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Wonsan-Mt Kungang International Tourist Zone

Establishment of the Wonsan-Mt Kungang International Tourist Zone was proclaimed by Decree No. 48 of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on June 11, 2014, as a measure of the state to activate international tourism in the scenic spots on the eastern coast including the Wonsan district and Mt Kungang, one of the celebrated mountains in Korea, which are being developed into an international tourist resort.

The development of the zone is under brisk way thanks to the close concern of the DPRK government.

With abundant tourist resources and solid economic foundations, the zone has good prospects for development.

Although it is not long since the proclamation was made public, interest of foreign tourists and enthusiasm among investors are growing day by day.

Situated in the central part of the Korean peninsula, the zone includes some areas of the city of Wonsan and Anbyon, Poptong, Chonnae, Thongchon, Kosan and Kungang counties in Kangwon Province. It is also within a 3-hour flight distance from over 40 metropolitans, each with a population of over one million, including Khabarovsk and Vladivostok in Russia and Beijing, Shanghai and Shenyang in China.

As it has good climatic and natural conditions for tourism, including Mt Kungang, a world-famous mountain, tourism in the zone is winning popularity at home and abroad.

There are hundreds of scenic spots including over one hundred historical relics, sand beach, natural lakes and mineral water resources, as well as millions of tons of mud, efficacious for neuralgia, enteritis and colitis.

Increasing worldwide demand for visit to this zone constitutes an economic guarantee for the interests of investors.

The foundations and infrastructure of industry (electricity, shipbuilding, foodstuff, footwear, etc), agriculture, fishing industry, tourism and service industry built already in this zone ensure its fast development.

As Kangwon Province has long been developed into an international tourist zone and the special zone for international tourism in Mt Kungang has been operated for over ten years, officials and residents of this zone have a good understanding of tourism and are friendly towards tourists, and also the service industry is on a high standard.

The specialist tourism course at Wonsan Jong Jun Thak University of Economics, and other universities, including those of agriculture, fishery, medicine and education train talented persons for the development of the zone.

Development Plan of the Wonsan-Mt Kungang International Tourist Zone

The zone will be developed, divided into the districts of Wonsan, Masikryong Ski Resort, Ullim Falls, Sogwang Temple, Thongchon and Mt Kungang.

The general direction of the zone development is to build up Wonsan as a world-level tourist district whose various recreational and cultural facilities blend well with its ecological environment, and at the same time develop and operate the districts of Mt Kungang, Thongchon and Sogwang Temple as

districts for sightseeing historical relics with well preserved ecological environment, as districts for international tourism and for medical treatment.

The zone will observe in its development the principles of developing by stage according to the plan, inviting investment from various countries, protecting the natural and ecological environment of the zone and its surroundings, utilizing the land and resources rationally, enhancing the international competitive edge in production and service, and providing both convenience for the economic activities and interests for the public.

Development of the Wonsan District

Wonsan is the seat of Kangwon Province and a cultural, port city.

At the moment, there are the Songdowon bathing resort, Songdowon International Children's Camp, Korean-style park and recreation ground, zoo, botanical garden and Jangdokdo recreation ground, and the Songdowon and Tongmyong hotels and other lodgings in the downtown area.

The development of the central part of Wonsan induces the building of its central axis and the dwelling and industrial areas and tourist facilities, laying out of green areas and modernization of lodgings.

Construction of the central axis is planned to preserve the characteristics of the central part of the modern city by building the axis long and wide from the foot of Mt Sambong to the coast and distributing the areas around it for commercial service, cultural recreation and science and technology exchange and by making the day and night scenery colourful.

Tourist facilities and public buildings including a swimming pool, aquarium, cultural recreation hall and restaurant will be concentrated in the central part of the city along the coast. Service facilities that can accommodate 12 000 more persons will be established in the Songdowon bathing resort.

The industrial district will be built with the main emphasis on the projects necessary for operating the tourist resort.

Development of Masikryong Ski Resort and Ullim Falls Districts

The Masikryong Ski Resort is situated in Poptong County, Kangwon Province.

It has a skiing area with ten ski slopes, outdoor skating ground and outdoor swimming pool, and the Masikryong Hotel with the capacity of 300 visitors.

In the Ullim Falls district, there is the 75-metre-high Ullim Falls, one of the noted falls in Korea, which covers an area of over 1 000 hectares.

In the valley opposite the falls are the exquisite tourist attractions including the Kusul Falls, Pidan Falls and six pools. The area also has various tourist facilities including the mountaineering path, spillway dam, bridge, aquatic farm and parking lot.

These two districts plan to expand the accommodation, gymnastic and public catering facilities while efficiently operating the already-built service facilities.

Development of the Sogwang Temple District

The Sogwang Temple is situated in Solbong-ri, Kosan County, Kangwon Province.

