

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY
Corn heaped in a mound in a facility of the Changchun Dacheng Industry Group.

Jilin walking road to prosperity

14.6

percent

annual GDP growth in Jilin over past five years

50.5

percent

of Jilin's GDP contributed by private sector

31.7

million tons

grain production of Jilin in 2011

2.55

million

number of beneficiaries of the Warm Houses Project

31.63

million

people covered by the province's social insurance system

Investments in innovation, infrastructure have led to explosive GDP growth

By ZHANG ZHAO
zhangzhao@chinadaily.com.cn

A Jilin local who has been away from the province for years will find great changes in his home after he comes back. He will lead a life of greater convenience, enjoy more days of blue skies every year and witness his neighbors getting richer.

The province achieved a GDP of 1.05 trillion yuan (\$166.5 billion) in the last year, an increase of 13.7 percent over the year previous. It was the first time provincial GDP surpassed 1 trillion yuan.

Grain production reached a record 31.7 million tons in the same year, 3.3 million tons more than in the previous year.

Large-scale industrial enterprises generated a total profit of 112.1 billion yuan, increasing 44.6 percent year on year.

The per capita disposable income of urban residents rose

by 15.5 percent to reach nearly 17,800 yuan, and the per capita net income for people in the countryside also grew to more than 7,500 yuan, up 20.4 percent.

The northeastern Chinese province is undergoing great changes because of increased investment, a growing number of industrial projects and preferential policies to promote innovation.

The provincial government is prioritizing upgrades and optimization of the industrial structure while enlarging its scale.

"We want high speed and high quality as well," said Sun Zhengcai, Party chief of the province. "Quality should be the priority."

The government has taken a series of measures over the past two years to boost its economy on a county-by-county basis.

It believes that investment is a key driving force of the

economy. In 2011, a total of 744.2 billion yuan was invested in fixed assets, growing more than 30 percent. Thanks to this injection of funding, high-tech sectors and service industries have emerged.

At the same time, the efficiency of large-scale industrial enterprises has been improved, with energy consumption per unit GDP reduced by 4.25 percent. The sulfur dioxide emission and chemical oxygen demand were cut to meet the national standard over the 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-2010).

With a series of encouraging policies, the private economy is also developing quickly in Jilin, with 50.5 percent of the GDP last year contributed by the private sectors.

The government aims to double the province's GDP by 2016. The province also seeks to double the net income of people in urban areas and the countryside by then, Sun said.

Major projects

Jilin has a number of ongoing infrastructure and tourism projects as well as plans for building industrial parks.

The China-Singapore Jilin

Food Park was planned in 2008 at the seventh Asia-Europe Meeting. It is the third strategic joint project by the two nations after the Suzhou Industrial Park and the Tianjin Eco-City.

The food park is to be located in Yongji county, which has upgraded its food safety infrastructure through such actions as establishing five roadside animal inspection stations.

With investments totaling 23 billion yuan, the nation's largest tourism project was also started on Baishan Mountain.

Additionally, Changchun, the provincial capital city of Jilin, has attracted many of the Fortune 500 companies, including Toyota, General Motors and Ireland's CRH.

Six highways were completed in the last year, bringing the total length of the province's highways to 2,250 kilometers, half of which was added in the last two years.

The cultural industry has also caught the eye of policymakers. Jishi Media Co Ltd, a cable TV operator based in Jilin, was listed on the Shanghai Stock Exchange in February, marking a milestone for the development of the province's



Employees work at the production lines in a factory of FAW-Volkswagen Automotive Co Ltd.

cultural industry.

Innovation, industry

Jilin was one of the nation's earliest industrial bases when the People's Republic of China was founded, but it has lagged behind the coastal regions in recent decades. To revive the province's industry, the government is planning nearly 90 major projects to boost emerging sectors.

The auto industry accounts

for about 70 percent of the industrial volume of Changchun, but in recent years, new sectors, such as food processing and train manufacturing, are taking off.

Both the government and companies in Jilin see innovation as a new source of development. In the last year, eight achievements by Jilin companies and research institutes were granted national technical awards.

"If industrialization and urbanization are the two wings of a plane, modern agriculture is the tail," said the provincial Party chief, "without a firm tail, the plane will be off course."

Jilin province has led China in per capita consumption of meat for 12 consecutive years, and the province is also the only one in the nation where per capita grain ownership is more than 1 ton. Six of the top 10 grain producing counties are in Jilin.

SOCIAL SAFETY NET EXPANDED

At the end of the last year, the social insurance system covered the entire population in the province, including rural residents.

Social insurance for rural residents, a new type of social insurance system, was listed in the top 10 issues that the provincial government identified at the beginning of this year as focal points for quality of life projects.

Residents in 53 counties are covered by the pilot program, accounting for 88.3 percent of the total number of counties in the province, 28.3 percentage points higher than the national average.

More police cars are seen in the evening in the provincial capital Changchun since July last year. It is a new service model for the city's public security bureau, and it allows police to engage communities at a grassroots level to enhance the people's sense of safety.

The crime rate of the city declined 8.7 percent in 2011 compared with the previous year. At the same time, the number of traffic accidents fell by 18 percent, with the death toll down 2.2 percent. And the number of people injured in fire accidents declined by nearly 70 percent.

Project brings much needed heat

By ZHANG ZHAO
zhangzhao@chinadaily.com.cn

The winter of 2009 was extraordinarily chilly in Jilin, with cold spells and snowstorms raging in the Northeast China province.

But thanks to the Warm Houses Project carried out by the government, the people of Jilin have a warmer winter to look forward to.

As part of the project, municipal workers replaced the old plastic covered steel windows with new materials that cost only 130 yuan (\$20.6) per square meter.

