

Introduction

Ningbo, often called Yong for short, is a coastal city in Zhejiang Province of China. It lies in the south of the populous Yangtze River Delta and faces the East China Sea. It covers an area of 9,365 km² and has a population of nearly 6 million. Under its jurisdiction there are two counties (Xiangshan and Ninghai), three county-level cities (Yuyao, Cixi and Fenghua) and six urban districts (Haishu, Jiangdong, Jiangbei, Zhenhai, Beilun and Yinzhou).

Ningbo enjoys the same rights as possessed by a provincial government in terms of economic management. As a large city entitled to formulate local laws and regulations, it is a famous historic city with a rich cultural heritage.

It is the birthplace of the Neolithic Hemudu Culture dating back more than 7,000 years.

Two thousand years ago, Xu Fu, a necromancer of the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.), led a fleet from here and thus commenced China's exchanges with other countries.

Ningbo first rose to importance during the latter part of the 5th century, when Korean ships found it the most convenient port for contacts with the southern capital city of Nanjing. Under the Tang Dynasty (618-907) this traffic continued. Although official relations lapsed after 838, private trade continued on a large scale.

In the 11th century Ningbo became a centre of the coastal trade. Its importance grew with the establishment of the Southern Song capital at Hangzhou in 1127, when overseas trade to and from the capital flowed through Ningbo. It grew rapidly during the Song (960-1279) and Yuan periods.

The early period of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) brought a setback to Ningbo's development. Overseas trade was deliberately curtailed by the

government and the building of oceangoing ships prohibited. Even coastal trade was severely restricted. Ningbo was attacked by Japanese pirates, and became a major defensive base. Its growth seems to have stagnated, however, until the last quarter of the 15th century when the rural prosperity of its hinterland began to recover.

This recovery was assisted when the Portuguese began trading in Ningbo in 1545, at first illicitly, but later (after 1567) legally. Still later, Dutch and British merchants arrived, and began to trade with China from Manchuria to Canton, as well as with the Philippines and Taiwan. Ningbo was the commercial centre of the coastal plain to the east of Shaoxing and an outpost for the Yangtze River Delta area, to which it was linked by the Zhedong Canal leading to Shaoxing and the Qiantang River. As a result, in the 17th and 18th centuries Ningbo merchants became important in China's internal commerce and began to play a national role as bankers in the early 19th century. In 1843 Ningbo was opened to foreign trade as a treaty port. But trade declined and its place was taken by Shanghai.

As a famous historical and cultural city, Ningbo has rich tourist resources including Xikou Town in Fenghua, Dongqian Lake, Sand Beaches at Songlan Mountain and Hot Spring in Tianming Mountain. There are also well-known Buddhist temples: Tiantong Temple, Asoka Temple, Xuedou Temple and Baoguo Temple.

Of a typical subtropical monsoon climate, Ningbo features mild temperature with moderate humidity and distinctive seasons, and is an ideal resort for the enjoyment of both its natural and cultural endowment. A tranquil coastal city, Ningbo's 500-km coastline forms a scenic seascape. The people of Ningbo have throughout their history had a deep affinity for the ocean. The Sun (or Rihu) Lake and the Moon (or Yuehu) Lake, dug in the seventh century, are also a particularly beautiful sight.

Historically, Ningbo has been the home of very influential academic schools, as represented by Yangming School and East Zhejiang School. It has produced

such great thinkers as Yu Shinan, Gao Zecheng, Wang Shouren, Zhu Shunshui and Huang Zongxi.

Ningbo is also the cradle of Chinese merchants as represented by the Gang of Ningbo, or Overseas Ningbo Merchants.

Today's Ningbo is the best developed city in Zhejiang Province. It ranks the fourth in China for its per capita income and the second in terms of consumption level.

Ningbo is best known for the Port of Ningbo—one of the four largest ports in China. It is of convenient access by air, sea, train and expressway.

Ningbo has shown great potential for development. Since China adopted the policy of Reform and Opening up, Ningbo people have pursued the trends of this new era. Visitors may witness the results of dramatic changes that have taken place in this city: widened roads, more diverse styles of dress on the part of the local people, and Mandarin gradually supplanting the local Ningbo dialect.

