

Left: Mining equipment installed in Qinshui county extracts coalbed gas, a kind of clean energy resource. KONG LEI / FOR CHINA DAILY
Right: A huge solar farm in the county of Tianzhen in northern Shanxi. TIAN ZHONG / FOR CHINA DAILY



Superthin steel foil rolls off the production line at Taiyuan Iron and Steel Group. SUN RONGXIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Tech gains in Shanxi set pace for steady future



A worker checks product quality at Gaoke Huaxing Electronic Technology, a high-tech company in Changzhi. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Shanxi maintained sustainable socioeconomic development in 2024 and is expected to sustain this momentum this year, said a government work report during the third session of the 14th Shanxi Provincial People's Congress that concluded in Taiyuan city on Jan 21.

The government work report was delivered by Shanxi Governor Jin Xiangjun on Jan 17, the opening day of the conference.

The report said that Shanxi had made all-around achievements in the green energy industry, energy industry transformation, the digital economy and social welfare.

The report said the transaction volume of Shanxi's green electricity — generated from green energy resources like wind, solar and hydraulic power — reached 7.66 billion kilowatt-hours in 2024. The province is the largest supplier of green electricity to the country.

The digital economy's progress was marked by the number of Shanxi's 5G base stations reaching 108,000 last year and the fact that its comprehensive computing power index was among the top nationwide, according to the report.

The booming digital economy has helped to advance Shanxi's energy industry transformation. It features developing new energy resources and upgrading traditional coal mining toward smarter, safer and more environmentally friendly operations. The report said that Shanxi now has a total of 268 smart coal mines, ranking it first nationwide.

In the area of social welfare, Shanxi became the first provincial-level region in China in 2024 to subsidize all nonprofit child care institutions that offer services to children under the age of 3.

Looking to 2025, the government work report projected a year-on-year GDP increase of about 5 percent, a rise of more than 6 percent in fixed asset investment, and 5 percent growth in the retail of social consumer goods. It also expected the installation capacity of green electricity to account for more than 50 percent of Shanxi's total power generation capacity this year.

In the report, Governor Jin highlighted promoting high-quality growth and advancing Shanxi's economic transformation through fostering new quality productive forces.

Shanxi's economic transformation features the cultivation of emerging industries and upgrading traditional industries like coal mining via high technology and the digital economy. In this process, innovation is crucial.

In 2024, Shanxi's ranking in innovation capacity increased five places in a national assessment, according

to the work report.

An example is that Taiyuan Heavy Industry Transit Equipment was named in the latest Global Lighthouse Network list revealed by the World Economic Forum on Oct 8, becoming the world's first lighthouse factory in the rail equipment industry.

The Global Lighthouse Network initiative, put forward by the WEF and McKinsey & Company, represents the pinnacle of intelligent manufacturing and digitization in today's global manufacturing sector.

Taiyuan Heavy Industry Transit Equipment is a comprehensive research and development and manufacturing base for wheels, axles, gearboxes and wheel sets for rail transit. By advancing intelligent development, the company has garnered accolades at home and abroad.

As an industry trailblazer, the company has integrated cutting-edge technologies into production, outlining a blueprint for artificial intelligence solutions to enhance production efficiency, problem-solving capabilities and innovation, according to company executives.

Another example of Shanxi's prowess in innovation is the full-size test line project of the ultrahigh-speed low-vacuum tube magnetic levitation transportation system completed in Yanggao county in the northern Shanxi city of Datong.

The system, also known as maglev or "high-speed flying train" in China, with a maximum travel speed of 1,000 kilometers per hour, completed a successful test on the Yanggao test line in August.

The test line was built by the Datong high-speed flying train project unit of China Railway Sixth Bureau Group. It is the first phase of a laboratory jointly developed by Shanxi and China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp. The inauguration of the lab and groundbreaking of the test line took place in May 2021. The purpose of

Government work report hails progress in green energy, digital economy and welfare



Workers assemble new energy cars at Geely Auto's production facility in Jinzhong city. ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY



Women in Taiyuan socialize at a community elder care center. KOU NING / FOR CHINA DAILY



The first cargo train between Shanxi's Changzhi city and Moscow departs Changtie Lveng Logistics Park on Dec 6. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

the lab is to provide a key test platform for maglev technology.

The maglev train, which is also known as vactrain in the industry, is designed to run inside a virtually air-free tube to reduce resistance.

"While China's researchers have made breakthroughs in technologies relating to the vactrain, a reliable infrastructure system allowing the trains to run and test its performance is of equal importance," said Yang Xufeng, chief engineer of the Datong high-speed flying train project unit.

"When we were commissioned to build the project in 2021, we were aware that this was the most challenging mission in the history of our company. But the successful test proved that we have the competence to tackle all the challenges," he added.

Installing the vacuum tube, which is done by putting together pipes each with a diameter of 6 meters and a length of 21 meters, for instance, requires great accuracy, according to Yang.

Other achievements in Shanxi's innovation capacity include its 1,599 high-tech enterprises; 626 specialized, refined and innovative enterprises; and 120 cutting-edge products that enjoy popularity in overseas markets.

It is worth mentioning that Shanxi's product exports from the "new three sectors" — photovoltaics, lithium-ion batteries and new energy vehicles — reported more than two-fold increases year-on-year in 2024.

The work report said Shanxi should advance economic transformation and foster new quality productive forces by promoting the deep integration of technological innovation and industrial innovation.

To push forward energy industry transformation, the report said Shanxi will step up the construction of "five bases" for the green development and utilization of coal; natural gas production; electricity genera-

tion and transmission; coal-based chemicals; and coal mining-related research.

Another highlight of the government work report was to endorse the achievements in developing a hub of opening-up in China's inland regions.

One achievement in Shanxi's opening-up is the operation of the China-Europe, China-Central Asia and China-Southeast Asia cargo train service.

Data show that since the launch of the service in 2017, the number of cargo trains running between Shanxi and overseas destinations reached 874 by the end of 2024. There are 15 railway routes that reach 48 cities across 16 countries.

The work report said that Shanxi should integrate its opening-up with the Belt and Road Initiative and enhance its links with the Belt and Road countries and regions.

Shanxi is offering a beneficial policy environment for opening-up, especially in the areas of international trade and investment.

It has created a "one-plus-N" policy framework for opening-up. It involves the Action Plan for Shanxi Province to Develop a New Highland for Opening-up in China's Inland Region as the master plan, and policies regarding increasing support for trade in goods, developing new models of foreign trade, opening up the financial sector and others as the supplement.

Statistics show that Shanxi's imports and exports of goods reached 159.58 billion yuan (\$21.91 billion) in the first 11 months of 2024, growing 3.3 percent year-on-year.

As ever, the welfare of residents continues to be a focus of the government work report.

In 2024, Shanxi made progress in child and elder care, assistance to the disabled and employment drives, according to the government work report.

Fu Lijing, a deputy to this session of the Shanxi Provincial People's Congress, and a worker from a steel company in Yuncheng city, said she is proud of the achievement made in child care in 2024.

"I hope there are more cost-effective child care institutions for those below 3 years old," she said. "This can be of great help for families with working parents."

Li Ailing, another deputy from Taiyuan, said while elder care institutions are popular in cities, she hopes more such facilities are established in rural areas.

"I suggest rural elder care institutions strengthen cooperation with township and village clinics, allowing elderly people to better access medical resources," Li said.

Peng Ke'er contributed to this story.