

Striving Towards a Modern Coastal Metropolis

Photo Exhibitions at Ningbo's Global Factories Strengthen Cross-Cultural Bonds

By Jin Lu

On May 23, the first edition of "Ningbo in Photographs: An Exhibition Series in Global Companies" opened in Phnom Penn, Cambodia. This event marked a significant cross-border dialogue and a cultural exchange that breaks barriers. Ningbo's iconic "Smile of the East" and Cambodia's renowned "Smile of the Khmer," two globally celebrated cultural symbols, converged at the exhibition, held on the premises of Ningbo companies' overseas factories in Cambodia. This unique opportunity provided local workers with a deeper understanding of Chinese culture.

This exhibition marks the beginning of a year-long endeavor: Ningbo, a pivotal city in global trade, plans to organize 100 photography exhibitions at 100 overseas factories, building more bridges of cultural exchange and friendship.

A Meeting of Two Smiles

In Cambodia, it is common to see people greeting each other with a Buddhist gesture, palms pressed together. The streets are filled with kind, friendly, and sincere smiles. These smiles possess an infectious power.

The "Smile of the Khmer" refers to the serene and peaceful smile of the four-faced Buddha statue at Bayon Temple in Angkor Wat, Cambodia. The Buddha's faces, with their slight smile and typical Khmer features, exude a mysterious charm that sparks the imagination. These smiles symbolize the Cambodian spirit of facing life with optimism, regardless of hardships.

The smile of the Maitreya Buddha at Xuedou Temple in Fenghua, Ningbo, was featured alongside its Cambodian counterpart in the photo exhibition. The image of the Maitreya Buddha, with a big belly believed to be capable of "digesting" all worldly troubles



"Ningbo in Photographs: An Exhibition Series in Global Companies" opens in Phnom Penn, Cambodia. [Photo by Huang Jin]

and a smile directed at the world, is known as the "Smile of the East". It embodies the spirit of tolerance and kindness of the Chinese nation.

Different smiles, but the same spirit. The meeting of these two cultural symbols overcame the barriers of language and time. "I felt an instant connection. Seeing such a classic smile from distant Ningbo here was unexpected. It looks so open-hearted and comforting; I love it," said Chunshu Arlin, a visitor at the exhibition, echoing the feelings of many. Such is the "heart-to-heart connection" fostered by cultural exchange.

Culture has the power to transcend time, space, and national borders. The Maitreya Buddha is recognized globally, creating a bridge of cultural exchange that is inspired by history and touches hearts worldwide. Understanding the "Smile of the East" also brings a deeper appreciation for the "Smile of the Khmer".

Connecting Hearts

Each photo in the exhibition, with its poignant visual

message and bilingual text description, often telling a human story, provides an opportunity for emotional connection. The images reflect the fascinating stories of Ningbo, Zhejiang, and China, giving overseas workers a closer look at Chinese traditional culture and modern society, and evoking empathetic responses.

Photos of Sanjiangkou in Ningbo narrate the history of Chinese tea going global. Reading the detailed explanations accompanying the images, viewers can easily visualize tea-laden ships departing for Cambodia and beyond.

The exhibition also highlighted Ningbo's vitality and fast development. Photos showed high-speed trains racing through the city center and rapidly growing skyscrapers. Spectacular images of the China-Cambodia National Agricultural Industrial Park in Cambodia, left many viewers astonished.

Civilizations have become richer and more colorful with exchanges and mutual learning. Each photo delivers a powerful

message, offering employees at Ningbo's overseas factories a rich experience of cross-cultural exchange.

"These photos fill me with yearning for Ningbo. I look forward to more cultural exchange activities," said Lassi, an employee of Ningbo Seduno in Cambodia, expressing a desire to visit Ningbo soon.

Sharing Progress

At the exhibition, visitors eagerly snapped photos and shared their experience on social media. The exhibition revealed Ningbo's dynamic growth, highlighted China-Cambodia collaboration, and celebrated the advancement of both countries.

Some saw opportunities in Ningbo's booming vitality, some saw the success of China-Cambodia cooperation, and some cheered for the prosperity of their hometown.

In today's interconnected world, the voices of ordinary people can amplify a nation's global messages significantly. The photos effectively showcased Ningbo's progress, while presenting a compelling image of

a beautiful and advanced China.

Cambodia is currently experiencing rapid development, with Sino-Cambodian trade ties growing increasingly close. As a result, more Cambodians are gaining an understanding of China, with the speed of China's development drawing the attention of many.

The meticulously curated exhibition highlights the most remarkable aspects of Ningbo's progress, portraying an appealing and successful image of China.