Ningbo is an active participant in the progressive world trends. By the year 2010, Ningbo will be modernized into a more open international port city boasting an even stronger economy, more advanced science and culture, greater affluence, and better social fabric and environment.



Natural Conditions

Located in the middle of China's coastline Ningbo lies in the northeast of Zhejiang Province, and the east of the Ning-Shao Plain, 120°55' and 122°16' E, 28°51' and 30°33' N, with an area of 9,816 km², including an urban area of 2,642 km². The south of Ningbo is hilly land and on the northeast is Ning-Shao Plain. Facing the sea on the north, south and east, Ningbo has 9,758 km² of sea space, 788 km of coastline, and 527 islands, rich in resources for ports. The city proper is located between Tiantai Mountain and Siming Mountain, with the Yaojiang River and the Fenghua River flowing within, which merge into the Yongjiang River.

About 7,000 years ago when the sea retreated back from the land, part of Yongjiang River plain began gradually to extend from the mountainous area to the sea, thus forming a stage for our ancestors. Hemudu Culture, by its abundant unearthed discoveries, has revealed the early people's lives in a most vivid way. Ningbo is therefore also one of the cradles of Chinese civilization.

Siming Mountain

Siming Mountain is an offshoot of the Tiantai Mountain Range, which runs northeast along Yuyao, Yinxian and Fenghua, and being a watershed of the Yongjiang River and Cao'e River. The average height of Siming Mountain is between 100-300 meters. The mountain is also called Gouyu Mountain, with Dachang Mountain the highest peak at 979 meters, Huangnijiang Mountain 978 meters and Naibu Mountain in Yinxian, 915.5 meters.

The mountain derives its name from a cave in Dayu Mountain, where the light of the Sun, the Moon, and the stars can penetrate into the four window-like apparatuses. The word Siming means "four lights" in Chinese.

Tiantai Mountain

Tiantai Mountain originates in Tiantai County, going northeast through Xiangshan, Beilun and Yinxian and forming the south of Ningbo. The average height is between 300 and 600 meters. The highest peak is Wanghaigang in Ninghai (931 meters), followed by Dongbanshan in Xiangshan (811 meters), while the third highest is Taibaishan (657 meters). These mountains were originally linked to Zhoushan, but gradually separated through the movement of the sea and land.



Forests

Ningbo has a hilly area of 502,251 hectares, with 393,530 hectares of forest. The forest coverage is 31.1%, except for Fenghua, 41%. Ninghai contains mountain area of 933 million m², making 74 % of the total area, while Xiangshan owns a mountain area of 4667 million m², making 75 % of the total area. The whole city has a wood capacity of 2.08 million m³ with Ninghai the biggest county of 540,000 m³.

Islands

Ningbo has over 300 islands of various sizes, totaling about 250 km² and covering 3.3 % of the land space of the city. The largest islands include



Daxie and Meishan in Beilun, Gaotang and Lingtou in Xiangshan. Most islands are on the east coast, and situate in Xiangshan, whose islands cover 15.1% of land area. The islands, most of them being offshore, are featured of low height, little size, and low density of population.

Harbors and Ports



Ningbo has got coastlines of 830 km, one third of Zhejiang's total. The coastlines along the islands total 600 km. The largest ports of Ningbo are Port of Beilun, Port of Zhenhai and Port of Shipu in Xiangshan. With Xiangshan harbor in the middle, Ningbo borders Sanmen Bay and Hangzhou Bay on the south and north. The large rivers of Qiantang, and Yongjiang, as well as numerous streams, form a concentrated river network, making offshore seas perfect for marine organisms.

The coastal tide in Ningbo is an irregular semidiurnal tide, with two high tides and two low tides per day. The average high tide is 3.14 m over Wusong zero point with a record high of 4.86 m, and the average low tide is 1.47 m with the lowest record at 0.31 m.

Rivers

Ningbo is in a region of crisscross rivers and lakes in the south of the Chiangjiang (or Yangtze) River, being part of the eight river systems of Zhejiang. The biggest rivers are the Yongjiang, Yaojiang, and Fenghua rivers.

