

BUSINESS

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Born in Xuzhou, Jiangsu province, Zhang Chuanyin has been engaged in agricultural cultivation for over 40 years.

With accumulated farming experience and cash, he decided to enlarge his own business by planting garlic and ginger, but had to find a better place to do it.

Zhang turned his eyes to Liuzhi special district in Guizhou province in Southwest China, which boasts superior natural conditions featuring a subtropical monsoon climate — with neither extreme heat in summer nor severe cold in winter.

While enjoying abundant rainfall and a frost-free period of 294 days, Liuzhi is good for growing garlic and ginger, and Zhang's products can sell at higher prices as his produce can be harvested one month earlier than in traditional places.

He rented 153 *mu* (10.2 hectares) of land for trial planting in 2024, and with a good profit, he expanded it to 471 *mu* this year in Mugang town, and is confident of a bumper harvest this year.

As more than 100 farmers helped him plant and pick the fresh ginger, he said: "Since Oct 1, I have hired 2,000 locals to help during harvest season."

Zhang said he is expecting total sales of 6 million yuan (\$858,200) this season, with ginger exported to Indonesia, Thailand and Dubai. But enhanced convenient transport is a must.

Local transport is very convenient. Air transport is accessible at Anshun Huangguoshu Airport (40 kilometers away), Liupanshui Yuezhao Airport and Guiyang Longdongbao International Airport (150 km away), in addition to accessible expressway and railway lines.

For his business, Zhang said he is betting big on the Shanghai-Kunming Expressway, which runs through Liuzhi and serves as a crucial transport artery connecting western Guizhou with Yunnan province and Southeast Asia.

Liuzhi's agricultural produce is varied and bountiful, with vegetable cultivation occupying 250,000 *mu* and output likely to exceed 455,000

Nation expands roads to boost flow of goods, visitors

Transport enriches residents, spurs local tourism enterprises

metric tons in 2025, with an expected output value surpassing 2 billion yuan.

The 2,730-km Shanghai-Kunming Expressway, which was fully linked on Sept 8, 2011, is a great boon for local traffic, and amid rapid economic growth, traffic congestion on an existing four-lane road section in Guizhou has been considerable.

To alleviate jams and adapt to regional economic development, Guizhou decided to expand the Anshun-Panzhou section of the expressway, with the expansion commencing in March 2023, said Yin Shigang, Party secretary of the project department of China Railway No 4 Engineering Group, which is building the section.

With diverse resources, Liuzhi netted a regional GDP of 18.5 billion yuan in 2024, an annual hike of 5.9 percent, said Liu Qiang, head of the Liuzhi district government.

Besides agricultural output, Liuzhi is rich in over 20 types of mineral resources, including coal, iron, sulfur and limestone, with confirmed coal reserves reaching 3.3 billion tons, as well as abundant coalbed methane deposits hitting some 65 billion cubic meters.

In 2024, its coal production increased by 18.85 percent year-on-year, with eight coal mines successfully revitalized, and as raw coal production in Liupanshui is expected to climb to 72 million tons in 2025, Liuzhi will retain its growth trend this year, Liu said.

Back in 2024, Liuzhi opened some major projects in mineral resources, with over 5 billion yuan added into the sector, showing its strong growth momentum and potential, he said. That is why people in Liuzhi



Above: Farmers tend garlic crops in Liuzhi special district, Guizhou province, on Dec 28. LI SHIFU / FOR CHINA DAILY
Below: Xujiawan Bridge in Liuzhi is under construction by China Railway No 4 Engineering Group this year. CHUI TINGTING / FOR CHINA DAILY

are hoping to see the expansion of local traffic networks.

In nearby Anshun, in Guizhou, Huangguoshu Scenic Area is a nationally renowned attraction, with Huangguoshu Waterfall — 77.8-meter high and 101-meter wide — impressing visitors with natural beauty.

Together, the falls form a vast system, recognized by the Guinness World Records headquarters as the largest waterfall cluster in the world. Its source, the Baishui River, is located in Liuzhi, home to 750,300 residents from 32 ethnic groups.

Liuzhi, administered by Liupanshui — a prefecture-level city in Guizhou — enjoys such titles as

"China's most beautiful leisure resort" and "China's ecological charm city" with its beautiful mountains and rivers.

Liu has called for efforts to better promote the unique tourism resources in Liuzhi special district, which was set up in the 1960s.

With the opening of the Nayong-Qinglong Expressway on Sept 26 and the Liuzhi-Anlong Expressway on Sept 28 — and the expected opening of the Anshun-Panzhou section of Shanghai-Kunming Expressway in 2026 — the development of Liuzhi's tourism industry will usher in unprecedented opportunities, he said.

The fourth plenary session of the

20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued a communique in Beijing on Oct 23, urging the enhancement of the country's transportation network.

During the first 10 months of this year, the country invested some 2.01 trillion yuan in building roads, said the Ministry of Transport, adding that the nation's roadways transported 35.6 billion tons of goods, a year-on-year rise of 3.6 percent, and ensured 9.57 billion trips for people during the period.

Invested by Guizhou Transportation Investment Group, the Anshun-Panzhou section of the Shanghai-Kunming Expressway cost some 32.31 billion yuan, with 97 km running through Liupanshui, Yin said.

The section starts at the county seat of Puding in Anshun and ends at Panguan town in Panzhou, a county-level city in Guizhou.

With a total area of more than 1,790 square km, Liuzhi is the core area of the ancient Yelang Kingdom — a tribal emirate composed of many tribes during the Warring States Period (475–221 BC).

Like a pearl sitting between the Wumeng and Miaoling mountains, Liuzhi links the majesty of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau on one side and the mystery of the ancient Yelang Kingdom on the other.

