 percent of the country's total. It is known as the "Museum of Ancient Architectural Art in China". The province has been home to many talented people dating back to thousands years ago, such as the ancient Chinese thinker Xun Zi (Hsun Tsu 313-218 BC) during the Warring States Period, poets of



The Great Wall is pictured on Taihang Mountains in Shanxi province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

the Tang Dynasty (618-907) including Wang Bo, Wang Wei and Wang Zhizhen, and Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127) statesman Sima Guang.

Some of China's world-class cultural symbols are deeply rooted in Shanxi. One example is the Great Wall, which was the most complete defense system for the Chinese military in ancient times. Another is the Yellow River, the mother river of the Chinese nation, which surrounds southwest Shanxi and forms the wonderful Hukou Waterfall in Jixian county. Taihang Mountains is another magnificent natural wonder and landmark in Shanxi. The province has a mild climate with distinct seasons, forests, wetlands, hot springs, and other recreational resources.

The area is rich in natural resources with more than 120 types of minerals. There are more than 270 billion metric tons of coal reserves and its volume of coalbed methane, vanadium and magnesium ore rank first in China.

Shanxi is a paradise for food, especially its noodles and grain. The province has more than 400 kinds of noodles and produces more than 120 types of miscellaneous cereals in seven categories.

The province is also a major pro-

duction base for traditional Chinese medicines. There are 1,788 kinds of TCM materials and 39 kinds of authentic medicinal materials in Shanxi. It is also home to the time-honored alcohol brand Fenjiu, one of the eight famous spirits in China.

Shanxi has rich and diverse folk cultures such as Jinju Opera, the art of Chinese paper-cuttings and wood-cut prints. Enamelware, polished lacquer and clear mud are three cultural treasures in Shanxi.

Thriving Shanxi

We are committed to building a vibrant Shanxi. Entering the new era, Shanxi is aiming to boost high-quality growth, maintain steady and healthy development and build a well-off society.

Shanxi will seize development opportunities under the nation's key policies such as environmental protection and high-quality development of the Yellow River basin.

The province will construct a comprehensive pilot zone to transform its resource-based economy, carry out energy revolution reforms, create a first-class innovation ecosystem and focus on the advancement of high-end emerging industries, such as manufacturing, next-generation

information technology, big data, new energy, new materials, energy conservation, environmental protection, general aviation and biomedicine.

Shanxi is also committed to developing other industries such as cultural tourism and intensive processing of agricultural products. It will also accelerate the sustainable development of traditional industries such as coal, coke, iron and steel.



The province is striving to reform and innovate its development zones, establishing 77 such zones at the provincial level and above.

The area of industrial development zones in Shanxi has reached 2,800 square kilometers, accounting for some 1.8 percent of the province's land. The development zones are becoming a main engine for innovation and opening-up in Shanxi.

Open Shanxi

We are committed to building an

open Shanxi. Shanxi has a business tradition since ancient times and its people have always had an open mindset. In the new era of opening-up to the outside world, Shanxi has tried hard to expand its business circle under the Belt and Road Initiative, boost national strategies such as the synergetic development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the integration of the Yangtze River Delta and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Shanxi will build open platforms such as ports, comprehensive bonded areas and inland ports to further promote opening-up.

Taiyuan is its transport hub along the high-speed railway system, with the China-Europe Central Asia scheduled train services offered. The number of international routes has been on the rise and the throughput of Taiyuan Wusu International Airport has exceeded 14 million passengers annually.

Shanxi is aiming to create a business-friendly environment for investors by speeding up the construction of a digital government, strengthening intellectual property protection, deepening customs clearance reform and providing a "single window" service for international trade.

Optimized structure fuels Shanxi's transformation

By **HU YUYAN**
huyuyan@chinadaily.com.cn

Resource-rich Shanxi province in North China is trying to shake off its dependence on coal by investing in alternative industries for sustainable growth.

One-third of China's coal reserves are located in Shanxi, which used to "power half of the country's light bulbs". Yet decades of dependence on coal has given Shanxi's economy deep-seated structural problems.

Depending on a single resource is risky business for any economy, especially when the resource is non-renewable. Diversification of the economy has become the only way out.

The Shanxi Transition and Comprehensive Reform Demonstration Zone, located in the city of Taiyuan, was established in 2017 as one of the province's significant steps away from a coal-dominated economic structure.

The zone is intended to become an innovation hub for emerging industries such as big data, internet of things, cross-border e-commerce, advanced manufacturing, new materials, energy conservation, new energy vehicles and modern logistics.



Industrial robots work at a new energy vehicle company in Jinzhong, Shanxi province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

The government said it hopes that achievements made in the zone can be repeated across the entire province.

Since its establishment less than three years ago, the zone has introduced 138 projects in emerging sectors, involving a total investment worth 230 billion yuan (\$33 billion). Companies including Tiancheng Electronic Information Technology and Chengong New Energy Technology have settled in the zone.

Bringing in projects is only one step in the process of transforming the local economy.

Quality support services for the businesses involved are equally important. To make life easier for these companies, in 2018 the zone launched an "all-in-one" online platform that can handle 150 administrative procedures, improving efficiency.

Access to the platform is displayed prominently on the front page of the zone's official online

portal. And a professional team has been established to assist companies with the online procedures.

"The all-in-one online platform has brought us great convenience," said Ma Yuefei, a senior executive at Taiyuan Daningtang Pharmaceutical. "What took five to six months before can now be done in only two months."

