

ZHANJIANG

Balance for environment, economy

Massive development plans, eco-awareness in Guangdong

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A city needs a soul to be great. For port city Zhanjiang on China's southern coast, that soul comes from being "HAPPI".

Coined by Mayor Wang Zhongbing, "HAPPI" is an acronym for harbor, amazing, petrochemical, papermaking and iron-steel. It describes the city's major industries and pleasant environment.

"Zhanjiang is in the middle of rapid industrialization, but the process has adopted a new approach and will make the city an even more beautiful place," said Wang.

"For the industrialization to be deemed successful, people here have to be happy with its outcome."

Zhanjiang lies on an inlet on the South China Sea at the southwestern end of Guangdong province and faces the island of Hainan to the south.

It has an airport with direct flights to Hong Kong and Beijing, and railways and highways linking it closely with Southwest China along with the rest of Guangdong and the country.

The main city in the less-developed western part of Guangdong, Zhanjiang is expected to be the new engine for the development in the province, which is investing heavily in the city and its surroundings.

Guangdong is traditionally No. 1 on China's GDP list, but the eastern province Jiangsu is narrowing the margin.

Approved by the central government, the new Guangdong International Airport will be built in Zhanjiang. Construction will begin in 2015 and is expected to be completed by 2017. The airport will have the same status as airports in Guangzhou and Shenzhen and will be a hub for southwestern China.

A high-speed railway being built will shorten travel time between Guangzhou and Zhanjiang to about two hours when operational in 2016. Now it takes a five-hour drive.



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MAYOR

A new highway under construction starts and also ends in Zhanjiang. It will circle along the coast of the Leizhou Peninsula where the city is located.

Guangdong is betting on Zhanjiang because the city has many advantages including a natural deep-water harbor.

The harbor opened in 1956 with throughput of 1 million tons in the year. Its throughput has already reached 180 million tons in 2013 and there is still great potential for more, said the mayor.

"Now that Zhanjiang has been selected to become the main port in the south, we feel great urgency. The harbor is to go beyond the Bay of Zhanjiang where it lies at present," he said.

"There are many places on the Leizhou Peninsula that have the natural conditions to build harbors. There are five counties on the coast that have only fishing ports. We want to build an industrial port in each county."

"One industrial port, one fishing port and one scenic town that lie beside each other are enough to gear up the growth of a county, as it has been in many places in Europe."

Besides the port, nature has endowed Zhanjiang with China's longest beach as well as quite a few



ZHOU HAITAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Zhanjiang Mayor Wang Zhongbing and other city government officials examine the blueprint for the west bank of the Zhanjiang Bay.

others. It also has one of the world's largest volcano lakes, and a great variety of seafood and tropical plants.

Also amazing is the fresh air. While many Chinese cities are battling air pollutants the PM2.5 — airborne particles smaller than 2.5 microns — readings stay below 20 in Zhanjiang all year round.

The petrochemical joint venture between Sinopec and Kuwait Petroleum Corp under construction is designed to process 15 million tons of crude oil and produce 1 million tons of ethylene annually. The crude oil project will go online in 2016, followed by ethylene production in 2017.

The first phase of the 7.6 billion yuan (\$1.2 billion) paper plant by

Guangdong Guanbao High-Tech Co went into trial operation this month. China Paper Corp and Chenming Group also have massive projects in Zhanjiang.

State-owned conglomerate Baosteel Group is building a modern iron-steel complex, the first phase of which will be completed as early as Sept 2015. It will turn out 9.2 million tons of iron and 10 million tons of steel annually, replacing old, polluting iron and steel-making capacity that the country is eager to shed.

The petrochemical and iron-steel projects will form a circular economy by using each other's byproducts, and use the most stringent environmental standards.

"We are working very closely

'HAPPI' ZHANJIANG

WHAT IS HAPPI?

