



Delegates at the fourth Jinyang Lake Digital Economy Development Summit, which opened on Aug 23. SHI XIAOBO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Potential of Shanxi's digital future in focus

About 1,000 people from ministries, universities and enterprises meet in Taiyuan to discuss province's impressive achievements and plans



By YUAN SHENGGAO

Experts and industry insiders from the digital sector throughout the country gathered at a summit in Shanxi last week, sharing insights into promoting digital-empowered transformation in the province.

The three-day event — the fourth Jinyang Lake Digital Economy Development Summit — opened in Taiyuan, Shanxi province, on Aug 23.

Some 1,000 participants, including representatives from national ministries and provincial government departments, industry associations, universities, research institutes and enterprises, attended.

The event, evolving from the Jinyang Lake Summit on the Integrated Circuits and Software Industries in 2020, is now one of the highest-level industrial events in Shanxi.

The theme of this year's summit was "empowering transformation with digitalization, creating a smart and better life together".

Liu Yong, deputy chief of the Shanxi Department of Industry and Information Technology, said the summit aims to build a national exchange platform for digital economic development and accelerate the comprehensive development of the digital economy in Shanxi.

The summit took place online and offline at the Jinyang Lake Interna-

tional Conference Center with activities such as the opening ceremony, a keynote forum, 16 subforums, a digital economy exhibition and related industry events.

The digital economy exhibition was an important part of the event. It exhibited the core sectors of the digital economy; digitalization for characteristic towns with specialty industries; the integration of the coal industry and digital technology; industrial internet applications and the supply of basic information technology services.

During the event, the operation of several key research facilities and industrial establishments were announced. These included an open innovation platform for data processing, computing and algorithm for the artificial intelligence industry; the first provincial center for the promotion of digital-empowered transformation; the Shanxi Comprehensive Service Platform for the Industrial Internet; and several demonstration zones for the digital economy.

Many attendees praised the stronger influence of the event. Zhou Yue, general manager of Yundee Intelligent Science and Technology, is a frequent participant in the event.

He said this year's summit was larger in scale compared with previous sessions and was more professional and focused on market segmentations.

"More new delegates are coming to this year's summit, showing its increasing recognition," Zhou said.

He added that he is also impressed by the latest development in digitalization in Shanxi.

"Digitalization is playing a growing role in upgrading Shanxi's tradi-

tional industries, especially the energy sector, and the results are encouraging," Zhou said.

Many experts and industry insiders noted that Shanxi has been implementing an energy revolution campaign. It aims to upgrade the traditional coal industry toward the direction of cleaner, more efficient, smarter and safer operations, and accelerate the development of new options like hydrogen, coal-bed methane, solar and wind power.

They agreed that digitalization is a feasible approach to achieving the targets of energy revolution.

Sun Hongbin, vice-president of the Taiyuan University of Technology, advocated the establishment of "the internet of energy" for sharing technologies, information and other resources among the various sectors and stakeholders of the industry.

Liu Feng, vice-chairman of the China National Coal Association, highlighted the role of digitalization in developing intelligent coal mining operations.

"Carbon peak and neutrality are now the new requirements for China's sustainable development," Sun said. "But when it comes to the coal industry, it's not simply a practice to reduce output."

He added that this is true especially in Shanxi, which is shouldering the mission to ensure coal supply throughout the country and safeguarding national energy security.

"Shanxi's practice shows that emissions reduction can be made possible through digitalizing coal mines, power plants and other coal-related facilities, without sacrificing output and supplying capacity," Sun said.

Latest statistics show that Shanxi has developed 48 intelligent coal mines and 1,217 intelligent mining shafts.

As a result of industrial upgrades driven by digital, intelligent and environmentally friendly technologies, about 80 percent of Shanxi's coal output in 2022 — which stood at 1.3 billion metric tons — was produced by advanced facilities with cleaner, safer and more efficient operations.

Many delegates to the summit also suggested Shanxi improve its "computing power" and digital infrastructure to drive digitalization across all socioeconomic fronts.