Liuzhi is a unique tourist area that integrates ethnic cultural customs, natural scenery and famous historical sites. Scenic spots there can generally be divided into three groups — natural beauty, cultural attractions and hot springs, said Liu.

Xiao Jinfeng, a primary school teacher from Mianyang in neighboring Sichuan province, took her

daughter, Li Yiwen, on a high-speed train during summer vacation to Liuzhi for a visit. Lured by the beautiful scenery there, she drove to Liuzhi for a revisit during the National Day holiday.

In Liuzhi, they visited the Zangke River pier, Laowang Mountain and Yanjiao ancient town.

"There are beautiful views everywhere in Liuzhi. The air is fresh, and the reflections of verdant mountains in the river create a poetic and picturesque scene," she said, noting that the district offers her an authentic and unspoiled ethnic charm, and can instantly put her mind at ease.

Liu said Liuzhi should improve the quality of tourism services and reception capacity in an all-around way, and highlight its distinctive cultural and tourism products, so as to amplify its brand effect.

Yin said Liuzhi is located at the watershed between the Yangtze River basin and the Pearl River basin. Sitting between the Yangtze and Pearl water systems, it is a picturesque place with more than 40 rivers and streams, and high mountains.

He said that while constructing the expressway, protecting the local environment became a priority.

On entering Yongfeng village on the banks of the Sancha River, the terraced fields are lush green, and the main piers of Xujiawan Bridge stand on both banks, forming a beautiful ecological picture in Longhe.

"During our construction work, we tried our best to maintain the original natural terrain, minimizing the impact of construction on the environment. As we are building an expressway, we need to set up a pre-fabrication yard to precast beams, which may occupy some seven hectares of land," Yin recalled.

"By following the principle that 'lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets', we finally decided to build our smart beam yard in the mountains," he said, noting that this not only helped reduce land use by half, but also minimized damage to the ecological environment.

He worked with over 2,400 staffers, including 142 local ethnic minority workers, who are very appreciative of the new expressway.



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Born in 1999, Chui Tingting graduated with a bachelor's degree from Shandong University in 2021, becoming an English teacher in Chongqing shortly thereafter.

As her husband came to work at China Railway No 4 Engineering Group, Chui too applied for a job with the State builder, and was hired in February 2022.

She was assigned to work at a project in Xizang autonomous region in Southwest China, following CREC4's practice of cultivating its staffers — learning skills at the grassroots level.

In November 2022, she was transferred to a CREC4 project to build the Anshun-Panzhou section of the Shanghai-Kunming Expressway, with project headquarters located in Liuzhi special district under Liupanshui, Guizhou province.

Aiming to hone its staffers into versatile talent capable of working at various tasks and positions, Hefei, Anhui province-based CREC4 has formulated its own talent training policies amid its 75 years of history, Chui said.

With a staff of some 25,500, CREC4's businesses are distributed across 31 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions on the Chinese mainland, as well as in 38 countries and regions, including Angola, Mongolia and Indonesia.

Due to her excellent work, Chui was assigned to work as office director at the No 3 division of the CREC4 project department in Liuzhi, in charge of coordination and liaison work, as well as hiring locals to take part in work-for-relief programs.

Luo Kao now serves as deputy director of the project department's engineering division in charge of a smart prefabrication yard. But two years ago, he was only a technical supervisor at the yard.

While working at the yard, Luo gained a deeper understanding of new quality productive forces and intelligent construction by engaging with the new equipment and new processes, and was soon promoted to his current position.

Under his management, the



An instructor (left) from China Railway No 4 Engineering Group briefs his colleagues on new technologies in Liuzhi, Guizhou province, in 2023. CHUI TINGTING / FOR CHINA DAILY

appearance and quality of the T-shaped beams produced all reached an advanced level.

Li Shiftu, Party secretary of the No 3 division, said building a highway can bring a series of benefits — profit and employees' skill enhancement for CREC4, better flow of goods and

people for the nation, and cash income for locals participating in construction tasks.

Li said CREC4's construction workers have reached 2,746 since the building work for the expansion of the Anshun-Panzhou section started in March 2023, including

temporary workers from Liuzhi.

Dai Xi, a driver from Zunyi in Guizhou, was glad to hear of the expansion work, and came to accept a job at the project department.

Governing 15 towns and three sub-district communities, with a total population of over 750,300, Liuzhi houses 253 villages and urban neighborhood communities. Li Guang, a chief engineer at CREC4 project department, stressed that while building the expressway, helping locals get jobs and increase incomes was also vital.

One-third of the villages in Longhe town, Liuzhi — where his project department is located — are Miao ethnic villages, and most young people rely on migrant work to improve their lives. So a work-for-relief program was designed to help locals, Li said.

"Our project department organized 30 free training sessions and pre-job training for steel bar binding and welding for over 200 people, and finally hired some of them for

the construction work," he said.

Yang Wenfu, a Miao ethnic worker from Longchang village, Longhe, joined the CREC4 construction team after training.

"Previously, I had to depend on my 3 *mu* paddy field and rapeseed fields to make a living, but now, as a steel reinforcement worker, I can proficiently tie and knot steel bars to earn a handsome monthly salary to support my children and their education," Yang said.

Li Shifu noted that since their construction work started, they have provided 1,647 jobs for locals, including 142 ethnic minority workers, paying them 132.83 million yuan (\$19 million) in total.

"Meanwhile, our 2,746 staffers working here have also boosted the economy of Longhe through our spending," he said.

"The CREC4 staffers have enabled our villagers to learn skills and steadily increase their incomes without leaving town. They have truly built a bridge of friendship, injecting strong momentum into the rural vitalization in Longhe," said Wang Yongyue, Party secretary of Longhe.