

Rising Henan to host regional expo

Increased economic ties among central provinces

By YANG FEIYUE
and SHI BAOYIN

Organized to display investment opportunities and promote regional cooperation, the eighth Expo Central China will be held in Henan province from May 18 to 20.

Organizers said the host province is expected to use the expo to promote new programs in urbanization, industrialization and modern agriculture.

"Development of Henan's Zhengzhou Airport Industrial Park will be a highlight of Henan's effort," said the event's organizing committee.

The airport park in Zhengzhou will showcase its business opportunities in electronic information, air transport and modern logistics.

The expo is jointly sponsored by the governments of Jiangxi, Shanxi, Hubei, Hunan, Anhui and Henan provinces, all in the central region of China, so how to coordinate development will be a dominant issue at the event, said organizers.

"Since the State Council

proposed the 'Rise of Central China' plan in 2006, remarkable achievements have been made in the region," said Liu Shiwei, deputy secretary-general of Henan provincial government. "And the annual event begun in the same year has been the major showcase for such achievements."

He added that the expo is also an important channel for networking and exchanges among businesses and governments in the region.

Liu said the milestone in regional coordination reached at past events is a program to form a Central China Economic Zone that covers all of Henan and some areas in Shandong, Hebei, Shanxi and Anhui.

The implementation plan for the program was approved by the State Council last November, making it a national strategy.

Government officials from the provinces will sit together at a summit forum to discuss concrete measures to carry out the program, said Liu.

In addition to showcasing the general image of each province, the event also dis-



The modern development of the host city of Zhengzhou will be on display during the upcoming Expo Central China.

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plays products, services and investment projects.

As well, there will be shows on quality products from Guangxi, Guangdong, Fujian, Hong Kong, as well as Australia and Pakistan.

Participating businesses will bring 5,850 projects to seek potential investment partners, including 394 from Jiangxi, 830

from Shanxi, 390 from Hubei, 259 from Hunan, 1,035 from Anhui and 2,942 from Henan.

The projects cover a wide range of fields including advanced manufacturing, electronic information, food, light industry, tourism, trade, logistics and modern agriculture.

The organizing committee

said more than 4,000 foreign business representatives and over 19,000 domestic company delegates have confirmed that they will attend the expo.

Among them are reps from 52 Fortune 500 companies including Caterpillar, Cargill, Wal-Mart, General Electric and Microsoft.

Renowned domestic companies including Baidu, Vanke, Tencent and Lenovo will also be present at the event.

Leading international and domestic organizations such as the World Chinese Entrepreneur Association, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, and

the United States International Trade Commission will also participate in the expo.

Its main session will be held in Zhengzhou, with others held in Luoyang, Luohe and Sanmenxia, said organizers.

Contact the writers through shibaoyin@chinadaily.com.cn

Spotlight on progress in economy, social development

By YANG FEIYUE
and SHI BAOYIN

An important component in the "rise of Central China" plan by the central government, Henan province has maintained solid economic and social development over the past five years.

Despite the nationwide slowdown, the province's GDP grew by 10.1 percent in 2012 compared to the national average of 7.8 percent.

"Much of the growth was driven by the consumer market, investment and exports," said Jiao Jinmiao, head of the Henan Provincial Bureau of Commerce.

He said the three sectors accounted for two-thirds of local GDP in 2012 and about 7 percentage points of the 10.1-percent growth.

Its fixed-asset investment grew by 22 percent, retail sales of consumer goods increased 16 percent and the value of exports surged 54.3 percent from the previous year.

The province also had 15.1 percent growth in government revenues last year that helped fund a 17.8 percent increase in public spending.

Henan met the central government's requirements for energy saving and emissions reduction in the past

five years by implementing a strict control system for major pollutant discharges and energy consumption.

The local government also rolled out measures to improve the quality of life through increased incomes for both urban and rural residents, improved public services and training for job seekers.

One of the leading agricultural provinces in China, Henan's grain production has been on the rise for nine consecutive years.

Over the past five years, "the government has taken a flexible and feasible approach in dealing with the international financial crisis," said one official of the Henan provincial government.

It has given priority to steady growth, adjusted its development according to national economic policies, and maintained two-digit growth in the period, he added.

Growing investment

Henan has pushed ahead with continued opening-up and reform, which helped it draw investment from many leading companies at home and abroad.