With globalization advancing, more Ningbo enterprises are exploring international markets. In Phnom Penh alone, there are dozens of Ningbo enterprises, employing over 100,000 workers. Leading companies like Shenzhou and Seduno have established significant operations with thousands of local workers, creating robust economies of scale.

The photography exhibition enabled employees to appreciate the unique charms and commonalities of both cultures, enhancing mutual understanding and significantly strengthening their corporate culture of unity.

Dialogue with Dong Na

Brazilian Professor Shares Ningbo's Beauty with the World

By Dong Na

Our correspondent Ms. Dong Na's Brazilian friend, Prof. Evandro Menezes de Carvalho, recently concluded his first journey to Ningbo.

Prof. Carvalho is a senior visiting research fellow at Peking University's Institute for Global Cooperation and Understanding and a professor of international law at Fluminense Federal University in Brazil. He received the Chinese Government Friendship Award in 2023.

The city left a lasting impression on him, with its unique blend of rich human history and stunning natural scenery.

As the sun cast its golden rays on Ningbo's Tianyige Museum, Ms. Dong led Dr. Carvalho through its storied halls. The museum, renowned for its vast collection of rare books and artifacts, captivated the professor with its intricate carvings and elegant architecture. Together, the duo explored the exhibition, with Ms. Dong pointing out rare books and artifacts with pride. Professor Carvalho was particularly fascinated by the detailed calligraphy and stone carvings, frequently stopping to admire the intricate craftsmanship. He expressed his keen interest in understanding the profound meanings behind each artifact, to deepen his appreciation for Chinese traditional culture.

Professor Carvalho sees Ningbo as a beautiful city, highlighted by the Ningbo Zhoushan Port—the world's busiest port in terms of cargo throughput—the centuries-old Tianyige Library, and a bustling financial district. He envisions building cultural bridges between Ningbo and the rest of the world, aiming to introduce more people to this shining gem situated on the coast of the East China Sea.

The professor expressed his confidence in Brazil-China diplomatic and trade relations. He hopes to see more Brazilians visiting China and establishing cooperative ventures to strengthen bilateral ties.

"There is still potential for more cultural exchange and mutual learning between the civilizations of China and Brazil. I believe our bilateral cooperation will extend beyond the conventional areas of politics and trade. The people of our two countries should engage more with each other, inspire one another, exchange views, and share ideas," said Prof. Carvalho.

Chief Adviser: Zhao Qingchuan
Proofreader: Yan Yiran

SPOTLIGHT

Ningbo in the Spotlight of Foreign Media

By Yan Yiran

The much-anticipated China (Ningbo)-CEEC Exchange Week recently concluded, once again drawing journalists' attention to Ningbo. Nearly 30 journalists from mainstream media outlets in 14 countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, and Greece, visited Ningbo.

How did Ningbo appear through the perspective of journalists from Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs)?

"What impressed me most was the Ningbo Zhoushan Port!" said Anita Buhovski, an editor from Radio Televizija Crne Gore. Anita visited Ningbo in

March this year and was awed by the progress of China's modernization. She wrote a series of articles focusing on Ningbo Zhoushan Port.

"Previously, I had searched for information about Ningbo online and wrote articles based on what I found, translated into my own language. But when I saw the world's largest port in person, I was awestruck. It was a truly unique experience," said Anita.

This was Anita's second trip to the Ningbo Zhoushan Port. "I hope to learn more about Ningbo, a port city, especially its transportation network infrastructure and environmental protection efforts," she added.

Pavleta Davidova, a journalist from the Bulgarian

newspaper 24 Chasa, focused on trade. "Ningbo is well-known in Bulgaria due to the significant trade volume between us," said Pavleta. She noted that despite Bulgaria's relatively small size compared to China, the trade between the two countries has a profound impact on both sides.

"During my time in Ningbo, I discovered that the trade volume between the two countries has increased at a remarkable pace, truly astonishing me. I plan to cover this trade dynamic, with a special focus on the variety of products exported from Bulgaria to China," Pavleta explained.

"I filmed many short videos about Ningbo and plan to release them soon," said Nata-



Journalists from Central and Eastern European Countries visit Ningbo. [Photo by Wang Jiabin]

lia Makhviladze, an anchor and producer from Imedi TV in Georgia.

She highlighted the close friendship between Georgia and China, noting their visa-free agreement and strategic partner-

ship.

"This time, I hope to gain deeper insights into Ningbo's way of life, culture, and traditional customs. I believe it will foster mutual understanding," said Natalia.

