

# Ningbo Set to be Pioneer of Common Prosperity

By Jin Lu

At a conference held by the CPC Ningbo Municipal Committee on June 25, Ningbo announced its roadmap to make substantial progress in becoming a pioneer city for common prosperity by 2025.

On June 10, the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council jointly published an outline of Zhejiang's future efforts to become a demonstration zone of common prosperity, where best practices would be developed and rolled out nationwide.

As one of the main cities of Zhejiang province, Ningbo has explored innovative measures and garnered experience through rural revitalization and new urbanization strategies. The gap between Ningbo's urban and rural areas continues to narrow.

## Villages Prospering with Accessible Opportunities

Standing in a grove of bayberry trees laden with fruit, a flock of chickens pecking around his feet, Xie Wenke, a villager of Henghe village, Cixi, uses a livestream to show his audience the organic fruit and eggs he harvests from his orchard and farm.

Online livestreaming platforms are a new way for villagers to boost their business. The orchard's beautiful scenery has attracted a large number of followers. Many purchase Xie's produce regularly.

"Through livestreaming, users, especially high-income people from big cities, can see the view of our orchards and how the bayberries and eggs are harvested. These things trigger their curiosity and interest," Xie said.

The extensive reach of online platforms means villagers no longer need to worry about the sales of their produce.

In Yuelou village, Xiaotang township, experienced growers are providing professional services to farmers.



Jiangbei's Yunhu Lake is now a demonstration destination for red tourism and agro-tourism. [Photo by Wang Peng, Shen Guofeng]

Zhang Yan has been offering help to her community since graduating from a university in Japan. With the help of Zhang, many villagers are now equipped with professional agricultural knowledge.

Currently, 80% of the farmers in Yuelou Village grow the "Red Beauty", a variety of premium citrus. The cultivation area of "Red Beauty" citrus in the village is over 30 ha, and the average income per hectare exceeds 1 million yuan, 30 times more than regular varieties of fruit.

The increasing income of farmers is narrowing the gap between Ningbo's urban and rural areas. According to statistics, in recent years, the income ratio of urban and rural residents in Ningbo has shrunk from 2.06:1 in 2011 to 1.74:1 in 2020. The per capita income of farmers has been growing faster than that of urban residents for 18 consecutive years.

Last year, Ningbo rural cooperatives' total assets reached 102.3 billion yuan. The cooperatives distributed 3.21 billion yuan

in dividends, ranking first in the province.

## Accelerating Urban-Rural Integration

Urban and the rural integration is the key to common prosperity, officials and experts said. Integration will accelerate the development spillover from urban to rural areas.

Xumin village in Ninghai county is famous for its stone architecture and has now become a popular tourism destination.

At Xumin, tourists can walk among verdant trees, across wide fields, and on the shoreline of shimmering lakes. They can visit a local museum, converted from an old residence, where sewing machines, radios, photos, and other items from a bygone era are on display. They can also purchase local specialties from villagers' streetside stores, set up with the support of favorable local policies.

Thanks to improved trans-

portation infrastructure and public facilities, many villages like Xumin have transformed into more modern and beautiful versions of themselves. Villagers' lifestyles are no different from urban residents'.

Upgraded public services in both rural and urban areas accelerate the progress of common prosperity in Ningbo.

Since the establishment of Haishu No. 2 Hospital on Shiqi Street, the number of daily outpatient and emergency visits has continued to increase. The hospital has successfully carried out complicated operations.

"You no longer have to travel long distances to see a doctor. Booking appointments via smartphone apps saves a lot of time," said a farmer from Haishu.

## More Breakthroughs in Innovation Needed

To achieve the ultimate goal of common prosperity, what should Ningbo do in the future?

Wei Jiang, dean of the School of Management at Zhejiang University, said attaining more breakthroughs in innovation and core technologies will be key to tackling Ningbo's economic challenges, including the high homogenization of local industries.

He explained that an economy built on the foundation of scientific and technological innovation will be critical if Ningbo is to transform into a pioneer city for common prosperity.

