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Adidas to open 2,000 new stores by 2020

Global leading sportswear producer Adidas is expected to open 2,000 new stores by 2020 in China, the company said.

CEO Kasper Rorsted said on a visit to China that its business in the country grew nearly 30 percent last year, making it its second-largest market in the world after Western Europe.

Rorsted said that last year his company — which owns other brands including Reebok, Taylor-Made and Reebok-CCM Hockey — achieved sales of 3 billion euros (\$3.26 billion) in China on the back of updated products, new stores and the vibrant development of e-commerce.

The sportswear producer currently has more than 10,000 stores in China. In 2016, Adidas opened 1,000 stores in the country.

Hefei fair to attract foreign investors

China's central provinces are expected to attract more foreign investment at the 10th Central China Investment and Trade Exposition, which will be held in Hefei, in East China's Anhui province, from May 17 to 19. The expo aims to strengthen new drivers for regional economic development, officials said on April 25.

In the first quarter of the year, foreign investment flowing to the region — mainly Hunan, Henan, Hubei, Anhui and Jiangxi provinces — increased by 1 percent year-on-year, Wang Shouwen, vice-minister of commerce, said at a news conference in Beijing.

"The growth rate equals the national average," Wang said.

Central China has unique advantages in absorbing foreign capital, due to the region's geographical location, abundant labor force and supportive policies, he said.

JD.com unveils new logistics services arm

Chinese e-commerce giant JD.com on April 25 announced the establishment of JD Logistics, a new business group under JD.com, to provide smart supply chain and logistics services.

The group said JD Logistics would provide business partners with comprehensive supply-chain solutions, including warehousing, transportation, delivery, after-sales services as well as logistics services, including smart and cross-border logistics.

It will work together with Jingdong Mall to share online and offline resources and join hands with JD products.

JD said its new unit would leverage the company's advanced



AN ADIDAS outdoor advertisement in Beijing, one of the brand's major markets in China. WANG GOUDAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

technology and logistics expertise to provide smart supply-chain and logistics services to businesses across a wide range of industries, to help reduce costs, increase efficiency and improve user experience.

Illegal fundraising to face severe crackdown

China will tighten its crackdown on illegal fundraising to protect people's interests and fend off systemic risks, the Office of the Inter-agency Anti-illegal Fundraising Taskforce said on April 25.

China saw 5,197 illegal fundraising cases in 2016, involving 251.1 billion yuan (\$36.5 billion), down 14.48 percent and 0.11 percent year-on-year, respectively, according to the office.

It is the first time both figures declined, showing that the rising trend of illegal fundraising in past years has been contained, said Yang Yuzhu, head of the office.

Pressure growing on listed banks: Report

China's listed banks' net profits continued to grow in 2016, but they will face increasing pressure to maintain this growth, according to a report published by PwC on April 24.

The report analyzed the 2016 annual reports of 27 A-share and H-share listed lenders — six large commercial banks, seven joint-stock commercial banks, nine city commercial banks and five rural commercial banks.

The net profits of the 27 listed companies in 2016 totaled 1.32 tril-

lion yuan (\$191.9 billion), up 3.2 percent year-on-year, it said.

Pretax profits were flat or declined for the large commercial banks, as net interest income declined and growth in fee-based income was slow.

At some joint-stock and city commercial banks, operating profit growth remained healthy, but net profits were affected by provisions.

Silicon Valley Bank JV plans Shenzhen branch

SPD Silicon Valley Bank (SSVB) plans to open a branch in Shenzhen in the summer of 2018, another big step in its robust expansion across China.

The Shanghai-headquartered bank opened its Beijing branch in February and signed a memorandum with the Shenzhen government on April 20 on the establishment of a branch in the city, a technology and innovation hub.

SSVB will invest 100 million yuan (\$14.5 million) as the startup capital for its Shenzhen branch and support its "solid growth" with additional capital, according to Dave Jones, the bank's president.

SSVB is a joint venture (JV) between Shanghai Pudong Development Bank Co and US-based Silicon Valley Bank.

Unicom venture to offer in-flight Wi-Fi service

China United Network Communications unveiled a joint venture with local partners on April 25, as the country's second-largest telecom carrier by subscribers scram-

bles to offer in-flight Wi-Fi services.

The State-owned company said UnicomAirNet, with a registered capital of 200 million yuan (\$29 million), will develop communication systems and offer technological support to enable passengers to surf the Internet onboard planes.

The new venture comprises China Unicom's broadband network unit, Chinese on-train Wi-Fi service provider Hangmei Online, and a unit of Sichuan Haite High-Tech Co, which repairs aircraft equipment.

An official license for the in-flight Wi-Fi service is expected to be granted at the end of this year, said a China Unicom senior executive.

Top-end Beijing office rents seen falling 15%

The rent for Grade A office space in Beijing's central business district is expected to drop 15 percent by the end of 2021 as supply is anticipated to rise from this year, industry experts said.

The Grade A office vacancy rate in Beijing rose to 6.1 percent from January to March, up 0.5 percent from the last quarter of 2016, leading to a 0.2 percent decrease in the average monthly rent to 335.1 yuan (\$48.6) per square meter, according to a report by Savills, a London-based real estate adviser.

Four new projects contributed 153,000 sq m of working space to the local market in the first quarter of 2017. With that, the leasable high-end office space in Beijing has grown to 10.08 million sq m, said Xiong Zhikun, head of project and development consultancy at Savills China Research.

Quotable

"Signing this memorandum of understanding fits into our vision of a new kind of internationalism."

JIN LIQUN, president of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, after the World Bank Group and the China-led AIIB signed an agreement on April 23 to strengthen cooperation and knowledge sharing.

"There are many opportunities for Adient in China's development of transportation, including railway and aviation."

DARLENE KNIGHT, Adient's vice-president and head of China operations, saying China will play a key role in the United States-based automotive seating supplier's strategy of having its non-automotive revenue reach \$1 billion per annum by 2021.

"Chinese consumers have an increasingly higher requirement on values and a stronger desire for healthy products."



RAHUL COLACO, China president of Royal FrieslandCampina, noting that the Dutch dairy giant is bullish on the growth potential of the market in China.