



TWO SESSIONS

How does China lead the world in mobile payments?

BY LIU SHAOHUA

When delivering his most recent Report on the *Work of the Government*, on March 5, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang pointed out that "in terms of high-speed rail, e-commerce, mobile payments and the sharing economy, China is leading the world." The report stated that rapidly emerging growth drivers are reshaping China's economic model, are profoundly changing the way we live and work, and have become a new hallmark of China's innovation-driven development.

Since the birth of Alipay in 2004, China's mobile payment industry has created dozens of unique application scenarios through innovation and technology enhancement. In turn, these advancements are bringing great convenience to

the daily lives of all Chinese people. Moreover, the developments continue to drive the shared bicycles and many other new industries, many of which are now global leaders and well ahead of their overseas rivals.

China's mobile payment industry ranks first in the world in terms of market size. In 2017, the country's third-party mobile payments amounted to about 100 trillion yuan, and are expected to continue high-speed growth in the future. According to statistics compiled by world-renowned research company Ipsos, China's mobile payments have a penetration rate of 77 percent, much higher than those of the United States, Europe and Japan.

"Mobile payments not only provide convenience, but also promote the development of small and micro enterprises. They have



In a shopping mall of Bangkok, Thailand, a shop clerk scans the QR code of Alipay on a customer's phone to finish the payment. (Xinhua)

indeed played a very important role in promoting inclusive finance and economic and social development. Some of these functions cannot even be replaced by traditional finance," explained He Qiang, a member of

the CPPCC National Committee and a professor at Central University of Finance and Economics.

Mobile payments are no longer limited just to "payments" themselves. Striking and even

phenomenal application scenarios have been created in the emerging industries of smart healthcare, smart transportation, mobile e-commerce, taxi-hailing apps, municipal services and unmanned economies. For example, now people can use Alipay to take buses in 50 Chinese cities, pay their utility bills, check in at the hospital and make inquiries about social insurance and housing provident fund in more than 300 cities.

In fact, mobile payments are expanding from China to the rest of the world. In India, Malaysia, South Korea, Indonesia and other countries, Alipay's parent company, Ant Financial Services Group, has invested or jointly invested in the development of mobile payment products. (People's Daily)

How China changed over the past five years?

Since the First Session of the 12th National People's Congress, China has made historic achievements and seen historic changes in terms of both its economic and social development. What are they?

Economic strength

China's gross domestic product (GDP) has risen from 54 trillion to 82.7 trillion yuan, registering average annual growth of 7.1 percent. Its share in the global economy has grown to roughly 15 percent, up from 11.4 percent. Meanwhile, China's contribution to global growth has exceeded 30 percent.

Structural transformations

Consumption's contribution to growth has increased from 54.9 to 58.8 percent. The share of the service sector has risen from 45.3 to 51.6 percent of the total economy. High-tech manufacturing has achieved an average annual increase of 11.7 percent. The urbanization rate has risen from 52.6 to 58.5 percent.

Innovation-driven development

China's investment in research and development has grown at an average annual rate of 11 percent, ranking second in the world.

The contribution of technological advances to economic growth has risen from 52.2 to 57.5 percent.

Living standards

More than 68 million people have been lifted out of poverty, including a total of 8.3 million relocated from inhospitable areas.

Personal income has increased by an annual average of 7.4 percent, creating the world's largest middle class.

Old-age pension schemes now cover more than 900 million people and basic health insurance plans cover 1.35 billion people, combining to form the largest social safety net in the world.

Better environment

Both energy and water consumption per unit of GDP have fallen more than 20 percent, the release of major pollutants has been consistently declining, and the number of days of heavy air pollution in key cities has fallen by 50 percent. Forest coverage has increased by 10.87 million hectares.



