Solar burns bright in dark corners

Chongqing is one of the cities in China with the least sunshine, so perhaps it’s one of the last places you would expect innovation with solar energy to be going on, and yet that’s exactly what’s happening.

In the solar power parks of local factory sites, photovoltaic panels are putting up an impressive and prominent display of the sustainable development of the city, an industrial powerhouse in southwestern China.

In April, Chongqing Auto, one of the city’s leading carmakers, began operating the largest rooftop photovoltaic project in the city, with a total installed capacity of 37.5 megawatts.

The project, covering 74 acres across 10 units of rooftop parks, is expected to generate 667 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually, reducing the use of standard coal by 264,550 tons and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 738,650 tons, Chongqing Auto says.

During the opening ceremony, Chongqing Auto officials described how the project is just the beginning of the company’s sustainable development strategy and that they hope to gradually expand it to cover all production sites.

In January, Chongqing Longjiang Industrial, a steel company that uses a lot of energy, installed more than 2,000 panels on its factory roof.

"We expect to save 600,000 yuan ($80,000) a year," the company’s deputy general manager said.

Once stained in faded blue paper boxes for almost 60 years and buried away in a tall cabinet, the vibrant, ready-to-wear garments are now elegantly displayed on a meticulously organized shelf.

A remarkable collection of dresses known as "opera," "cheongsam," or "uppertone," from Hong Kong, many from the 1960s or 1970s, have spanned time and space and found new life as an exhibit in a new studio in Beijing.

Guo Huiwen, 22, opened Xiran, a boutique that sells the outfits this year.

"I was attracted by the style, pattern, and material of the clothes," Guo said.

"The experience of picking through the collections of all the pieces, imagining what each one might look like on someone, represents women’s wisdom and accumulated sense of time: they are truly perfect," Guo said.

Located in Dongcheng district in Beijing, the studio is open to the public during the summer to look for fabrics or dresses. Typical fabrics include silk, embroidered cotton, and silk crepe satin. The shop is preparing to start making new outfits using old techniques, so Guo also offers her customers’ brand new and custom-made dresses.

"I was a freelance stylist with about 10 years of experience," Guo said.

"I wanted to start my own brand and create something that could resonate with modern people.

"Xiran is an example of Chinese traditional clothing. Its origins lie in the ethnic clothing of different minorities in China, and its design is inspired by the traditional Chinese textile techniques.

"Over the years and across different regions in the country, the design of Chinese-processed clothing evolved. In the 1990s and 2000s, as Hong Kong’s economic development boomed and the fashion industry grew, the traditional Chinese clothing began to experience rapid development. This development led to the creation of new fashion brands in China.

"Xiran" is a reference to the Chinese word for heaven, and Guo hopes to bring together traditional and modern elements in her clothing designs. She plans to create a unique brand that reflects the cultural heritage of China while also appealing to modern consumers.

"Chongqing’s blue-white walls and distinctive rooftops have always impressed me," said Guo. "I want to bring these elements into my designs, creating a connection between the past and the present.

"I think this is an excellent opportunity to introduce Chinese traditional clothing to the world and to showcase the unique魅力 of Chinese culture."

"I hope my customers will enjoy these beautiful outfits and appreciate the craftsmanship that goes into making them."

"It’s important to maintain the integrity and authenticity of the traditional Chinese clothing, while also adapting it to modern fashion trends."

"Xiran" is a Chinese word that means "heaven," and Guo hopes to create clothing that feels like it belongs in the sky.

"In Chinese culture, the sky is considered a symbol of freedom and aspiration. I want to tap into this spirit and create clothing that reflects this idea."

"I have always been fascinated by the connection between traditional and contemporary fashion, and I believe that there is a lot of potential for creativity in blending the two.

"I’m looking forward to creating a brand that is both traditional and modern, and that resonates with people of all ages."

"I hope that my customers will wear these outfits and feel like they are part of something greater than themselves, something that connects them to the past and the future."

"I want to create clothing that is not just fashion, but also culture, that celebrates the richness and diversity of Chinese traditional clothing.

"I believe that fashion is a powerful tool for cultural exchange, and I hope to use my brand to share the beauty and richness of Chinese traditional clothing with the world."

"I’m excited to see how people will react to my clothing and to see how they will wear it. I hope that they will appreciate the craftsmanship and beauty of the designs, and that they will feel a sense of connection to the heritage of China.

"I’m also looking forward to collaborating with other designers and artists to create a truly unique and innovative brand.

"I hope that my brand will inspire others to explore and celebrate Chinese traditional clothing, and that it will help to preserve and promote this important aspect of Chinese culture."

"I’m excited to see where this journey takes me, and I look forward to sharing my creative process with others."

"I believe that fashion is not just about clothes, but about expressing oneself and connecting with others. I hope that my brand will allow people to do both.

