

Striving Towards a Modern Coastal Metropolis

Solid Steps Stressed for Steady Growth in Foreign Trade

By Jin Lu

The value of China's foreign trade in the first four months of this year was 12.58 trillion yuan (\$1.88 trillion), up 7.9 percent year-on-year, the General Administration of Customs announced on May 9th, among which exports totaled 6.97 trillion yuan, up 10.3 percent and imports reached 5.61 trillion yuan, up 5 percent.

However, the growth rate of foreign trade in the first four months was 2.8 percentage points lower than that of the first quarter.

For Ningbo, the key tasks must be effectively implemented with a clear division of responsibilities and solid steps taken to facilitate stable foreign trade while overcoming difficulties, according to a enterprise symposium on May 10th.

Ningbo's Foreign Trade up 12.6% Jan-April

Ningbo's imports and exports were valued at 404.22 billion yuan (\$62.19 billion) in the first four months of this year, an uptick of 12.6 percent year-on-year, according to the official statistics from Ningbo Customs.

To break down, its exports totaled 262.57 billion yuan, rising 16.6 percent year-on-year, while its import volume amounted to 141.65 billion yuan, an increase of 5.7 percent.

Despite the growth, the global economic recovery is uneven, monetary policy changes in major developed economies are having negative spillover effects on the world, and the bottlenecks of the global supply chain are still difficult to address.

All of these factors result in a slow down in the growth rate of foreign trade in April compared to the first three months.

"The second quarter will be even harder!" When talking about the current foreign trade development, Zhou Jule, Chairman of China-base Ningbo Group, said during the symposium.

"With the gradual restoration of overseas supply chains, more orders are transferring to Southeast Asia and other places. In addition, the rising prices of



Meishan Port.

[Photo by Tang Jiankai]

crude oil, coal, natural gas, and other materials will have a significant impact on exports," he added.

RCEP to Help Boost Economic Growth

In the face of a more complex and souring external environment, the fact that Ningbo's imports and exports still maintained growth fully demonstrates Ningbo economy's strong resilience, ample potential, wide room for maneuver, and sound fundamentals.

On April 28, Bros Eastern Company released its first quarterly report. The company achieved an operating income of 1.975 billion yuan, a net profit of 345 million yuan attributable to shareholders of the listed company, an increase of 54.58% over the same period last year, and a net profit of 336 million yuan attributable to the parent after deduction, an increase of 55.82% over the same period last year.

Yang Weixin, the Chairman,

was not surprised. "A few years ago, we set up a large-scale production base in Vietnam, which is a member of RCEP. In recent years, we have continuously optimized production capacity and expanded the layout, and thus win more market share."

For Ningbo, its economic and trade cooperation with RCEP countries has embarked on a fast growth track in recent years, with close collaboration across the entire manufacturing industrial chains.

Over the first four months, the Ningbo-RCEP trade volume hit 100.97 billion yuan, edging up 1 percent year-on-year.

As foreign trade faces multiple pressures, the RCEP is expected to provide more growth room for the exports through creating new market demand with tariff concessions.

Experts said that the RCEP will spur technological innovations and upgrades among manufacturers to meet market demand. It will also promote the establishment of new standards, rules and regulations among the

member states, creating a more favorable external environment for the manufacturing sector to upgrade.

More Efforts Called for to Help Boost Foreign Trade

Foreign trade still gives good support for achieving the goal of ensuring stability and improving the quality of Ningbo's foreign trade this year. But the complexity of the situation means that Ningbo needs to act more proactively.

"Policymakers must be soberly aware that foreign trade and foreign investment still face many risks and challenges due to internal and external uncertainties," said the expert.

Zhang Yan, the Director of the Municipal Bureau of Commerce, said that the city is about to introduce a series of new foreign trade policy. Compared with the previous years, the city has increased its payment by 210 million yuan.

The government will give

full play to the leading role of major foreign trade firms and speed up its cultivation of "little giants", or innovative small and medium-sized enterprises that have played a crucial role in consolidating the country's supply and industrial chains.

Through policy assistance, Ningbo works with China Export and Credit Insurance Corp to give full play to the role of export credit insurance in risk prevention and credit enhancement.

