



A major trading port in Guangdong, Zhanjiang offers the shortest ocean transport route for China's southwestern region. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

# Focus on foreign trade

## Coastal city strengthens international ties, attracts investment

By LI WENFANG

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Zhanjiang achieved breakthroughs in international exchanges and cooperation with the establishment of economic and trade representative offices in Germany, Sri Lanka and Cambodia last year.

The German office is in the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce Greater China office, in Karlsruhe.

The German chamber has extensive links to German businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. It serves more than 3.6 million companies at home and more than 3,000 of the 5,000-plus German companies with a presence in China.

The trade office offers a "window through which we will be able to see what German businesses need, what they want to know and what they are interested in for better cooperation," said Zhanjiang's mayor, Wang Zhongbing, at the office's opening ceremony in June.

The Zhanjiang government hopes to attract more German companies including SMEs, he said.

The trade office in Sri Lanka was established at Colombo International Container Terminals Ltd, which is a joint venture between Hong Kong-listed blue chip China Merchants Holdings International Co and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority.

Liu Xiaohua, Party chief of Zhanjiang, encouraged the

office to promote Zhanjiang's business environment and facilitate two-way investment and trade at the launch ceremony in December.

The Cambodian office was set up at the Rui Feng Cambodia International Co invested by Zhanjiang-based Guangdong Hengfu Group Sugar Industry Co.

Liu said he hoped overseas companies invested by Zhanjiang firms would better connect to the industries in Zhanjiang and make greater contribution to the city's economic and social development.

Zhanjiang registered a 15 percent growth in foreign trade, which stood at \$6.3 billion last year.

Contractual foreign investment surged 384 percent to \$392 million and actual foreign investment rose by 14 percent to \$150 million in the year.

To step up support for foreign trade, the city's bureau of commerce provided tailor-made services to companies in the sector, said Wang Xiaosui, director of the bureau.

For instance, the bureau's officials were assigned to support certain companies, she said.

### Aquatic products show

The first session of the China International Aquatic Products Exposition held in the city in June helped establish a high-end trading platform for the aquatic industry, which contributed to a substantial share of the city's foreign trade.



Foreign staff work with Chinese colleagues at SGD Group's glass bottle plant in Zhanjiang. SGD is a famed French glass manufacturer. ZOU ZHONGPIN / CHINA DAILY

Zhanjiang's foreign trade with Southeast Asian nations exceeded 5.3 billion yuan (\$848 million) last year and included more than 3.9 billion yuan in exports, according to Zhanjiang Customs. Southeast Asia has become the largest destination for exports from the city.

The administration of Fenyong Economic Zone in Zhanjiang signed a cooperative agreement with Indonesia's Mudia Dean Sentosa Co in June last year to build Sino-Indonesian Zhanjiang Industrial Park in Zhanjiang and the Indonesia-China Pacific Rubber Sci-Tech Industrial Park in Indonesia.

The administration of Fenyong said it was seizing opportunities arising from the national strategy to build a 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and taking advantage of its geographical location and con-

nections with overseas Chinese.

It aims to build the zone into a major platform for cooperation with countries along the road.

The city will support a sisal hemp production project in Indonesia and a sugar cane production project in Sri Lanka invested by Guangdong Zhanjiang Agribusiness Group Co, according to the government's work report delivered in January.

It will work to expand cross-border e-commerce, strengthen exports to markets in Europe and the United States and explore emerging markets to foster new foreign trade growth areas.

Zhanjiang was the nation's top aquatic product exporter last year, with 122,800 tons of products worth \$988 million. Prawn exports from the city made up about 30 percent of the national total.

# Appliance maker set to expand at home and abroad

By ZHENG CAIXIONG  
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Huaqiang Appliance Group Co Ltd, a major household appliance manufacturer in Guangdong province, plans to further increase its competitiveness through innovation in the years to come.

"Innovation is the key to Huaqiang's expansion at home and abroad, and the group is making great efforts to develop quality products to boost its sales," said Lu Xizhang, chairman of the company, which is based in Zhanjiang.