"I’m excited to see how the world will react to my clothing, and I’m looking forward to the new opportunities that come with it."

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Pastures for posterity

ChinaWATCH

Chengdu FISU Games leave lasting memories

The 33rd International University Sports Federation (FISU) World Games from July 15 to August 2 were attended by more than 11,500 student athletes from 156 nations, providing a platform for student athletes to achieve their dreams. In this view, the event has made the dreams of students of all walks of life come true whether they have won medals or not, because their experiences in the city have been unforgettable.

Eric Samran, secretary general of the Federation, said that the Chengdu FISU Games exceeded expectations. He believed that it would serve as a template for future FISU Games.

David Schmid, president of the Continental University Sports Federation, said that the Chengdu FISU Games were held under tough and unprecedented conditions.

He noted that the facilities and services provided were of world-class standards.

The games included 31 sports, 157 events, 22 international and 32 domestic competitions.

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After 10 years, free trade zones go into top gear

The digital trade is becoming a trend in international trade development and a key driver of future trade growth. This trend has been showcased at the recent China International Fair for Trade in Services. At the fair, 96 countries and regions, including 23 Heads of State and Government, have set up pavilions. The fair showcases the latest global digital technologies, products, and services.

The logistics service provider International Terminal Services (ITS), a China’s pilot free trade zone, is working on the smart service platform for the construction of an efficient and high-quality internet of logistic services. It is operated in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, and Shanghai, completing more than 10,000 security checks of various products by May. At the fair, ITS displayed a new webinar control robot, which was designed for high-risk scenarios in medical services and rescue operations. A staff member said the robot can achieve the goals of digital delivery on multiple platforms with high accuracy, thus reducing the cost of logistics, and improving efficiency.

In service platform Methusea’s fourth-generation unmanned aerial vehicle, which was showcased at the event, features artificial intelligence logistics. It is operated in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, and Shanghai, completing more than 10,000 security checks of various products by May. At the fair, ITS displayed a new webinar control robot, which was designed for high-risk scenarios in medical services and rescue operations. A staff member said the robot can achieve the goals of digital delivery on multiple platforms with high accuracy, thus reducing the cost of logistics, and improving efficiency.

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The exhibits at the China Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum in Beijing's Liulihe district are an invaluable resource. I believe they are not only a reflection of China’s intangible cultural heritage, but also embody the Chinese characteristics in various areas. It is the director-general of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Bureau of Serbia, Dorkovic, who, as a social media influencer, said a media tour is an effective way to boost the influence of cultural and tourism promotion, virtual reality and the digital economy. Serbia has a unique cultural tradition, which has important references for China, and we are working on new areas, including my own country. Losan Budaric, a renowned professor and director-general in charge of the department of cultural heritage and tourism, showed great interest in Beijing's museums, and he hoped that Beijing, people and the city are able to contribute to the cultural state of two-way interaction.

After learning about Beijing residence policies and seeking help from the local government through hot lines, joining the flag-raising ceremony and hunting for paper squares, the social influence and popularization in Beijing feel the people's participation in the city's governance.

A recent forum on intangible cultural heritage in the national image, Xu said that Beijing has been playing its part in the international rankings over the past 10 years by showing the perspectives of comprehensiveness of intangible cultural heritage’s innovation, financing, opening-up, etc.

Beijing has made the top 10 list of most visited and influential global cities, which is why the metropolis is at the forefront of cultural heritage protection and comprehensive, he noted.

The Liulihe Village District was discovered in the 1940s. Its artifacts extended the history of Beijing from 800 years to more than 3,000 years. In 2018, Beijing started to relocate one of the top 100 national archaeological discoveries in the city, and the location of the village, Beijing’s Liulihe, is protected with cultural heritage protection and renovation projects. In 2021, Liulihe was selected as one of the top 10 national cultural relics protection areas of the city. The Liulihe Site Protection Plan (2021–2035) is implemented to better protect the site's history, function and utilization of the site. The Liulihe area is promoted as the construction of three cultural districts – the Great Wall Cultural Belt, the Grand Canal Cultural Belt and the Xianhu Mountains’ Yongding River Cultural Belt – to improve the city’s historical and cultural protection system and help build itself into the country’s cultural center. In 2020, Beijing released a medium-long-term planning that runs from 2025 to 2035 for its transition into a national cultural center. Experts said the cultural belts enable the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional cultural industries.

The project also helps to improve the historical cultural ecological scenery and promote the city’s cultural development and marketing in the urban layout and promote the development of cultural travel regions involved.

Beijing is the capital city (2016–25) that has three cultural districts of the city’s historical and cultural development. Also, the cultural and tourism development of Beijing during the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–25) proposes to boost the protection and development of cultural belts. For the Great Wall Cultural Belt, for instance, the protection and renovation projects along this cultural belt.

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