

Exhibitions show Qingdao's economic prowess

► Sector becoming yet another driving force in the city's growth

By ZHANG YING

Already renowned in China for its regattas, expansive beaches and the sailing venue in the upcoming 29th Olympic Games, Qingdao is using its advantages to attract more international conventions and exhibitions.

According to April statistics from the Qingdao International Convention Center (QICC), more than 70 domestic and international exhibitions are planned this year, including the China Interna-

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tional Consumer Electronics Show (SINO-CES), the 7th Qingdao International Auto Show and China (Qingdao) International Marine Fair (CIMF).

"The exhibition industry has been growing rapidly," said Mayor Xia Geng. "We are trying our best to build Qingdao into a famous exhibition city across the globe."

The local government began implementing a plan last year to accelerate development of the exhibition industry. By 2010 it plans to double the size of exhibitions and the number of visitors compared to 2005.

The city will by then have forged its image as a noted international exhibition city, the mayor said.

To reach that goal, the local government is making efforts to attract more influential domestic and international exhibitions to Qingdao, while

the impetus provided by the coming Olympics has already brought increasing numbers of national exhibitions to the seaside city.

SINO-CES, Qingdao International Beer Festival, China (Qingdao) International Fashion Week and CIMF have both national and international influence, covering more than 30 industries including apparel, home appliances, marine machinery, automobiles and fishing equipment.

Statistics from the local industry and commerce department show that the number of registered exhibitions held in the city have increased 106 percent since 2003.

City estimates say the number will continue to grow 10 to 15 percent annually to make the exhibition industry another engine powering the local economy.

Last month Qingdao received an award for its performance in hosting large events from the China Convention and Exhibition Society (CCES).

The Qingdao International Beer Festival ranked among

the 10 most-influential festivals in China in 2007. It attracted 3.6 million visitors, including 75,200 foreigners, and the participation of 45 overseas beer brands. It is now the biggest gala of its kind in Asia.

SINO-CES, sponsored by the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), has attracted global attention with the help of CEA, which promotes the event internationally.

The 2007 SINO-CES show featured 1,316 booths and attracted more than 40 famous enterprises from both home and abroad, including Intel, Sony, Lenovo, Haier, IBM, GE and HP.

Significant international fairs to be held in the city this year include the 7th Qingdao International Auto Show, the 6th CIMF and the China (Qingdao) International Tourism Expo set for this month. Preparations are now well underway for the 9th China (Qingdao) International Gifts, Handicrafts & Houseware Exhibition in June.

Events scheduled for the



Olympic champions Gu Jun (first, left), Ma Yanhong (first, right), Lou Yun (second, right), Xu Haifeng (third, right) and China's go chess master Nie Weiping (second, left) wave at the audience during the celebration for the 100-day countdown to the Olympics.

Ju Chuanjiang

second half of the year include the SINO-CES in July and China Fisheries & Seafood Expo in November.

Qingdao's exhibition in-

dustry has joined foreign trade, tourism and manufacturing as pillars of the city's economy.

Among the efforts by the

local government to cultivate the industry are schools to produce professionals in exhibition planning, management and business.



Local officials and the disabled test facilities at the Olympic village in Qingdao. It will also accommodate sailors in the 2008 IFDS Qingdao International Regatta held May 8 to 15.

Ju Chuanjiang

Famous brands lead city fortunes

By ZHAO RUIXUE

Each year China's General Administration of Quality, Inspection and Quarantine bestows the title of "Famous Brand" on quality products that have found favor with consumers from both home and abroad — and Qingdao continues to contribute many that further enhance the fortunes of the seaside city.

"At present Qingdao is home to 69 Chinese famous brands, all of which boost its economic development," says Wang Dianzhang, head of Qingdao Municipal Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision.

One is Qingdao Jifa Group, whose knitted garments and other products are exported to more than 20 countries and regions, including Japan, the United States and Europe. The group registered a 10 percent year-on-year increase in export volume in the first three months of this year.

Jifa has formed a total of 20 joint ventures with 17 overseas enterprises, including six Fortune 500 companies, which helped the group realize an export volume of \$392 million in 2007.

Another is Doublestar, one of the oldest famous brands in Qingdao, a shining star

in export of tires, shoes and machines that are sold to more than 130 countries and regions. The company recorded a 10.8 percent year-on-year increase in export turnover in the first quarter.

"Among the more than \$20 billion in exports generated by local enterprises in 2007, 65 percent came from famous brands, which indicates that the brand economy has developed into a driving force for the city's economic development," Wang says.

Other famous-brand enterprises in Qingdao that have gained international recognition for high quality and value for cost include Kingking Group (Qingdao) that is a major supplier of candles and related products to 26 Fortune 500 enterprises including Wal-Mart from the US and Ikea from Sweden.

Twenty-four Chinese famous brands vitalize the economy of the Qingdao Economic and Technological Development Area. Customs statistics show they accounted for 70 percent of the area's \$2.84 billion export volume last year.

Encouraged by the local government, nationally famous brands such as Tsingtao Brewery Group, Haier and Hisense have established more than 5,000 branches, outlets and

manufacturing bases across the country.

More than 50 fairs are held in Qingdao every year to help local enterprises woo overseas buyers, especially those that produce famous-brand products.