The temple district has many famous historical relics, mountaineering paths, mineral springs, facilities for medical treatment and tourism and lodgings that can accommodate over 1 000 persons.

The district plans to open up a new mountaineering path from the Sogwang Temple to the Pomun Hermitage and renovate the existing lodgings and the surrounding tourist facilities.

Development of the Thongchon District

Chongsokjong, known as one of the eight scenic spots in the east, and the beautiful lagoons of Tongjong and Sijung are in the Thongchon district. There is also the Sijung bathing resort on the coast.

Lagoon Sijung, situated between Kangdong-ri and Songjon-ri in Thongchon County, Kangwon Province, was formed by the wave motion of the sea.

There are various cultural and recreational facilities including a bathing resort, boating-ground and angling site, a hotel and other lodging that can accommodate over 1 000 persons and welfare service facilities, as well as several sanatoria and holiday camps including the Sijungho Sanatorium.

As a beautiful place where the mountains, sea and natural lakes blend well, the district has been known historically as a holiday-making and tourist area. It is planned to be developed to serve various tourist purposes all the year round, including sea bathing, golf, physical exercise, hotel, restaurant,

cultural recreation, treatment by mud baths and so on. Foreign investors are allowed to rent land in this district so that they can develop infrastructure and conduct real estate business.

Lodgings that can accommodate over 5 600 persons and tourist and service facilities are to be built in area around Lagoon Tongjong and tourist service facilities including a bathing resort, boating-ground and passenger quay near the natural park in the Chongsokjong area.

Development of the Mt Kumgang District

The Mt Kumgang district is located between Kosong and Kumgang counties in Kangwon Province.

Mt Kumgang is world famous for its queerness, magnificence and beauty. It has over 30 natural monuments, over ten historical relics, two nature reserves, bathing resort and Kumgangsán hot spring.

The district plans to increase various tourist facilities, expand the capacity so that it can accommodate more than 10 000 persons and build more natural parks, a folklore street, traditional martial arts hall, aquarium and other recreation facilities.

Facilities along the mountaineering paths, including a cableway, will be built or reinforced, and the Mokran and Tanphung restaurants and the other existing service facilities will be renovated.

Development of Port, Railway, Road, Electricity and Ecological Environment

The Port of Wonsan will be renovated, and small- and medium-sized passenger terminals built.

The existing Wonsan-Mt Kumgang railway will be renovated for freight transport, and a new high-speed tourist railway will be built parallel to the Wonsan-Mt Kumgang tourist road.

The existing Wonsan-Mt Kumgang tourist road will be upgraded and a new one will be built. The road in the central part of Wonsan is planned to be expanded, and various other sections reconstructed so that they can form a ring road in each district.

For electricity supply, a new substation with tens of thousands of kVA capacity will be built, the existing hydraulic power generating capacity increased, and renewable energy used in an effective way so as additionally to produce hundreds of thousands of kW of electricity.

Wonsan plans to prevent sea pollution completely. To this end, it intends to raise the level of disposal of sewage into the first class by building a large-scale solid waste treatment plant, renovating sewage treatment plants and improving the urban sewage network management system.

Wonsan-Mt Kumgang International Tourist Zone Development Process

After its groundbreaking on May 20, 2015, a large building force has been engaged in the construction projects of the Wonsan district; like water supply, drainage, electricity supply, the Port of Wonsan, railway and other types of infrastructure, as well as apartment houses.

In late May, 2015, the 2015 Seminar on Investment in the Wonsan-Mt Kumgang International Tourist Zone was held on Mt Kumgang. Over 100 overseas compatriots and foreigners attended there. Various documents reflecting the investors' will and memoranda of understanding and agreements were concluded during the seminar. Some of the agreed projects are being intensified in the form of contract while some others actually started investment. Later, some businesses have presented proposals to hold the seminar on a larger scale.

Tourism in the zone has gained new aspects. In addition to the sightseeing of the sea, lake and Mt Kumgang it is planning various other themes including mountain marathon, race, mountain biking, and aerial sports. These kinds of tourism are being prepared with foreign travel agencies.

The Wonsan District Development Corporation hopes that competent foreign investors will take part in the development of the tourist zone and actively cooperate with it.

The zone plans to actively introduce foreign investment while pushing ahead with the zone construction and tourism development in parallel. To this end, foreign investors are provided with many privileges in various aspects including taxation and land use by the law of the DPRK on economic development park. Especially, more privileges will go to those who invest in advance on the condition of getting reward later or accept the overall land developing method until 2017.

The Wonsan-Mt Kumgang International Tourist Zone will turn into a base for the tourist zone development that combines the comprehensive natural beauties of the sea, mountain, valley, lake and city on the basis of the potentials of world-level tourist resources, and provide an opportunity for the foreign investors participating in the development to gain satisfactory economic profits.

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