Yongjiang River

The Yongjiang River starts at the Three-River Mouth (or Sanjiangkou), where it forms a junction with the Fenghua and Yaojiang River, and flows out of Zhenhai into the East China Sea. The drainage area is 13 km².

Fenghua River

The Fenghua River is a mainstream of the Yongjiang River. It is 121 km long with a drainage area of 1,963 km².

Yuyao River

The Yuyao River (or Yao River) is another main stream of the Yongjiang River, and is 109 km long with a drainage area of 2,690 km².

Mineral Resources

Ningbo has 35 varieties of mineral resources, including 21 metal ones and 14 nonmetals. The former mainly consists of lead and zinc, magnetite, pyrite, and iron glance; the latter of gypsum salt and clay. Xiangshan has the richest mineral resources, with over 20 varieties, especially kaolin, zeolite and fluorite. Ninghai is best known in China for its clay.

Vegetation

Ningbo is located in the south of the north subtropical zone, and its vegetation is typical. Common in the mountain area are camphor trees, bamboo,

and masson pines. In the plains, the major crops are rice, cotton, rapeseed, broad bean, wheat, and vegetables.

Climate

Ningbo enjoys subtropical monsoon climate featuring mild temperature, moderate humidity and distinctive seasons. Its average annual temperature is 16.2°C, with July being the hottest month (average temp. 28.8°C) and January the coldest (average temp. -4.2°C). As the frost-free period lasts about 230-240 days and the crop growth period 300 days, it is suitable for the growth of grain, cotton and oil plant, etc. The annual precipitation averages 1,300-1,400 mm. The precipitation from May to September contributes 60% of the year's total.

Population

In 2006, the population of Ningbo grew at a slow rate with a registered population of 5.604 million and the birth rate, death rate and natural growth rate being 3‰, 5.6‰, and 1.7‰ respectively.

By 2020, the population in Ningbo is estimated to maintain a stable growth, owing to the increased natural population growth and the fast growth of immigrations from outside Ningbo.

History

The history of Ningbo is closely related to the sea and the city. About 7,000 years ago, the people of the Hemudu Culture built a fishing village, from which present-day Ningbo evolved.

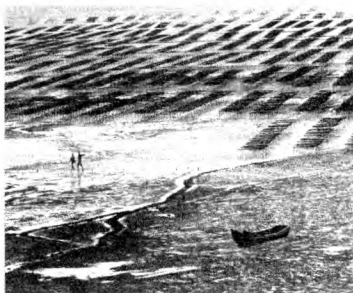
The recorded history of Ningbo can be dated back to the Xia Dynasty (2000—1600 BC), where the first written historical record of the name of the city appears. During the Spring and Autumn Period (770—476 BC) in Chinese history, Ningbo was part of the kingdom of Yue, and later, when the kingdom of Yue was destroyed by the kingdom of Chu, Ningbo became part of that kingdom.

In the year 222 BC in the Qin Dynasty, Ningbo belonged to the Qin after the Qin's conquest of the kingdom of Chu. The seat of the town was several miles to the east of today's city proper.

During the Han Dynasty, the Three Kingdoms' Period and the Wei and Jin dynasties, while the name of the city was slightly changed, the location remained unchanged. It was in 621 AD, or during the Tang Dynasty that the city proper moved to where now the three rivers meet. In 627, the whole nation was divided into ten provinces, and the county of Maoxian, or Ningbo, belonged to that of Jiangnan. It was in the Tang Dynasty that the city received the name of Mingzhou.

During the Tang, Song, Yuan and Qing dynasties, the location of the city changed from place to place and the governing area also changed accordingly. In 1658 in the Qing Dynasty Ningbo Taidao was established, controlling the five counties of Yin, Cixi, Zhenhai, Fenghua and Xiangshan.

Ningbo is also called “Yong”, after the



Yongjiang River.

In 1987 Ningbo was listed as one of the cities specifically designated in the State Plan, and in 1994 it was deemed a quasi provincial-level city.

Trade

The unearthed relics of the Hemudu Culture show that ship building in Ningbo area began about 7,000 years ago, in the Neolithic Age. Its reputation as a commercial city in history can be known by its ancient name: Maoxian County, meaning a Trade County and indicating the prosperity of trade.