Famous brands in Qingdao have become the most attractive enterprises for foreign investment, which at present cooperate with about 50 overseas companies including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd, DuPont and HP.

The international connection not only enhances development of famous brands, but also smaller local companies. More than 300 agreements have been signed between Qingdao enterprises and overseas companies.

The brand economy also promotes the city's technological development and competitiveness in the global market. Forty-one of the city's famous brand companies now have research and development centers, seven of which are State-class.

The brands range across more than 20 industries, including home appliances, electronics and machinery.

Total export volume generated by the famous brands increased 52 percent last year.

All walks of life ready for Games

By SHAN DONG

With the 2008 Olympic Games just around the corner, enthusiasm in Qingdao has reached virtually every corner of the city, touching both the high profile and the humble.

"I have great expectations for the torch relay in Qingdao. To stay in shape I exercise every day," wheelchair-bound torchbearer Li Ke said.

"I give my best wishes to Beijing Olympic Games and I hope the torch relay will be smooth and successful," the

sailor added.

Cheng Jian, driver of the number 227 bus, also said he is ready as he starts another shuttle trip. "As a Qingdao driver, I am so proud to have the Olympic sailing competition held in Qingdao. Buses not only showcase our company, but also the city. To gear up for the Olympics we are striving to optimize the quality of our service," he said.

"We are ready and have prepared everything for the Olympic Games. We are pleased to receive public supervision and accept valuable advice,"

Cheng answered to a question asking if anything needs to be improved.

Buddhist monk Miao Yan from the Zhanshan Temple said: "the Games provides a good chance for China".

"It is also a good chance for our temple. We have made a bell entitled Olympic Peace to pray for the Beijing Olympics," Miao said.

"It is our honor to participate in the Olympics as guards for the city," said Fu Jiwei, a soldier of the Qingdao branch of the Chinese Armed Police Force. "To ensure the safety of people

is our duty and we are committed to the task."

Kim Yu Jin, an exchange student at Ocean University of China from South Korea's Sung Kong Hoe University, said she hopes the 2008 Olympic Games will bring an important opportunity for the development of China and its people.

"I am very lucky and excited to be in China during the Games. There are less than 100 days left to the Games, so I hope people around the world will give support and the best wishes to the Games, and don't politicize the Games."



One hundred young girls give an evening performance to mark the 100-day countdown to the Olympics. Seventy will be chosen to serve in the Qingdao sailing competition.

Ju Chuanjiang

Giant firms anchor industrial clusters

By XUE XIAOYING

"Famous Chinese corporations have drawn more large companies to Qingdao. As an engine driving industrial clusters, those brands are a mainstay of the Qingdao economy," said Wang Jian, deputy director of Qingdao Municipal Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision.

The number of giant, famed Chinese companies based in Qingdao, including Haier and Hisense, ranks the city third in brand power following Shanghai and Shenzhen, Wang told China Daily.

Last year 50 percent of total industrial value and 65 percent of profits in the city came from famous brand corporations.

The new Qingdao auto factory of SGMW — a partnership between Shanghai Automobile Industry (Group) Co, General Motors and Wuling Automobile Co Ltd — began

production on April 1. It is designed for an annual output of 300,000 cars.

A new SGMW engine factory under construction is scheduled to begin production in the first half of next year.

Six primary industrial clusters have been highlighted by the Qingdao municipal government since 2002, including electronics, home appliances and shipbuilding.

Qingdao is now the largest production base for household appliances in the nation through the rise of famous brands like Haier, Hisense and Aucma that support more than 800 related companies.

Famous Chinese brands such as Qingdao Jifa Group and Redcollar Group power the textile trade, with Jifa attracting more than 1,500 textile operations to open in Jimo, a Qingdao satellite city, over the past three years. The resulting industrial textiles cluster that formed

in Jimo make it the nation's largest producer of knitted goods, clothing fabric and sportswear.

Qingdao Port, the third-largest in China, is making extensive improvements in its effort to become the shipping hub of northeast Asia.

Through Hong Kong Merchants Group, Itochu Corp and Baosteel Group, Qingdao Port now has international shipping lines reaching 450 ports. Its modern facilities have attracted more than 900 logistics companies from home and abroad.

Advantages offered by Qingdao port have also lured large petrochemical and processing operations, including a 10-million-ton annual capacity refinery built by China Petroleum and Chemical Corp scheduled to begin production in May. More than 30 petrochemical enterprises, including those from South Korea and Japan, have facilities in Qingdao.

In shipbuilding and repair, China Shipbuilding Industry Corp (CSIC) has become an anchor enterprise at the port requiring the support of more than 20 large companies, research institutions and overseas shipbuilders.

With an investment of 10 billion yuan at Haixi Bay of Qingdao in 2004, CSIC began construction of a facility to build ships ranging in size from 150,000 to 500,000 tons. Annual revenue is expected to be 10 billion yuan after completion.

"Since a large project can form a series of industrial chains and clusters, Qingdao will dedicate itself to developing more famous brand industrial clusters to propel the economy," said Wang.

According to the 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-10), six main industrial clusters will take shape by 2010 to have an annual output value of 1000 billion yuan, accounting for 70 percent of the entire city.



A production line at SGMW Qingdao that went into use on April.

Wu Ling