A resident in Changchun, the provincial capital, surnamed Zhao, aged over 60, never misses a chance to show off her affordable, high-tech windows to friends and relations whenever they drop by.

"I paid only 2,000 yuan for 15 sq m of windows in my home," Zhao proclaimed, noting that she had heard that the same materials can cost at least 260 yuan per sq m on the open market. "It's so cheap because the government subsidizes our purchases."

The project is part of the provincial government's overall plan to improve the quality of life in the region.

Statistics shows that the average income of Jilin residents in urban areas and the countryside has been increasing faster than the province's GDP growth rate.

Modernized residential communities are being built where

shantytowns once stood, while old houses are being repaired to be warmer and more comfortable. Many farmers are now rich enough to buy their own cars.

In the last two years, the total heating capacity in the province increased by more than 55 million sq m after authorities reconstructed 818 kilometers of pipelines and 811 boiler houses.

Using investments totaling more than 140 billion yuan, the provincial government built affordable houses covering a combined floor space of 149 million sq m.

More than 20 percent of the province's population benefited from the project, which has helped more than 6 million people in 2.1 million households improve their living conditions.

The Warm Houses Project and home reconstruction, along with a number of other projects have improved not only infrastructure but also services including

property management in the residential communities.

Three villages in Jilin were granted the status of national ecological villages, and 17 towns were named national ecological towns. There are also 38 nature reserves in the provinces covering altogether 2.3 million square kilometers.

While rapid urbanization has meant more people living in newer areas, farther from their workplace, robust scientific and technological development has brought about more complicated, multi-layer traffic systems.

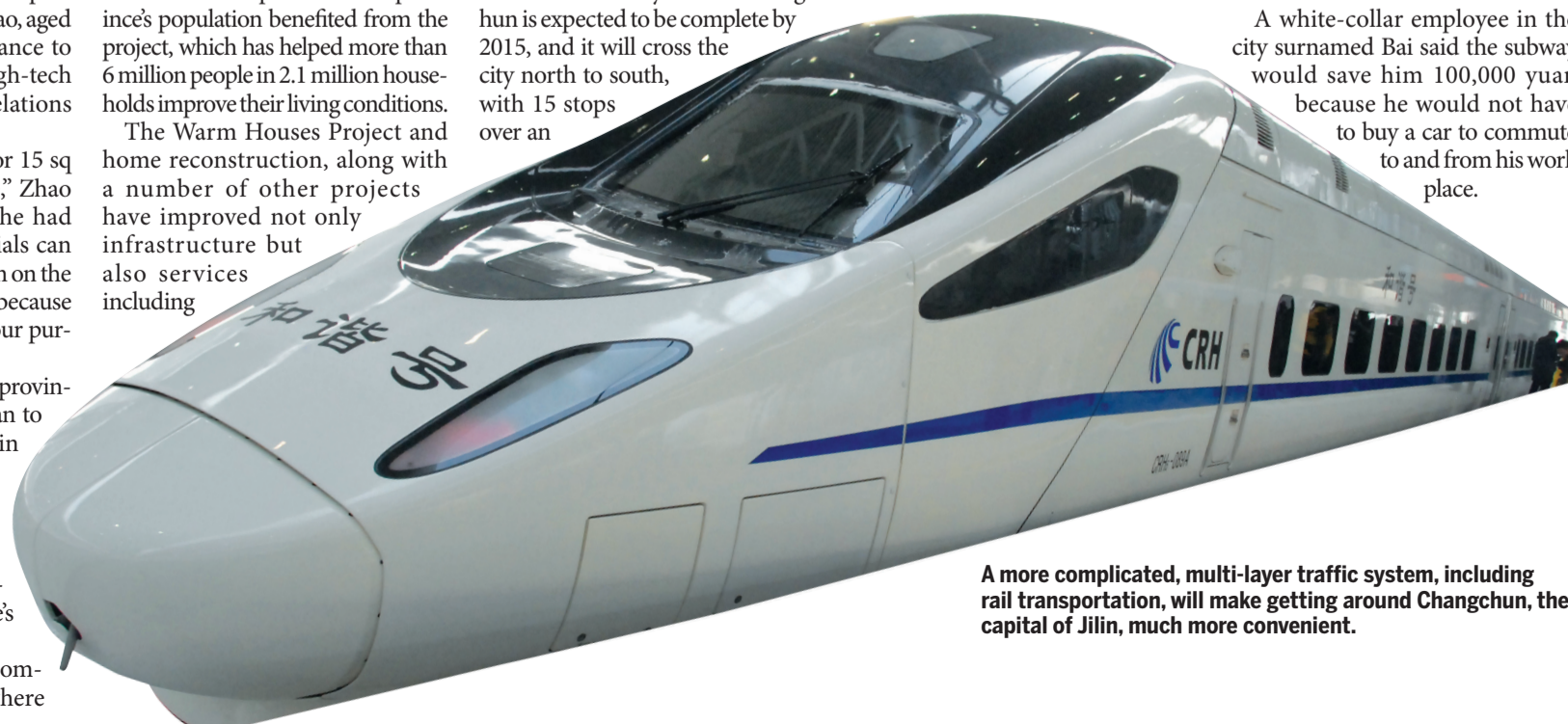
The first subway line in Changchun is expected to be complete by 2015, and it will cross the city north to south, with 15 stops over an



The Warm Houses Project is part of the provincial government's overall plan to improve quality of life in recent years.

18.5-kilometer route.

A white-collar employee in the city surnamed Bai said the subway would save him 100,000 yuan because he would not have to buy a car to commute to and from his workplace.



A more complicated, multi-layer traffic system, including rail transportation, will make getting around Changchun, the capital of Jilin, much more convenient.