

CIFTIS visitors wowed by exhibitors' offerings

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Twenty companies representing the development of Shanxi's service sectors displayed themselves at the recent China International Fair for Trade in Services, garnering attention from both Chinese and international visitors.

The five-day event, also known as CIFTIS, concluded in the Chinese capital of Beijing on Wednesday. Statistics released by the fair's organizers show that it attracted more than 2,400 companies to exhibit their products and services offline, with their booths covering a total area of 155,000 square meters.

The exhibitors from Shanxi were from six sectors — cultural tourism; medical and healthcare services; supply chain and commercial services; engineering services; services relating to communications, computing and information technology; and education.

The Shanxi pavilion, which housed 20 exhibitors, was one of the most eye-catching areas at this year's CIFTIS due to its novel design that combined the elements of modern sciences and traditional Shanxi architecture.

And the exhibits themselves were both modern and traditional, with folk artwork like paper-cuts from the county of Guangling and *duijin* embroidery from Changzhi city displayed side by side with modern exhibits like robots made by local producer Jiashida.

Shanxi-based Mingkong Yinghua, a company developing software and platforms for the culture and tourism sectors, was a regular exhibitor at the event. But it has brought new exhibits to every session of the fair.

According to an executive of the company, Mingkong Yinghua's offering at the 2021 CIFTIS was a platform for the immersive show of intangible cultural heritage. And this year, it brought something totally different — an artificial intelligence-aided program code generating platform that allows for software development by ordinary people without any knowledge of programming.

The executive added that CIFTIS has been an effective platform for exchanging and generating new ideas.

"We are here to communicate with our old friends and find new partners," he said. "But more

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Zhao Jinyang, an executive of Zhilin Information Technology

importantly, we view it as a window to see how we can identify new development opportunities by learning from the new ideas of our friends.”

Zhao Jinyang, an executive of Zhilin Information Technology responsible for exhibition at this CIFTIS event, held a similar view. Zhilin is a developer of AI-based platforms for assisting teaching and examinations in middle schools.

"We highlight interactions with our clients and other partners in developing systems suiting their demands, so we have traveled extensively for networking," Zhao said. "And CIFTIS is a better venue for communication as it has gathered everybody here.”

He added that CIFTIS is a world-class showcase, through which local companies can display their competitive products and services to the whole world. Also on display was Pinshenghuo Culture, a Shanxi-based company that offers research and design services for wellness tourism operators in Shanxi.

Wellness tourism is an emerging sector featuring travel associated with the pursuit of enhancing one's personal well-being. It covers activities such as thermal springs, spas, exercise, recreation, relaxation and recuperation.

Zhang Jing, general manager of the company, said that when offering design services for the sector, it highlights the use of digital, intelligent technologies for creating cozy, relaxing and pleasant experiences for tourists.

Yan Jie and An Xiaoyi contributed to this story.



The Shanxi pavilion at the 2023 CIFTIS attracts visitor with its eye-catching design. RUAN YANG / FOR CHINA DAILY



Jin Xiangjun, governor of Shanxi, delivers a welcome speech to the Taiwan entrepreneurs and youth representatives visiting the province on Aug 29. LI ZHAOMIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Shanxi hosts key exchange for Taiwan merchants and youth

Delegation from island province tour cities to seek out opportunities in business and culture

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The North China province of Shanxi welcomed a large group of corporate visitors and youth representatives from Taiwan province in late August, to an event for business and cultural exchanges.

The event called the Shanxi Trip of Taiwan Merchants and Youth began in Taiyuan, the provincial capital of Shanxi, on Aug 28. Organizers said this was the largest-scale exchange event between Shanxi and Taiwan provinces in recent years. The trip's members were warmly welcomed by high-ranking officials in Shanxi as well as local businesspeople and residents.

The organizers added that this event covered multiple fields of cooperation, including culture, trade, investment, science, technology and education.

A welcoming ceremony was held at the Xiaohe International Convention Center in Taiyuan on Aug 29.

Song Tao, chief of the Taiwan Work Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, delivered a welcome speech at the ceremony.

He said Shanxi province has played an important role in cross-strait exchanges because of its strong cultural and commercial links with Taiwan.

Shanxi is regarded as one of the cradles of Chinese civilization and culture. It is said to be the birthplace of the Red Emperor, a legendary figure some 5,000 years ago, who is considered as one of the common ancestors of the Chinese people.

In the city of Gaoping, the home-



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Jin Xiangjun, governor of Shanxi

town of the Red Emperor, there is a grand ceremony to pay homage to him every spring, which is attended by people from the Chinese mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, as well as overseas Chinese.

Song said that CPC Central Committee's Taiwan Work Office and the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council support people in Shanxi and Taiwan to strengthen their cultural and business exchanges. He hopes more Taiwan

people, especially young entrepreneurs and professionals, can work, do business or live in Shanxi.

He added that both the central government and the Shanxi government will continue to improve policies toward Taiwan businesses, helping them benefit from the growth of the mainland and Shanxi as well.