The company plans to invest more than 80 million yuan (\$12.8 million) to help digitalize its management and production equipment and upgrade technology for its second-phase development that began last year.

Huaqiang signed cooperation contracts with Guangdong Ocean University and Lingnan Normal University in recent years.

"Huaqiang will accelerate its research and development for more high-tech products by cooperating with local universities and research institutes," Lu said.

The group is investing more than 10 million yuan annually in R&D and importing new technologies and equipment to upgrade its production, Lu said.

Huaqiang spent more than 30 million yuan recruiting and training talented researchers in the past years, he added.

To boost sales, the company also plans to increase its cooperation with e-commerce

giants such as Alibaba and JD.com, Lu said. He added that it would couple traditional sales channels with e-commerce platforms to increase its market presence at home and abroad.

The group will focus on Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa and South America, regions Lu said had great potential in the near future.

Lu added that his company would further expand its global presence by grasping opportunities brought about by the country's One Belt, One Road initiative.

"The initiative will certainly benefit our overseas expansion, as Zhanjiang has already established close ties with the nations along the ancient Maritime Silk Road," Lu said.

Last year, the company's exports amounted to about \$8 million, with sales to the Middle East, Europe, Asia and South America recording rapid growth.

The company sold 406.37 million yuan worth of products in 2014, up 11 percent from 2013.

It established more than 3,000 sales and service outlets nationwide.

Huaqiang was established in 1988 and has developed into one of the three largest household appliance manufacturers in the country.

The company mainly produces electric rice cookers, electric pressure cookers, electric kettles, cooker hoods, gas cookers and electric water heaters.

Huaqiang has won several domestic and international prizes for its products over the years.



Huaqiang Group based in Zhanjiang is a major household appliance manufacturer in Guangdong province, with its high-quality and award-winning products sold throughout the world.

# Coastline development boosts port reputation

By LI WENFANG

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Last year Zhanjiang had multiple achievements in its efforts for opening-up.

Ports in the Baoman area and Donghai Island were opened up and brought the total number of opened-up ports in the city to six.

Zhanjiang Port Group Co's proposals for a bonded logistics center were approved, making it the 38th such center in the country.

A number of projects in city were included in provincial plans to meet the nation's 21st Century Maritime Silk Road strategy.

They include Guangdong Fenyong ASEAN Industrial Park, South Maritime Valley, Zhanjiang High-Tech Park, an aquatic and agricultural technology park, a seaside tourism park, a maritime high-tech base and a sugar-making center.

The opening-up of Baoman and Donghai port areas means 44,400 meters of coastline and 29 berths will open up to foreign trade.

Zhanjiang Port will be better positioned to attract multinational shipping companies and to enhance economic cooperation with Southeast Asia, Europe and the Americas, according to the city's commerce bureau.

The latest opening-up move is set to boost the capacity of Zhanjiang Port, speed up development and help promote seaside industries and logistics.

The newly approved bonded logistics center will enable companies to expand their exporting, international transshipment and re-exporting businesses, according to Zhanjiang Customs. The center is scheduled to open in September.

Although it is an important distribution hub for bulk goods such as crude oil, iron ore, coal, fertilizers and sulfur in South China, Zhanjiang port has not achieved substantial growth due to limited storage space.

Without the center, some Zhanjiang companies had to use facilities in other cities.

The center will help com-

panies cut operating costs, be more flexible with exports and better withstand risks in the global market.

It will also push forward the transformation of the processing trade in Zhanjiang.

The center is located in the seaside industrial park and has a planned area of 390,000 square meters and total investment of 535 million yuan (\$86.35 million).

It will include 40,000 sq m of warehouses, a 130,000-sq-m storage yard and a dedicated rail line.

The Zhanjiang city government said it would work to expand the economic and cultural exchanges and cooperation with Southeast Asia and other countries and regions along the new Maritime Silk Road.

It plans to join in efforts to integrate cities in the Beibu Bay rim.

Customs management is due to be streamlined and cooperation in customs services with the adjacent Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region and Hainan province will be advanced.



A petroleum terminal at Zhanjiang Port. The port handled more than 200 million tons of cargo last year, making it one of the leading ports in Guangdong province.