In the Tang Dynasty, Ningbo was one of China's three major ports, trading celadon ware and silk goods with over 20 countries in South Asia including Japan and Korea. Thus the city was one of the biggest three in China at that time, the other two being Yangzhou and Guangzhou.

In the Song Dynasty, in the year 990, a government office responsible for foreign business affairs and tariff was established in Ningbo. Thus, in the South Song Dynasty, when the capital city moved to Hangzhou (called Lin'an at that time), the importance of Ningbo was even more enhanced.

In the Yuan and Ming dynasties, Ningbo was still a major port and trading center in China and enjoyed a prominent position in terms of trade and foreign business. However, in 1523, after Japanese escorts had robbed the city, and later Japanese pirates had invaded, the Central Government issued an order prohibiting any foreign business in Ningbo.

However, in 1842 after the Opium War Ningbo was made a treaty port together with the cities of Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou and Shanghai.

Traditionally, Ningbo people have been well recognized both at home and abroad for their talents in trading and business. Today, there are over 300,000 people of Ningbo origin living in over 64 countries and regions, many of them being successful merchants and known as the Overseas Ningbo Merchants, or

Gang of Ningbo. Overseas Ningbo Merchants are representatives of those Chinese merchants who portray their tradition of the pioneering spirit, honesty, industry, and patriotism.

Silk Road via Sea

In the 1960s, some Japanese scholars raised the concept of the Silk Road via Sea. For, whether by sea or land, the Silk Road refers to the broader concept engaging in communication between the East and the West as in ancient times. Today, many research institutes, museums and memorials have mushroomed along the sea routes of related countries or cities, and a number of well-organized activities have been held. Among the 102 historical and cultural cities in China, Guangzhou, Quanzhou and Ningbo are most famous for their deep involvement in the silk trade via sea.

Ningbo's involvement with the Silk Road via Sea since ancient times has been evidenced. Artifacts from the Hemudu Culture site prove that the locals were quite active as navigators!

It is especially noteworthy that after the Tang and Song dynasties Ningbo became a key port for the exporting of chinaware, making itself as famous as Guangzhou, Yangzhou and Jiaozhou. History has also recorded the communication between Ningbo and Japan, Korea and Southeast Asia in past centuries.

New Perspectives

Though Ningbo in ancient times boasted thoroughfares, and had formed a city proper encircled by the civil wall, it was rather backward before liberation (1949). From 1949-1989, the city infrastructure developed quickly with 400 km of roads in Haishu, Jiangdong and Jiangbei, the three urban districts and the road size per capita was 7 m². The symbol of the city, the three rivers, became an obstacle hindering urban traffic, while garbage and drainage stations struggled to meet modern standards.

The 1990s witnessed the rapid development of a Ningbo whose awareness of urban construction had been awakened. Set within the background of the nation's quickening steps in economic development, and exploitation of the advantageous geographic location, and flexible economic system, the city of Ningbo developed quickly. It engendered a fast-growing economic power and strength, a deep change in social life, and bigger and more spacious living spaces. The skyline of the city changed dramatically at the same time.

Ningbo began to extend itself both eastward and westward, thus having gained a bigger space for further development. To solve the traffic problems that hindered future development, Ningbo city in 1994, engaged in a 3-year campaign to make facile the traffic flow, and eventually to form a three-horizontal four-vertical city transportation framework. Based on this framework, the city raised a develop-to-the-east strategy. A number of roads and bridges started to be built. By the year 2000, 3 bridges and 24 four roads had been built, which extended the city greatly to the east. At the same time, with the extension of Huachengbei Road, Zhongshanxi Road and Lianfeng Road, the city also made itself bigger to the west.

It is worth mentioning that during the new round of city construction, the

city also tried to meld a high level of construction with beautification. The new Century Road, Tongtu Road, Beiwaihuan Road and Nanwaihuan Road, the extended Jiangxia Bridge, Jiefang Bridge, Xingning Bridge together with the newly constructed Qin Bridge, Yongfeng Bridge and Zhilan Bridge, these newly built roads and bridges bring the city an even more harmonious aroma.