At the welcoming ceremony, Jin Xiangjun, governor of Shanxi, introduced the recent development and business opportunities in Shanxi to the Taiwan representatives.

He said that Shanxi is promoting high-quality economic development by implementing a transformation strategy. It aims to upgrade traditional industries like coal mining toward cleaner and more efficient operations and foster emerging industries as new growth engines.

"We hope more Taiwan people work, study and start businesses in Shanxi," Jin said. "And we expect this tour can help our guests to better understand Shanxi and find opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation.”

Lai Cheng-i, chairman of the General Chamber of Commerce of Taiwan, said: "Shanxi is an ideal destination for investment considering its high-quality development in many sectors.”

He cited sectors with great potential for cooperation, which include agriculture, healthcare, advanced manufacturing and advanced technologies.

Lai's comments were echoed by many representatives from Taiwan. Lin Chun-che is the chairman of a Taiwan-based medical company that has a number of

branches on the Chinese mainland.

"Shanxi has a huge market and good business environment, which are the fundamentals for the success of investments," Lin said. He added that he will strengthen collaboration with Shanxi's partners in multiple fields that include hospital operations, medicine production and medical equipment, as well as research and development in technologies.

The medical industry, especially traditional Chinese medicine, is one of the strategic emerging sectors in Shanxi. Local statistics show that the province is host to more than 1,700 types of medical herbs that can be used to produce TCM products.

Li Honglan, executive vice-chairwoman of the Association of Taiwan Investment Enterprises on the Mainland, proposed the integration of Taiwan's technological advantages and Shanxi's medical resources to cultivate a stronger medical industry in Shanxi.

At a seminar for exchanges between Taiwan and Shanxi entrepreneurs, Tang Zhiping, vice-governor of Shanxi, also expressed his expectation for deepened cooperation in the medical sector and other industries that have advantages for both partners.

"Shanxi will strive to create a top-class business environment for companies from Taiwan," Tang said.

The five-day event, which concluded on Sept 1, covered such cities as Taiyuan, Xinzhou, Shouzhou and Jinzhong.

Deng Weiqiang and Zhang Jufeng contributed to this story.

Green efforts yield picturesque results

By YUAN SHENGGAO

In late August when the summer vacation was coming to an end, the Zhangze Lake National Wetland Park in the southeast Shanxi city of Changzhi was still filled with tourists.

Many of them were photography enthusiasts, in addition to ordinary sightseers.

What attracted them were hectares of the blooming lotus flowers and flocks of water fowl on the lake.

Lyu Qingshan, a local photographer, said that things were very different from more than a decade ago.

"In the past, the vicinity of the lake was a vast expanse of wild marsh," Lyu said. "Nobody wanted to go near because of the stench of the lake's water.”

He explained that the lake was polluted by untreated sewage from the city of Changzhi. "According to local media reports, the water quality of Zhangze was kept in Class V or below for many years.”

In China, the water quality is divid-

ed into five classes, with Class V being the lowest standard for agricultural and industrial use. That below Class V marks a high level of pollution.

Recent reports from the local monitoring stations showed that the water quality has been stabilized around Class III in recent years. The latest survey also indicated the number of bird species has reached nearly 170.

The improvement of the lake is a result of the Shanxi authorities' relentless efforts in curbing pollution and promoting the recovery of the ecological environment throughout the province.

The Yellow River and its branches in Shanxi, as well as other rivers flowing eastward, are the major targets of this decadeslong environmental improvement campaign.

The latest survey shows that of the 94 surface water sections under national supervision in the province, 81 had achieved water quality better than Class III during the first half of this year, accounting for 86.2 percent

of the total, an increase of 8.8 percentage points compared to the same period of last year.

There were also significant achievements in air pollution control. In the first half of this year, the average concentration of PM2.5 — particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less — sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and ozone dropped by 2.4 percent, 77 percent, 6.2 percent and 5.1 percent from the same period of last year. Good and excellent air quality had been reported for 64.5 percent of the days during the period.

But Shanxi won't rest on its laurels. Local authorities said they will continue to work on improving the environment.

According to Zhao Liang, an official at the Shanxi Department of Ecology and Environment, about 280 projects are on the province's task list for this year's environmental protection, with investment totaling 104.6 billion yuan (\$14.31 billion).

These projects include emission-



Rural Shanxi has a better appearance thanks to efforts in environmental protection and farmland improvement. YANG JIANFENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

reducing upgrades of steelmaking, coking and cement-making plants; construction of sewage treatment facilities in industrial areas, and projects for sewage treatment and soil improvement in the rural regions.

The province is also promoting the

use of digital technologies to aid environmental monitoring and environment-related law enforcement.

Devices like cameras, drones, robots and senses, which are connected through 5G networks, are widely used in environmental

monitoring, substantially increasing the accuracy and efficiency of the environmental protection work, according to Zhao.

Cheng Guoyuan contributed to this story.