"Ningbo has passed the primary phase of powering growth by tapping into its factors of production. Now, wealth must be created through innovation," said an expert from Ningbo University.

In the future, Ningbo must focus on improving its innovation capacity and stimulating the vitality of market players, while resolving the problem of unbalanced, inadequate growth through reform and innovation, said the expert.



## SPOTLIGHT

# Fotile Group: Spearheading Intelligent Manufacturing in an Emerging Ningbo

By Gou Wen

As a rising manufacturing powerhouse, Ningbo is home to 51 manufacturing enterprises that have been recognized as "sector champions of the manufacturing industry" by China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

Recently, journalists from CGTN came to Ningbo to report on the remarkable progress of the city's manufacturing industry. They visited two enterprises to witness the latest advancements in intelligent manufacturing. Fotile Group is one of them.

In China and across Asia, stir-frying is a popular cooking style. Thus, there is a great demand for powerful range hoods, presenting a challenge for product research-

ers and developers.

In order to measure the effectiveness of their products, the developers stir-fried about 1,000 kilograms of chili in their laboratory. "The range hood has to be powerful enough to suck away all discernable oil fumes from the air, even when chili is being stir-fried—this is our criteria," said Wang Yanhui, general manager of Fotile's range hood product line.

During technology development, Fotile has encountered challenges. Previously, their products could not meet the standards of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). Out of safety considerations, the IEC requires the bottommost part of the range hood to be at least 65 cm above the stovetop. In response, Fotile invented the side

suction range hood, which meets the distance criteria and has better performance.

Mao Zhongqun, Chairman and President of Fotile Group, said, "if we don't focus on innovation and start fighting a price war instead, the industry will quickly collapse. If leading enterprises such as ours keep innovating and spearheading progress, the industry will thrive." The many iterations of new Fotile products are linked by a common thread: innovation, driven by customer demand and customer satisfaction.

Fotile's pursuit of technology advancement has already borne fruit. As of May 2021, Fotile has successfully applied for 5,000 patents, including nearly 900 invention patents. Since its inven-

tion in 2015, the Fotile sink dishwasher has earned 331 domestic patents and 40 invention patents.

Fotile's R&D expenditure accounts for 5% of its sales reve-

nue, making the company eligible for preferential tax policies offered by the Tax Bureau of Hangzhou Bay New Area. Over the next three years, Fotile will further increase its R&D spending.



Fotile's innovative manufacturing being covered by CGTN reporters. [Photo provided to Ningbo Times]

## HISTORY & CULTURE

# Making Lucky Tiger-Head Shoes

By Dong Na

In Chinese culture, tigers are regarded as auspicious. People decorate the toecap of children's shoes with tiger-head embroidery in the hope that the children who wear them will grow up to be as strong and lively as tigers.

Tiger-head shoes were more common a generation ago, but with the advent of modern lifestyles, they are gradually disappearing from regular people's lives.

Fortunately, the art of making tiger-head shoes has not been lost. It lives on with Zhenhai artist Jin Shanzhen, inheritor of the intangible cultural heritage "tiger-head shoe crafting".

Tiger-head shoes may look simple, but the actual production process is very complicated. There are over a dozen steps, requiring thousands of stitches. Usually, it takes Jin three days to complete a pair of delicate tiger-head shoes.

Jin also makes miniature tiger-head shoes no bigger than her thumb as novelty items to attract young people.

With growing awareness for intangible cultural heritage protection, people are becoming more interested in traditional culture. Jin organizes intangible cultural heritage workshops in local communities, teaching people her unique handicraft skills.

For beginners, the hardest part is embroidery. Jin starches the fabric to make it stiffer and easier for learners to push their needles through. She also lets beginners use beads and sequins for the parts that are difficult to embroider, such as tiger eyes.

"Nowadays, the pace of modern life is getting faster. Making tiger-head shoes is a delicate craft that requires much patience. I hope more young people could take the time to appreciate this art form and pass it on to future generations," Jin said.

Chief Adviser: Zhao Qingchuan  
Proofreader: Gou Wen