The building of skyscrapers once and again changed the skyline of the city. Until the 1980s, Tianfeng Pagoda, which was a building from the ancient Sui and Tang dynasties, marked the number-one height in Ningbo. However, ever since 1990s, a great many of skyscrapers began to appear in Ningbo, and the record of number-one highest building has been once and again broken. Located in Zhongshan Road and finished building in December 1995, the Zhongnongxin International Business Center was the first one to reach a height of 138 m, which was even the highest in Zhejiang Province. While in July 2004, the newly built Lingjiangmingting reached a height of 179.2 meter, which is the highest building in Ningbo now.

Until now, there are hundreds of high or super-high buildings in Ningbo, among which 13 are above 100 meters. In the Sangjiangkou area where the three rivers join, skyscrapers are mushrooming and the appearance of a modern city has come into being. There will be even more skyscrapers in the newly future: the Shangri-La Hotel Compound, the Mingzhou Garden Hotel, and the Jiahe Center, to name just a few.

With a long history of civilization dating back to Hemudu Culture, Ningbo is making strides on the road to modernization. A number of landmark buildings have been gradually built up.

The rebuild of the Moon Lake (or Yuehu Lake), which was a 600 million yuan project, got started in 1999. The lake was built in the Tang Dynasty, has been taken as the apple of the eye in the people of Ningbo. After a year's construction,

the once-messed up lake has regained its beauty.

With the new-century bell still ringing in the air, the largest ever building project, the Central Business District (CBD), started on the way. Over 4,000 residents were moved, 1.4 billion yuan was invested and the occupation was over 200,000 m², and all this was for the Tianyi Square, or “commercial aircraft carrier” in Ningbo, which began to navigate in 2002. The Tianyi Square was a perfect combination of beauty and function, fashion and tradition, with altogether 22 buildings in different styles, the biggest music fountain in Asia and a gigantic water screen for movie showing. This grand construction project created a mode that the government does not put in any money but utilizes investment from commercial organizations to construct big projects.

The Old Bund (or Laowaitan) in Ningbo, boasting a history even longer than the Bund in Shanghai, is another fashion center of the city. Due to its low-lying position at the Yongjiang riverfront, it has been neglected for years. However, with the construction under protective measures, it has now become a place converging the real and the imaginary, the new and the ancient.

The three rivers have not only brought up the local civilization, but present a splendid landscape. To highlight the waterfront landscape Ningbo has been attaching great importance to the facelift of the river banks and waterfronts.

In the year of 2000, a big campaign was carried out to renovate the Sanjiangkou area. To the south of Sanjiangkou, the old Jiangxia Park and another piece of land was linked together by a green belt. To the east, the Qing'an Guild Hall was well renovated, and the Shanshan Park was rebuilt into a port of a Ming Dynasty style, making this part antique-like. To the north, the Catholic Church and the Qianye (Monetary) Guild Hall—the earliest bank in China were restored to the original, making this part western-like. Thus, the three parts joined make this area a bright spot of the city. The Ningbo Grand Theater, a project costing over 500 million yuan has been finished, making the riverside cultural corridor take initial shape. Other places of interests, such as the City Library, the Folk Arts

Center, the Museum of Art will make Yaojiang River- the mother river of Ningbo an even nicer place to visit.

To improve the housing conditions the city government has made tremendous efforts to redevelop old buildings and build new ones. To redevelop or renovate old buildings can solve the shortage of housing on the one hand, and improve the city image on the other. The past years has witnessed the most dramatic efforts made by the city of Ningbo to redevelop the older parts of the city.

In the past 5 years, over 14 million m² commercial building has been finished, 5.2 million m² of which was in the downtown areas. At the same time, 34 old residential communities were renovated with a total floor space of 3.4 million m² and 50,000 households benefited. Over 1.5 million m² of non-set apartments was renovated, benefiting some 32,000 households. The living conditions of the residents were very much improved and the appearance of the city greatly beautified with a great number of newly-built residential communities coming into being. The per capita housing space rose from 6 m² in 1978 to 17.1 m² and over 90 per cent of the citizens have an apartment of his or her own.

