

Zhanjiang eyes development of green industries

Industrialization, eco-friendliness and digitalization processes highlighted

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Zhanjiang-based Zhongke (Guangdong) Refinery and Petrochemical reported an output value of 80.6 billion yuan (\$12.8 billion) in 2021, bringing the total output value of the local green petrochemical industrial cluster to over 100 billion yuan — the first industrial cluster in the city to reach the milestone.

Zhanjiang, a port city in the southern province of Guangdong, boasts the Donghai Island Petrochemical Industrial Park and major players in the petrochemical sector including China National Offshore Oil Corporation and the BASF Group.

As a core area for the petrochemical industry, as highlighted in Guangdong's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25), Zhanjiang has been working to perfect its petrochemical industrial chain.

This year, Zhanjiang will put in place a new mechanism for managing industrial chains and clusters. Known as the "chain chief system", the new mechanism is expected to help complete, extend and strengthen industrial chains and advance the development of sectors along the chain.

In recent years, Zhanjiang has been ramping up efforts to build a modern industrial system. It is currently home to four industrial projects involving an investment of over \$10 billion each. A slew of Fortune 500 companies, such as Dow and Air Liquide, have set up operations in the city.



Zhanjiang, a coastal city in Guangdong province, boasts an appealing environment. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

"Zhanjiang is making every effort to grow into a provincial sub-center and has expedited the building of a modern coastal economic belt," Liu Hongbing, Party secretary of Zhanjiang, told local media.

"Based on Zhanjiang's actualities, we have put forward the concept of a deep integration of the city's industrialization, ecological development and digitalization processes," Liu said.

According to a government work report delivered by Zhanjiang Mayor Zeng Jinze on Jan 9, the city has set its GDP growth target for 2022 at about 6.5 percent.



Engineers use digital technologies to monitor operations at Zhongke (Guangdong) Refinery and Petrochemical project in Zhanjiang. ZHANG FENGFENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Port-related industries, the digital economy, modern services and infrastructure are among the priorities for Zhanjiang this year, according to the report.

The city will support Baosteel Zhanjiang Iron and Steel in getting its hydrogen-based shaft furnace project off the ground. Construction on the BASF integration project and the Lianjiang clean energy project has commenced.

In 2022, the city will step up the development of industrial clusters in five advanced manufacturing sectors, which are green steel, green petrochemicals, high-end

papermaking, green energy and new energy vehicles.

On the digital front, Zhanjiang will push forward the construction of the West Guangdong digital valley, a big data industrial park, and create an enabling environment for new industries including the industrial internet and the internet of things.

The city plans to support 70 manufacturing companies in going digital this year, according to the local government.

To boost the modern services sector, Zhanjiang will push forward the construction of tourist attractions such as the Mazhang Mangrove theme park and the Capital of Seafood industrial complex.

Support will also be directed to the modern finance sector, with green finance, digital finance and cross-border finance among the areas highlighted in the city's development plans for 2022.

Construction on a number of port infrastructure projects will kick off in 2022. They include a channel project in the Donghai Island port area and supporting wharves for the BASF integration project.

Zhanjiang made steady progress in the aspects in 2021, when the city's industrial parks generated a combined output value of 220 billion yuan, according to local officials.

In 2021, the first phase of a Zhongke (Guangdong) Refinery and Petrochemical integration project reached its design capacity, and the third blast furnace system at the Baosteel Zhanjiang Iron and Steel went into operation.

Last year, the city saw the addition of 3,627 5G base stations, extending the 5G network to every town in the city.

Business environment ranks among top 100

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Zhanjiang entered the list of China's top 100 cities in terms of business environment in 2021. It was the only one from western Guangdong province that made the top 100, according to a recent report.

The report on cities' competitiveness, which was jointly released by the National Academy of Economic Strategy at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and China Social Sciences Press in Beijing, reviewed the business environment of 291 Chinese cities.

Corporate executives gave Zhanjiang's business environment the thumbs-up. "In such a business-friendly environment, we have full faith in our company's development prospects," Zhu Shiyong, deputy general manager of an environmental tech company, told Zhanjiang Daily.