Passage and news spot

During China's "two sessions", the "ministers passage" is an important news spot where Chinese ministers to release authoritative information, explain reports and policies, introduce ministerial work, and answer questions on hot issues and common concerns. Every year, the passage is usually crowded with journalists to glean some information. Here, Mr. Liu Yongfu, Director of the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, is answering questions raised by journalists in the "Ministers Passage". In addition, there are also "passages" for NPC deputies and CPPCC members during the "Two Sessions".

Photo by Xinhua

Maintain sustainable economic growth through the Belt and Road

BY WANG YIWEI

The Belt and Road Initiative is blazing a new path for the further development of China and the world. In the Report on the *Work of the Government* delivered during China's "two sessions", Chinese Premier Li Keqiang mentioned the Belt and Road Initiative five times. The report pointed out that China is committed to achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration with Belt and Road countries, while also acting on the outcomes of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. China, continued Li Keqiang, is also working toward building major

international corridors, expanding industrial capacity cooperation with other countries and improving the composition of outbound investment.

With the construction continuously deepening, Belt and Road economic and trade cooperation has achieved fruitful results. First, the scale of trade is growing. In 2017, total imports and exports between China and Belt and Road countries reached 1.1 trillion U.S. dollars. Second, the scope of related investment continues to expand. Third, large-scale projects were steadily advancing. Railways, highways, ports and other infrastructure facilities are being completed one

after another, energy and resource cooperation projects are gaining momentum, and a number of manufacturing projects have been put into operation. China has built 75 overseas economic and trade cooperation zones in Belt and Road countries, with cumulative direct investment exceeding 60 billion U.S. dollars. The Belt and Road Initiative is increasingly contributing to the development of world peace, prosperity, opening up, innovation and civility.

The development of new things never progresses without some setbacks. In response to the doubts raised by the outside world, Chinese President Xi Jinping has put

forward the Green Silk Road, a development path stressing high ethical standards and other concepts, which have enhanced the world's confidence in the Belt and Road Initiative. Meanwhile, the overall position of China's goals has been clarified with facts.

In the face of facts and opportunities, more and more Western countries such as the U.K. and France are actively participating in Belt and Road programmes. The Belt and Road Initiative needs the participation of developed Western countries, and Western countries also need the Belt and Road Initiative. (The author is a senior researcher at Renmin University of China.)

NPC deputy helps villagers get rid of poverty

BY ZHANG YIN

From a migrant worker to the outstanding manager of a Hong Kong company, and then to the deputy of the National People's Congress, Yuan Haibo, a young man from Yunnan born in 1991, is still learning and exploring. When the reporter met him in the residence site for the NPC deputies during the "Two Sessions", he was discussing with other deputies on how to follow the road to prosperity for his hometown.

Yuan Haibo was born in the hilly valley of Ciyang Town, northeast Yunnan's Qiling District. Unfortunately, his town is a impoverished area.

"Villages in my hometown are mostly sericulture farmers. After they raise the silkworm, they sell the silkworm cocoons. But they can earn more if they sell finished or semi-finished products."



Yuan Haibo during the "Two Sessions" Photo by Lei Tongsu

Haibo told the reporter that he had a "magnificent" idea: to set up a cooperative and invite the villagers in neighboring villages to join in so that he can lead them out of poverty to pursue a better life.

Haibo said in addition to the policies and financial support provided by the government, if the villagers can go out of the moun-

tains, see the outside world and return to their hometowns, their ideas will surely change, and this will affect and change their style of life and production.

This idea is closely related to Yuan Haibo's experience. After graduating from high school in 2010, in order to ease the family's burden, Haibo packed his bag and went to Yiwu, the International Trade City in east China's Zhejiang Province and got a job there as an international export salesman for a lock shop.

In finishing his job, he had to deal with foreigners every day. Haibo began to learn English on the Internet. At that time, Haibo was just 20 years old. But he realized that getting rich himself was not real rich, and he should help his native fellows to get rich. After the Spring Festival in 2012, Haibo took 7 friends and relatives to Yiwu and helped

them find jobs.