To set up an optimized apartment providing system Ningbo has quickened its steps to build up more economical apartments and carry out the low-rent system. It became the first city in China to impose a ceiling price of houses. The experience of Ningbo has been well credited by other cities.

To green the city and build an ecological city one has been a goal of the city government. Nice trimmed gardens, tree shadowed residential area, wide and neat roads and streets, colorful green areas with blooming flowers and fresh grasses... These are the impressions that the city may give to people. Recently, through relentless efforts, the city of Ningbo has gained the title of "National Garden City", and is on the way to winning "National Ecological City".

In 1996, Ningbo invested some 12 million yuan to green the 17 km-long Jiangnan Road, thus beginning a large-scale greening project. In 1999, a 600

million yuan project, or the first round of the facelift of the Moon Lake was finished, making the Lake a beautiful garden. At the same time, walls, temporary buildings, illegal buildings and some old buildings were cracked down to make room for the beautification of the city. In 2002, the Jiangdong Park and the Central Park in the People's Road were greened, and 150 hectares of green land was added. By 2003, over 700 hectares of green land had been added with a per capita area reaching 10.6 m², increasing by 222 per cent. Until now, the green land coverage reaches 36.53 per cent, higher than the 30.1 per cent some 5 years ago. A green land framework focusing on the three rivers and six banks and the Moon Lake has been basically completed.

In terms of construction of facilities for environment improvement, two sewage treatment plants have been built; one is in Jiangdong District, and the other in the Development Zone. Until now, there are sewage treatment plants in the city proper, with a daily capacity of 200,000 ton of sewage, and of the daily sewage, 42.1 per cent will get treated. A daily capacity of 1,000 ton garbage incineration power station has been built, which was the number one in scale at



that time. Of the daily garbage, 84 per cent will get processed into harmless stuff. As for water supply, the daily capacity reaches 2.09 million tons, with that in the city proper 1.4 million tons, up 44 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. The air, water and noise control has been greatly improved thereafter, thus making Ningbo have won the honor of Model City in Environment Protection granted by the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA). Compared with that of 1998, the city has enlarged itself by 60 per cent, the per capita road size has increased by 130 per cent, the per capita green land has increased over 100 per cent, and the per capita household area has nearly reached 30 m². In 20 years to come, the city of Ningbo has set up the objectives that the population will reach 6.7-7.0 million, with 2.5 million living in the city proper, and that the green coverage will reach

over 70 per cent. With the awards as National Model City in Environment Protection, National Garden City, National Clean City in hand, the city is striving for the title of Best Livable City in China and National Civil (Wenming) City.

According to the blueprint approved by the Central Government most recently, to the year of 2010 Ningbo will go all out to develop Yuyao in a balanced way, carry out the development strategy for the new east urban area (NEUA) and the port of Beilun, optimize the location of port-based industries, hi-tech industries, logistics and commerce, speed up the construction of city infrastructure, complete the city transportation, enhance the quality and cultural taste of the city, and well implement the greening strategy.

The plans show that the Sanjiangkou area will develop to the east, forming a framework of NEUA and the north part of the city will be expanded in a leapt way. The area of Beilun will extend both eastward and westward, quickening the steps of developing near-sea and near-harbor industries. Zhenhai will extend westward and southward and to form a new urban area.

From a general perspective, the recent plan is to be divided into two parts, the redevelopment of the old areas and the construction of new ones. The construction focuses on the Sanjiangkou area and Beilun District, with NEUA, Yinzhou central area, Dongqianhu Lake area, Zhenhai new area and northern new area as the key projects. As for Beilun, it will develop the west and central parts, Gaotang area and the eastern coastal area. The redevelopment will be combined with the protection of historical sites, the construction of the cultural corridor along the riverbanks, and the greening of the riverbanks. All the non-set apartment buildings in downtown Ningbo will be redeveloped.

The focus in the near future is to put more money into the construction of city infrastructure, to enhance the ability to resist natural disasters, to complete the transportation system and to optimize the port conditions. The city will also attach great importance to environment improvement and upgrading the environment quality. The city of Ningbo will protect and preserve its cultural and