"With our Phase Two and Phase Three projects being planned, we will scale up our production and introduce more businesses to Zhanjiang," Zhu said.

"The city government has opened a green channel for project approval of key enterprises. Its service quality and efficiency are impressive and can rival that of the Pearl River Delta region," he said.

The city government designated 2021 as the Year of Business Environment Improvement in February last year to streamline administrative procedures, and reduce costs and time spent dealing with government agencies. All the 70 goals set in them were fulfilled in the year.

To achieve these goals, the authorities rolled out a series of encouraging policies and took action to promote an across-the-board upswing in the business environment.

The business environment optimization drive has spurred the growth of new businesses and injected fresh vigor into the local economy. Government data show that the number of new market entities mushroomed to some 56,000 in the first 11 months of 2021, increasing 5.18 percent year-on-year.

One-stop services offered by the city government have benefited entrepreneurs from home and abroad. For instance, a new business registration with the city's administration for market regulation can be completed in half a workday.

The government of Leizhou, a city under the administration of Zhanjiang,

Its (the Zhanjiang government's) service quality and efficiency are impressive and can rival that of the Pearl River Delta region."

Zhu Shiyong, deputy general manager of an environmental tech company in Zhanjiang

ang, has delegated 40 approval powers from its departments of development and reform, natural resources, housing and development, and water to the Leizhou Industrial Park's administrative committee.

Che Zhenchi, founder of a tech company that is the first business to move to the park, said it took just 45 days to complete the process from bidding for the land to starting construction.

Such high efficiency has boosted investors' faith. In 2021, representatives of more than 100 businesses were attracted to Leizhou to explore investment opportunities. A group of big companies including Guangzhou Yuexiu Holdings and Overseas Chinese Town Holdings have since established a presence in the city.

Big data and internet technologies have contributed to the improved efficiency in administrative services. Applicants can make online appointments for all the administrative approval and registration items that need to be handled onsite. Some 97 percent of the administrative approval items can be dealt with online.

"Thanks to the help and efficient services of Mazhang district (of Zhanjiang), we got our tax rebate worth 214.35 million yuan (\$33.9 million) in our bank account in less than three days, which greatly relieved us from pressure," said a financial executive at Zhanjiang Evergreen Aquatic Product Science and Technology.

"Operating in such a prime business environment, businesses feel more assured of their development," the executive said.

Zhanjiang Mayor Zeng Jinze said in his government work report in January that the city will continue to improve its business environment, further reforms and give businesses a new lease on life.

Coastal protection building 'city of mangroves'

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Home to more than a third of all China's mangrove forests, Zhanjiang, located on the southernmost peninsula of the Chinese mainland, is aiming to become "a city of mangroves", according to the local government.

Mangroves are shrubs or trees that grow in shallow coastal waters.

There are almost 10,000 hectares of mangroves in Zhanjiang, accounting for 33 percent of China and 78 percent of Guangdong province.

Bucking the global trend of mangrove decline, in recent years the Zhanjiang government has added an extra 2,000 hectares of mangroves to its coastline, a fact widely recognized by international bodies that work for their protection.

The mangroves in Zhanjiang are home to a great deal of biodiversity, with 235 species of birds recorded there and 33 species listed as key protected wild animals.

The Zhanjiang Mangrove National Nature Reserve is the biggest single mangrove forest in China, and is not only home to flocks of migratory birds year-round, but is also a paradise for fish, shrimp, crab and shellfish.

Mangroves have come to symbolize the city of Zhanjiang, and so the government has gone to great lengths to protect, preserve and



Egrets fly over mangrove forests in Zhanjiang.

LIU JICHENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

grow its mangrove forests so as to truly become "a city of mangroves". This desire was reaffirmed on Dec 30, 2021, during a government meeting held to discuss future action to protect, restore and make even better use of the forests.

Liu Hongbing, Party secretary of Zhanjiang, said the city should fully tap into the ecological advantages of mangroves, strengthen protection efforts and create new business models around them.

Early last year, an expanse of mangrove swamp in the city became the foundation for China's first blue carbon credit project, the first of its kind successfully developed and registered in China.