By stepping up the use of export credit insurance, the municipal department will protect exporters from the risk of non-payment by foreign buyers, and improve foreign trade companies' risk-hedging capabilities amid fluctuations in the Renminbi-US dollar exchange rate, as part of its efforts to stabilize the market and spur foreign trade growth.

"We always say with great difficulties come great opportunities," Zhou Jule said that he will continue to do his best in the second quarter, and that he believes that the stable growth can be maintained.



SPOTLIGHT

Ningbo Ranks Eighth in Public Service Quality Satisfaction

By Dong Na

Recently, the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) announced the results of public service quality monitoring (PSQM) nationwide in 2021.

Ningbo's public service quality satisfaction in 2021 was 82.49 points, ranking eighth among 120 cities in China and hitting a new high.

The PSQM framework involves twelve aspects, including public education, public employment, medical services, social security, public utilities, ecological environment, public transportation, public safety, public culture, public sports, elderly services, and administrative services.

Among the 120 cities, 40, or 33.3 percent, scored between 80 and 100, which means the people are satisfied with the quality of public services, down 10.3 percentage points from 2020. The remaining 80 cities all scored between 70 and 80 points, indicating a relatively satisfactory level. Nanjing, Hangzhou, Taizhou, Hefei, Zhenjiang, Lhasa, Guangzhou, Ningbo, Shanghai, and Beijing rounded out the top 10.

Since 2020, the satisfaction of each item of Ningbo's public service quality has exceeded 80 points, all of which are in the "satisfaction" range. Among the sub-scores of Ningbo, public education, elderly service, public employment, social security, medical service, ecological environment, and other six satisfaction indicators ranked within top 10 nationwide; public culture, administrative services, public utilities, public safety, public sports, and public transportation all ranked within the top 20. Among them, public utilities, public education, elderly services and ecological environment rose by more than 10 places.

It's worthy to mention that Ningbo ranked fifth in the field of public education service with 81.79 points. The public education score is calculated by assessing the enrollment in kindergartens and compulsory education schools, implementation of the "double reduction" policy and after-school services in compulsory education schools, school food safety and nutrition and health. The result shows that through digital reform, Ningbo has comprehensively deepened the construction of high-standard education methods and high-quality education system, and fully promoted the high-quality development of education in Ningbo.

Chief Adviser: Zhou Fangzhou
Proofreader: Dong Na

双语汇 Different Tongues

韭山列岛：隔海相望的鸟类天堂

By Gou Wen

Located in the East Sea, the Jiushan Islands are 18.5 kilometers away from Changzuitou. The main protected species here are large yellow croaker, finless porpoise, and various seabirds, who form a harmonious and balanced marine reef ecosystem.

韭山列岛是东海的一座岛屿，与大陆最近点长嘴头相距18.5公里，这里的主要保护对象有大黄鱼、江豚以及各种海鸟，这些物种通过保护形成一个和谐平衡的海洋岛礁生态系统。

Jiushan is also home to Chinese crested terns. Not long

ago, they returned from south, and the researchers on the island spotted the "legendary bird" again. As the most rare bird in China, the Chinese crested tern is listed in the Red List of Threatened Species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. At present, the global population of this bird is no more than 150.

这里也是中华凤头燕鸥的家。前不久，南下越冬的中华凤头燕鸥返回，岛上的科研人员又看到了“神话之鸟”。作为中国最珍稀鸟类，中华凤头燕鸥被列入世界自然保护联盟濒危物种红色名录，目前全球种群数量不超过150只。

In order to retain the "legendary bird", Zhejiang launched a project to attract Chinese crested terns. At least 110 Chinese crested terns have been hatched in the Xiangshan Jiushan Islands National Nature Reserve, accounting for nearly 80% globally and making it the largest breeding site of Chinese crested terns in the world.

为留住“神话之鸟”，浙江启动中华凤头燕鸥繁殖种群招引和恢复项目，象山韭山列岛国家级自然保护区已孵化至少110只中华凤头燕鸥，占世界各繁殖地总量近八成，是世界上最大中华凤头燕鸥孵化繁殖地。



Jiushan Islands. / 韭山列岛。

[Photo by Yang Zhonghua] 杨忠华 摄