Recalling his past experience, Haibo can't stop talking. "At first, my friends and relatives were doubtful about my going out to work. But there are now hundreds of Yunnan employees in the company where he works.

In 2012, Haibo quit his job in Yiwu and work in a Hong Kong company. Due to his hard work and continuous learning, good communication skills and excellent interpersonal relationships, he was promoted to workshop team leader half a year later and was awarded the title of Best Manager.

"I'm still young and there are many things I need to study and practice. But I hope to use the changes in my life to make more people understand that happiness is all about working hard. Everyone can achieve their own Chinese dream through hard work."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bangladesh minister positive about Belt and Road

BY LIU CHUNTAO

At a recent meeting with the Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh, Zhang Zuo, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mohammed Shahriar Alam, said that he is positive about promoting Bangladesh-China cooperation through the Belt and Road Initiative. He also hopes that bilateral projects will be implemented between the two countries as soon as possible.

Mohammed Shahriar Alam emphasized the importance of close political and economic exchanges between the two countries. He also thanked China for continuously supporting Bangladesh's social and economic

progress.

Zhang Zuo said that Bangladesh is an important partner with China in the Belt and Road international cooperation. In recent years, Bangladesh has witnessed rapid economic and social development and promises bright development prospects. He is willing to implement important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries during his term in office, while also advancing pragmatic bilateral cooperative efforts in various fields. This will help to continuously enrich the content of China and Bangladesh's strategic partnership of cooperation and promote the all-round development of relations.

(Xinhua)

Yunnan sets up School of International Journalism and Communication

BY CHEN YIXI

On March 9, Yunnan Daily Press Group and Yunnan Normal University jointly set up the School of International Journalism and Communication in Kunming, capital city of Yunnan province.

After the official establishment of the school, Yunnan Daily Press Group and Yunnan Normal University will complement each other by using their respective resources in journalism education. This will help further expand the education initiatives in the field of news communication, a discipline

with highly practical requirements. It is hoped that university curricula will fully integrate news practices, academic exploration and work innovation. Cutting-edge technology will fully integrate with media convergence, and personnel training will fully integrate with industry development. The school aims to cultivate journalists who can speak and write Chinese and the languages of South and Southeast Asia. The school's vision is to become a regional high-level institution of journalism and communication for South and Southeast Asia.

"A Roar of Wolf Troops" nominated in U.S. film festival



A poster of the "A Roar of Wolf Troops" Photo by Li Yuechun

BY LI YUECHUN

At New York City's 7th Winter Film Awards International Film Festival, the Yunnan-produced film "A Roar of Wolf Troops" was nominated for the Best Picture and Best Actress awards.

At the film festival, "A Roar of Wolf Troops" was selected for its North American premiere by the organizing committee. It officially debuted there on February 25. American media

reported on the film's original story, characters, the Zhuang ethnic group's resistance against Japanese aggression and the legend of the medicinal plant Panaxnotoginseng. Wang Yong and other film crew members working on "A Roar of Wolf Troops" received three special interviews. In the end, the film was nominated for the Best Picture Award, and starring actress Xu Dongmei won the Best Actress nomination.

2,000 overseas students trained in TCM

BY CHEN JING

According to the Yunnan Provincial Health and Family Planning Commission, Yunnan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine (YUTCM) has trained more than 2,000 overseas students. The university has also successively established traditional Chinese medicine centres in countries including Laos and Canada.

In 2015, YUTCM established traditional Chinese medicine education and training centres in Laos and Canada. Then, in September 2016, the First Lancang-Mekong Traditional Chinese Medicine Exchange Conference was

successfully held, and the Lancang-Mekong Traditional Medicine College was established to promote the in-depth cooperation between China and other countries in the region, as well as those in South and Southeast Asia.

To date, YUTCM has established educational exchange and cooperative relationships with schools and medical institutions in more than 30 countries or regions. These include Australia, France, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia. More than 2,000 international students have completed their Chinese medicine education at these schools.