"The paperwork for environmental impact assessment, quality supervision and other procedures can all be completed online. We no longer need to prepare multiple copies of paperwork for different departments as they can now share one copy online," Ma added.

From January to November last year, the added value of non-coal industries above a designated size in Shanxi grew 6.4 percent year-on-year.

Their contribution to the provincial total was 57.1 percent, 14.2 percentage points higher than that of the coal industry, according to the Shanxi Statistics Bureau.

Between 2016 and 2018, Shanxi province shut down 88 coal mines, phasing out 88.41 million metric tons of excess coal production capacity, the biggest amount of any province nationwide, Xinhua News Agency reported.



Tourist wander along an old street in Pingyao, an ancient county in Jinzhong, Shanxi province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Pingyao's New Year festival making a name for itself internationally

By **YIN RUOWEI**
yinruowei@chinadaily.com.cn

The ancient county of Pingyao in Shanxi province is wowing tourists from home and abroad with an annual cultural event — Pingyao Chinese New Year.

This year's event started on Jan 11 and will last until Feb 9. With the theme of "Our festival — Spring Festival," it will offer 18 themed activities focusing on five elements: beauty, culture, civilization, fashion and happiness.

The county's chief, Shi Yong, said this year's event takes advantage of new media such as short video streaming platform Tik Tok to create a new experience and attracts global audiences.

According to Shi, there will be three shows that should not be missed. First, the opening ceremony on Saturday presented a star-studded gala night and visual magic.

Friday will be the 23rd of the 12th lunar month of 2019, known as minor Chinese New Year, a week ahead of Lunar New Year's Eve. On that day, guests to Pingyao's landmarks are expected to take part in activities portraying Shanxi merchants' spirit that has been passed down the centuries.

Another event will take place on the 15th of the first lunar month, or Lantern Festival, which will fall on Feb 8 this year. It will feature lantern shows, lion dance and stilt

It has established trade relations with more than 180 countries and regions around the world, together with 58 friendship cities and 105 friendly partners.

Beautiful Shanxi

We are committed to building a beautiful Shanxi. To date, Shanxi has made remarkable progress in preserving its ecological rehabilitation of Taihang Mountains, Lyuliang Mountain, the major reaches of the Fenhe and Sanggan rivers, and the Yellow River basin in the fight against climate change.

The forest coverage rate of Shanxi has increased by 0.5 percentage points each year. Meanwhile, significant results have been achieved in energy conservation and emission reduction. The Fenhe River, the mother river in Shanxi, now has better water quality and beautiful scenery. Thousands of white swans come to Shanxi each winter.

Happy Shanxi

We are committed to building a happy Shanxi. More than 80 percent of the fiscal expenditure in Shanxi is used to improve people's well-being, employment, social security, education, medical care and other social undertakings.

The province is accelerating the construction of medical groups and medical centers. The income growth rate of local residents increases faster than its GDP. The number of poverty-stricken people was reduced by 3.27 million, and the incidence of poverty dropped from 13.6 percent to less than 0.1 percent.

In 2020, China is expected to get rid of poverty and achieve a well-off society in an all-round way, which will certainly set an immortal monument in the history.

We will work hard to transform the society and boost high-quality development in a sustainable way. We will realize socialist modernization in sync with the whole country by 2035 and unswervingly carry out the comprehensive reform.

Region partners with Baidu to invest in future

By **ZHANG DANDAN**
zhangdandan@chinadaily.com.cn

By joining hands with Chinese internet giant Baidu, Shanxi province is committed to developing the artificial intelligence data annotation industry.

The attempt aims to foster a new spot for its economic development, promote industrial upgrading and improve urban management and technical innovation.

As an important segment of the artificial intelligence industry, the data annotation sector is projected to have a market value of 30 billion yuan (\$4.29 billion) in China by 2022, industry insiders said.

According to a strategic cooperation framework agreement signed by the Shanxi government and Baidu in 2017, the two would use Shanxi's favorable policy environment and industrial foundation and Baidu's expertise in AI, big data

and cloud computing to collaborate in the data annotation industry.

"To build a digital Shanxi is an inevitable choice and the only way of promoting the modernization of the province's governance system and capacity," said Lou Yangsheng, Party secretary of the province.

The partnership between Shanxi and Baidu is expected to contribute to the province's digitalization as well as the creation of a digital government, Lou added.

In 2018, the two parties established an industrial base of AI data annotations in Taiyuan, capital of Shanxi province.

Nationally, this data annotations industry base is the largest in scale and the strongest in operation capacity, according to the local government.

The industrial base also provides key support for Baidu to help Shanxi realize its transformation into a digital economy in the future.

32 enterprises

Number of companies that have been registered with the industrial base of artificial intelligence data annotations in Taiyuan

So far, the industrial base has had offices measuring 10,000 square meters and 32 enterprises registered.

By offering data processing services in fields including unmanned vehicles, voice technology, facial recognition, picture and ground mapping, companies in the industrial base have so far generated nearly 100 million yuan in business revenue, according to the local government.

With the help of an intelligent management background system, the industrial base has advantages

in data processing efficiency and accuracy.

As a front-runner in terms of data processing volume nationwide, the base has an accuracy rate of 99.95 percent, according to the local government.

The industrial base has created jobs, fueled local industrial transformation and promoted standardization of the data service industry, said a senior executive at the industrial base.

The base will better provide data and technical support for Shanxi's transformation into a digital economy, he said.

The industrial base is boosting collaboration with relevant government bodies and enterprises to empower the province in fields such as digital government, public security big data, intelligent transport and intelligent medical care.

Li Yu contributed to this story.