According to industry insiders, computing power is the processing power of a computer or computing centers. Computing power is associated with data and algorithms. The three constitute the basic elements that promote the development of AI and other digital technologies and applications.

Liu Qingliang, a representative from Huawei Technologies, said that "the development of AI and other digital applications requires large computing power, which is backed by a strong cluster of digital infrastructure like high-speed computers, data storage and processing facilities, and a powerful telecommunication network".

Chen Shiyi, a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said that computing power is playing an increasingly important role in industrial modernization.

He explained that the new round of industrial modernization is empowered by digitalization featuring the combination of computing power, AI and big data.

Experts also praised Shanxi for its development of computing power-related infrastructure.

Latest statistics show that Shanxi is now among the top 10 nationwide in terms of computing power, with more than 827,800 computers in its various data centers.

Currently, the province has built more than 85,000 5G base stations, fulfilling its five-year target three years in advance.

Yao Yi contributed to this story.

Manufacturers embrace upgrading to fuel growth

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Driven by an industrial transformation campaign, Shanxi's manufacturing sectors maintained rapid growth during the first half of this year, according to officials at the Shanxi Department of Industry and Information Technology.

The sectors reported a year-on-year increase of 8.3 percent in terms of incremental output value in the first six months, 4.4 percentage points higher than the average of all industrial enterprises above designated size — those with annual sales revenue of more than 20 million yuan (\$2.74 million).

Zhang Zhanxiang, deputy chief of the department, said the rapid growth can be attributed to Shanxi's new industrial transformation campaign, which focuses on upgrading its manufacturing industries toward the directions of low-carbon and smart operation.

The manufacturing sector relating to environmental protection and energy conservation reported a 20.4 percent year-on-year increase in terms of incremental output value in the first six months, among the highest of all industries, according to Zhang.

He noted that this is the result of a provincial initiative to promote low-carbon operations, which has generated great demand for environmental protection-related equipment and solutions.

"The demand for resource-recycling solutions is impressive," Zhang said. "Now the ratio of recycled use of all kinds of waste has reached 75.3 percent provincewide

and there is still room for growth."

He said that the growth potential will come from Shanxi's renewed efforts in green development, which will highlight the economized use of resources, recycling of waste and cleaner production.

"Shanxi is continuing to implement low-carbon upgrades for the manufacturing industry and plans to develop more green industry parks," Zhang said. "So our outlook on the environmental protection-related manufacturing sector is optimistic."

In terms of intelligent manufacturing, the provincial department of industry and information technology announced a new batch of 63 demonstration intelligent manufacturers for this year in July.

Zhang said Shanxi is now home to 16 national-level and 284 provincial-level demonstration enterprises for intelligent manufacturing.

Another reason for the manufacturing industry's growth is that it is winning support from local financial institutions for their long-term development.

Statistics show that the amount of long and medium-term loans to manufacturers by local banks increased 4.9 percent year-on-year in the first half of this year. The loans now account for 56.4 percent of total lending, showing the lenders' optimism about the industry's future development, according to Ma Shuangxi, deputy chief of the Shanxi Commission of Development and Reform.

Jin Shuaini contributed to this story.



Workers assemble new energy vehicles at Geely's plant in Jinzhong. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Fenjiu delivering a taste of China to South Africa

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Residents in South Africa, as well as attendees to the 2023 BRICS Summit, were offered an opportunity last month to taste the white liquor varieties produced by famous Shanxi distillery company Xinghuacun Fenjiu and experience the culture associated with the brand.

BRICS refers to the five countries of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, representing emerging markets in the world. The summit was held in South Africa from Aug 22-24.

According to Yan Yuliang, general manager of Newrgy Trading, the dealer for Xinghuacun Fenjiu in South Africa, Fenjiu-branded white liquor was selected by the South African Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the designated beverage for banquets during the event. The agreement between Newrgy and the ministry was signed on Aug 18.

Xinghuacun Fenjiu was officially launched in the South African market on Aug 5. On that day, Newrgy hosted a launch ceremony in the city of Johannesburg, inviting local residents, business representatives and officials to a product release and liquor-tasting party.