Jiao said the province had its best-ever results in attracting investment over the past five years as 502.7 billion

yuan (\$81.93 billion) in capital flowed into the province in 2012, three times the amount in 2007, including \$12.1 billion in foreign direct investment.

One example is Foxconn Electronics Inc, the renowned original equipment manufacturer for renowned global brand Apple and others.

It started a \$100-million manufacturing unit in the provincial capital Zhengzhou in 2010 and immediately became the largest exporter in the city and province.

As overseas companies enhanced their presence in Henan, local businesses have grown stronger in both domestic and international markets, among them is Henan Coal Chemical Industry Group Co, which ranked 397th on the Fortune 500 list last year.

One of the reasons behind growing strength among local companies is their increasing capacity for innovation, according to the Henan provincial government.

Twenty-eight national technology centers, eight national-level laboratories and 20 State-level engineering centers were established in Henan in just the past five years.

They received 74 State science and technology awards over the period, while 27,000 patents from the province were

approved in 2012.

The government said enhanced investment in infrastructure is another factor in Henan's sustained growth. New facilities include an aviation hub in Zhengzhou and a transportation network of high-speed railways, expressways and highways throughout the province.

In the energy sector, the province has built new power plants with total capacity of 27.28 million kilowatts in the past five years.

Public welfare

Continuing high-quality economic growth has enabled the province to make further improvements in ecology and people's living standards.

Local statistics show that forest coverage reached 23 percent in 2012, up nearly 4 percent from 2007.

The local government has also increased spending on public welfare. It funded 1.23 trillion yuan in improvements to people's livelihoods over the past five years, some 69 percent of Henan's total government expenditures.

It also formulated favorable employment policies, helping create job opportunities for 6.52 million urban residents and 5 million rural laborers.

With subsidies from governments at various levels, a total of 1.37 million apartments for low-income families have been built in Henan over the five years.

Expenditures in education accounted for 22.3 percent of total government spending in 2012.

Healthcare is another highlight. The government increased investment in building more medical facilities and establishing a wider-coverage public healthcare insurance system in the past years.

Continuous growth

The achievements made over the past five years have laid a solid foundation for Henan's continuous growth in the years to come, said Jiao.

The provincial government estimates its GDP will surpass 5 trillion yuan in 2017.

The province is projected to have a 10 percent rise in GDP this year, with fixed-asset investment, consumer goods retail and foreign trade increasing by 21 percent, 16 percent and 15 percent.

The government will continue its efforts in employment promotion, expecting to create 1 million new job opportunities in 2013, said a recent government report.

Through forging closer partnerships with renowned global companies, especially in the fields of electronic information, advanced manufacturing and biomedicine, the government said it hopes foreign direct investment will grow 10 percent this year.

To create a better environment for investors from home and abroad, Henan will have 1.3 trillion yuan worth of investment in various infrastructure facilities this year.

The projects include construction of new power generation facilities with capacity of 1.3 million kilowatts and a natural gas pipeline network that serves 70 percent of its area.

Construction on the Zhengzhou aviation hub is expected to be completed this year, making the city a regional transportation and logistics center.

Contact the writers through yangfeiyue@chinadaily.com.cn



Asia's largest bearing was assembled at Luoyang's LYC Bearing Co plant. The company is a subsidiary of Henan Coal Chemical Industry Group, now ranked 397th on the Fortune 500 list.

PROFILE

At the center of China and covering 167,000 square kilometers, Henan was one of the cradles of Chinese civilization with a history dating back more than 5,000 years. It was China's cultural, economical and political center for more than 3,000 years.

While it abounds in cultural relics, the province is also rich in important mineral resources, such as coal, petroleum and natural gas.

Henan has the largest population among all provinces in China — 105.43 million at the end of 2012, offering rich labor resources and creating a huge consumer market.

The province is at a pivotal position in the national transportation network of railways and highways.

China's two most important railways — the Beijing-Guangzhou and Lianyungang-Lanzhou lines — converge in the capital city Zhengzhou. It also connects to the rest of the country by seven other national railroads and a number of expressways and highways.

Henan is also one of the leading agricultural provinces in China. It produces a large amount of cooking oil, grains, meats, cottons and processed food products to supply its own market as well as the entire nation.

It has maintained double-digit GDP growth in recent years, with the figure hitting 2.98 trillion yuan (\$486 billion) in 2012, ranking the fifth in the nation.



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