The city is working on ocean car-

bon sink accounting and a pilot study of carbon sink budgeting, aiming to develop the first provincial-level "Zhanjiang standards" of mangrove carbon sink accounting and will include the city's mangrove carbon sink in Guangdong's voluntary emission reduction program.

Through making full use of the mangrove resources, the local economy will be boosted in forms such as ecological tourism, the carbon sink economy and fish farming, Liu said.

Liao Baowen, head of a mangrove research center, said that building "a city of mangroves" will have an effective demonstration effect in the protection, restoration and util-

ization of mangroves across the country and worldwide.

The research center hopes to strengthen cooperation with the city government in mangrove protection and continue to play an important role in the ecological restoration and monitoring of mangroves.

Apart from mangrove protection, Zhanjiang has made notable progress in improving the local environment in general and maintaining sustainable development, officials said.

According to data from the city's environmental protection bureau, the city kept its air quality ahead of other cities in Guangdong. Ninety-eight percent of all days in 2021 met the requirements of the Air Quality Index, up 1.7 percent year-on-year.

The annual average concentration of six major pollutants — PM2.5, PM10, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and ozone remained above standard.

As a harbor city, Zhanjiang attaches great importance to the quality of its coastal waters, adhering to the overall action of pollution prevention and control in both land and coastal areas.

The concentration of main pollutants in Zhanjiang Bay dropped from 2020, according to the data. Jinsha Bay, a famous attraction in the city, is rated as one of the 10 most popular and beautiful beaches in Guangdong province.

NPC deputies hail strong support of govt work report

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Deputies from Zhanjiang to the National People's Congress hailed this year's Government Work Report, delivered at the opening of the fifth session of the 13th NPC on Saturday, as strong support for the city's growth.

Ning Ling, an NPC deputy, who serves as vice-president of Guangdong Ocean University, said that compared with that of previous years, this year's report delivers stronger policy support and is more encouraging to livelihood projects.

He expected Zhanjiang's future to be more promising in four aspects reflected in the report.

Increasing financial aid from the central government to local regions will boost Zhanjiang's high-quality development. Tax reductions for small and micro-businesses will benefit entrepreneurs in the city. The country's consistency in mac-

roeconomic policies and balanced development among various regions are conducive to Zhanjiang's enhanced reforms and opening-up. The report called for growing investment in scientific and technological research and innovation activities, which will boost improvements to innovation platforms in the city, he said.

Liu Xiaoquan, an NPC deputy from a village in Zhanjiang, said she is impressed at the high frequency that the issues of agriculture and villages, rural vitalization and improvement in people's life quality are mentioned in the report.

She said it is encouraging for her to learn from the report that the government will continue improving public services and addressing the public's common concerns closely related to their life quality.

"The proposal that I've brought to the meeting focuses on address-

ing the weakness in rural vitalization," she said, adding she would contribute her opinions on such issues as increasing financial aid for rural vitalization in less developed areas, enhancing fire safety in rural areas, and supporting the addition of an irrigation project to Guangdong province's water resources allocation program in the Beibu Bay Rim.

Wu Xiwei, an NPC deputy and executive director of Zhongke (Guangdong) Refinery and Petrochemical Project, said that as a deputy from the petrochemicals front, he felt the significance that the central government has attached to bolstering State-owned enterprises and growing the strength of the petrochemicals industry.

"That signals the direction for our petrochemicals industry's future and provides guidance for its development, thus boosting our faith and resolution in immersing

ourselves in the energy sector and creating world-leading businesses," he said.

Petrochemicals is one of the fields that are key to realizing the country's goals of carbon peaking and neutrality, Wu said. "We will conduct research on energy efficiency from the perspective of our company's development in the long run and introduce state-of-the-art energy-efficient technologies and equipment to our new projects."

Lin Shuixi, an NPC deputy and board chairman of sugar maker Jinling Group, said it strikes him most that the report included various measures to spur the growth of the real economy, in response to increasing risks and challenges in the current era.

The report provides businesses with timely relief from their development pressure and difficulties, which will bring the market entities new life, he said.