The tasting event gave South African guests an experience somewhat different from what they would

have with the liquor varieties found in local markets.

But more interestingly, according to Xinghuacun Fenjiu and its dealer representatives, guests at the event were pleased to have a chance to taste something that is a part of Chinese intangible cultural heritage.

The ancient techniques for making Fenjiu liquor were included in the national list of intangible cultural heritage in 2006.

In the Old Fenjiu Distillery, a museum owned by the company, visitors can still tap into the ancient techniques that have helped Xinghuacun's liquor brands retain their quality and popularity for hundreds of years. These techniques, still in use for making limited editions, include dry mixing of ingredients and yeast; fermenting in casks buried in the earth for temperature stabilization; and double distilling for improved purity.

A Fenjiu product that helped it first win international fame was from the old distillery. It won a gold prize at the Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, the United States, in 1915. After garnering attention from international buyers at the event, the company began exporting in large volumes, with its brands including Fenjiu and Zhuyeqing becoming popular in overseas markets.



A South African foreign ministry official receives Xinghuacun Fenjiu liquor from the brand's dealer representatives.

WEN ZHAOYAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Conference highlights city's wellness tourism success

By YUAN SHENGGAO

As a famed wellness tourism destination in Shanxi province, the city of Jincheng welcomed more than 300 guests — officials, experts and industry insiders — from across the country, to the 2023 China National Conference on Wellness Industrial Development beginning on Aug 25.

The delegates shared their insights into the industry's latest development trends and offered proposals for the sector's growth in Jincheng, Shanxi and the rest of the country.

Wellness tourism is an emerging sector in the wider picture of traveling. It features travels associated with the pursuit of enhancing one's personal well-being. Wellness trips include a variety of activities such as thermal springs, spas, exercise, recreation, relaxation and recuperation.

He Baoxiang, vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, was among the attendees.

In his speech delivered at the event's opening ceremony, he said the wellness sector is an important part of the tourism industry and has a unique role to play in the country's Healthy China initiative.

He said he is glad to see that Shanxi and Jincheng have witnessed rapid and sustained development in the industry and their practices are set-



A show during the event's opening ceremony illustrates wellness industry resources in Jincheng. WANG LIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

ting examples for the sector's growth nationwide.

Also at the opening ceremony, Lan Fo'an, secretary of the Shanxi Committee of the Communist Party of China, highlighted the province's unique resources for developing a wellness industry, which include its improving environment, pleasant weather, long history, brilliant culture, healthy food and rich forms of folk traditions.

As the province is adjacent to Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei province, Lan said Shanxi is expected to become the

"backyard garden" for the three regions, offering their residents rich options for sightseeing, recreation, relaxation and recuperation.

He also hopes businesses from across the country will invest in Shanxi's wellness industry and he made assurances that there should be good returns considering Shanxi's unique resources and its improving business environment.

Wang Zhen, secretary of the Jincheng CPC committee, introduced the development model of the industry in Jincheng. He said that those

who come to the city for a wellness experience can select a suitable one from a range of options — from senior wellness, medical-aided recuperation, cultural cultivation and exercise to rural life experience.

Xue Mingyao, mayor of Jincheng, talked about the development potential of the industry in the city.

As Jincheng is located in the southern part of the Taihang Mountains, it features forest coverage of more than 42 percent. This has won it fame as a "natural oxygen bar". The rich content of oxygen makes it an ideal destination for recuperation tours.

Building on the beneficial conditions, Xue said Jincheng is aiming to develop itself into a high-level wellness destination with both a national and international reputation.

He said the city is now the permanent host city of the China National Conference on Wellness Industrial Development. It was also recognized by the International Federation on Ageing as China's first pilot city for the wellness industry.

The mayor predicted that the city's tourism industry, with the wellness sector at its core, is expected to develop into a cluster with annual revenue surpassing 100 billion yuan (\$13.71 billion) by 2025.

Zhang Jufeng and Li Jiyi contributed to this story.