- **H** is for harbor: A natural deep-water harbor in the South China Sea, a central hub for southwestern and southern China.
- **A** is for amazing: Delicious seafood, fresh air, China's longest beach, one of the world's largest volcano lakes, diverse plants and marine life.
- **P** is for petrochemical: A mega joint venture between China Petroleum & Chemical Corp and Kuwait Petroleum Corp.
- **P** is for papermaking: Billions of dollars in investment from the several papermaking giants in China.
- **I** is for iron-steel: A modern iron-steel complex under construction by Baosteel.

with investors and managers of these heavy industry projects," said Mayor Wang.

"We want to build a city that is beautiful and rich in the following

centuries with future residents that are happy with the delicious seafood, the fresh air and the white beaches. 'HAPPI' is for the present, and also for the future," he said.



FACTS

Location: South China's Guangdong province

Size: 13,200 sq km

Population: 7.85 million

Coastline: 2,023.6 km

* WHERE IS ZHANJIANG?

Zhanjiang lies on an inlet of the South China Sea at the southwestern end of Guangdong province and faces the island of Hainan to the south.

* SOON TO COME:

The new Guangdong International Airport will be built in Zhanjiang. It is expected to be completed by 2017, and have the same status as airports in Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

A high-speed railway is being built to connect Zhanjiang with Guangzhou and Shenzhen. It will be finished in 2016.

The 325-km road along the coast of the Leizhou Peninsula is under construction. It will both start and end in Zhanjiang.

Officials reach out to European experience

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European businesses, institutions, governments and talent are the partners Zhanjiang's mayor wants to aid in the development of the port city.

"Coming from a port city rich of resources, we want to work with European partners on how to have a more scientific approach to industrialization — to develop at a lower cost, to better protect the environment and benefit the people," said Wang Zhongbing, mayor of the coastal city in southwestern Guangdong.

Wang is leading a delegation to Europe, with the major destinations set to be Dusseldorf and the Rhur district in Germany.

"The Rhine River running across the Rhur is so clean that it can be used for drinking water and a district known for its heavy industry has crystal blue skies," he said.

The mayor himself is a trained engineer with a PhD degree in steel production. Though the city will be home to a major steel production complex in 2015, he said he would never sacrifice the environment in a place that has never experienced smog.

Zhanjiang's government has formed a partnership with the German Chambers of Commerce Worldwide Network, known as AHK.

"We want to update Germany and other European countries about the latest progress in Zhanjiang's rapid industrialization, and familiarize them with our concept of development," said Wang.



Zhanjiang in southwestern Guangdong province has China's longest beach.

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"We would like them to become interested, to come and visit. Quite a few Chinese cities like Zhanjiang have managed to preserve blue sky. Life is pleasant and convenient here."

The mayor wants to work with businesses related to steelmaking, petrochemical and heavy industries along with those in the circular economy, environmental protection, the marine economy, agriculture and other sectors.

"We expect their businesses to be welcomed by both the market and the local people, to be profitable, environmentally friendly and socially responsible," he said.

"They are to be part of our local culture, and gear up both the industrial and the urban civilizations here."

Working with AHK and the Association of German Engineers, Wang also wants to entice German engineers and professionals to work in Zhanjiang's government, businesses and institutions.

The city government is also very interested in building partnerships with European city governments, he said.

"There can be not only cooperation in industrialization, but also collaboration in sectors such as culture, education and healthcare," he said.

"We would also like to have sister

cities in Germany and other European countries," he noted. Zhanjiang now has six sister cities including Cairns in Australia, Atlantic City in the United States and Serpukhov in Russia.

The city also wants to have more cooperation with European institutions such as business and professional associations, colleges and universities, said Mayor Wang.

Besides seeking cooperation, the mayor also expects to learn the European experience in developing new energies, in nurturing small and medium-sized enterprises and in promoting public transportation. Zhanjiang was known before the end of the World War II as the Bay of

Guangzhou, or Kwangchow. Part of it was leased to France and served as a major port. It is one of China's finest deep-water ports on the South China Sea.

"The level of development in Zhanjiang is far from where it should be, considering the richness of resources that the nature has endowed her with," said Mayor Wang.

"We want to explore a path of development that is different from the one that many other places in the country have followed in the past three decades. We would like to work with European partners that have gone through the phase of industrialization."