



CHINA • YUNNAN



70 YEARS ON

Yunnan achieves rapid, high-quality development in new era

“In 2018, Yunnan achieved a total economic volume of nearly 1.8 trillion yuan (about US\$260 billion), alongside a local public revenue of more than 370 billion yuan (US\$52.55 billion). These two totals rose 205 times and 1,988 times when respectively compared with 1952 levels,” said Chen Hao, secretary of the CPC Yunnan Provincial Committee. On the morning of August 12th, as part of the celebrations marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of People’s Republic of China, the State Council Information Office held a news conference in Beijing especially for Yunnan. On the occasion, Chen Hao introduced the province’s economic and social development to foreign and domestic journalists. Yunnan Provincial Governor Ruan Chengfa answered questions from the press.

“In terms of major indica-

tors, the annual growth of our ethnic areas has been higher than the provincial average for years,” Chen Hao said. Accordingly, 26 ethnic groups (including the Han Chinese) live in Yunnan. Chen went on to explain that the province is vigorously promoting economic and social development in the areas inhabited by the province’s 25 ethnic minorities.

Today, statistics show that the number of poor people in the province’s ethnic areas has decreased from 4.26 million in 2012, to 865,000 in late 2018. During the same period, Yunnan lifted 7.07 million people out of poverty (China’s current poverty line definition is 2,300 yuan, or US\$327), and achieved poverty alleviation in 48 poor counties.

From 2012 to 2018, forest coverage in Yunnan increased from 50.03 percent to 60.3 percent.

Additionally, the percentage of days with good air quality has stayed above 98 percent in the province’s cities at or above the prefectural level, and the water quality of Yunnan’s nine plateau lakes has improved significantly.

“Yunnan’s cooperation with other Chinese provinces and neighbouring countries is of increasingly higher quality, broader scope and richer results,” said Chen Hao. Yunnan has established eleven bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms with nine countries. It has set up eighteen functional areas for opening-up and cooperation, covering seven categories. Moreover, it has opened its doors even wider through the China-South Asia Expo and other platforms. Yunnan it has cumulatively introduced 3.8 trillion yuan (about US\$540 billion) from outside the province since 2015.

Yunnan opens its doors wider to serve and integrate into BRI

Policy coordination

Yunnan has established 11 bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms with nine countries.

People-to-people bonds

Yunnan has established 15 Confucius Institutes abroad, and 18,778 overseas students currently study at institutions of higher learning in the province.

Financial integration

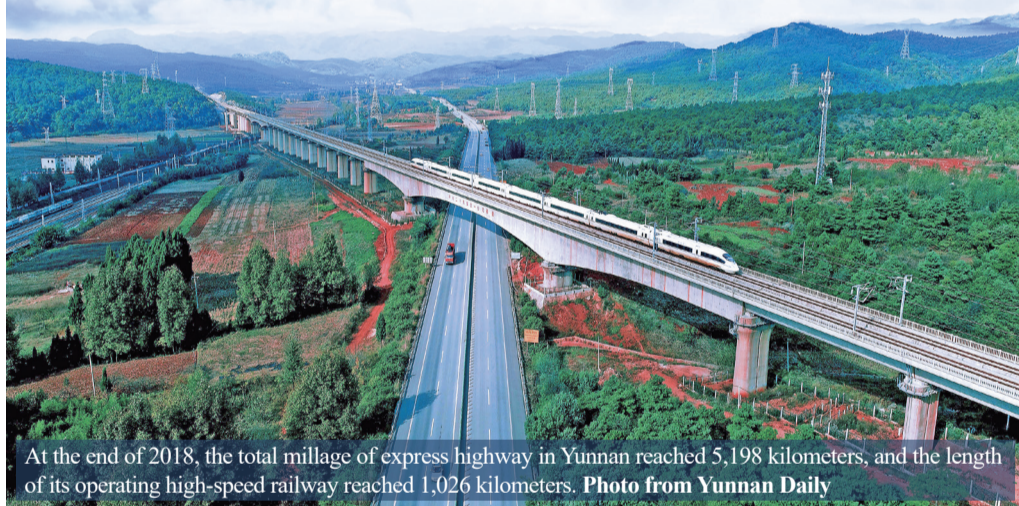
Yunnan has expanded cross-border RMB settlement businesses to more than 90 countries and regions.

Facilities connectivity

The Chinese sections of expressways connecting China with Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar have completely gone into operation. The China-Vietnam Railway has been opened to traffic in the province, while the construction of the China-Laos Railway is in full swing.

Unimpeded trade

Yunnan has set up 25 gateway ports at the state and provincial approval. Now the province boasts five national economic and technological development zones and four national border economic cooperation zones. It has held five sessions of the China-South Asia Expo, set up 30 trade representative offices abroad and completed investment of US\$9.99 billion in other countries.



At the end of 2018, the total millage of express highway in Yunnan reached 5,198 kilometers, and the length of its operating high-speed railway reached 1,026 kilometers. Photo from Yunnan Daily

BELT AND ROAD

Laos and China should strengthen educational cooperation: Lao Education Consul in Kunming



Mr. Bounsonh Thammavongxing receives an interview by The Cham-pa Magazine. Photo by Qin Xuedan

“In the past two years, about 5,300 Lao students came to Yunnan, and most of them chose to study in Kunming, Xishuangbanna and Honghe,” said Mr. Boun-

sonh Thammavongxing, Education Consul of Lao Consulate-General in Kunming. In a recent interview, he expressed his hope that more Lao students can come

to China to study.

According to Mr. Bounsonh Thammavongxing, Lao students got the opportunity to study in China through diverse channels over the past few years. Some applied for scholarships offered by Chinese national government, others from the Yunnan provincial government and privately held companies, while still others came to study in China at their own expense.

Lao students in Yunnan tend to study economics, finance and tourism. Few of them major in medicine and science. So far, none of them have opted to pursue agriculture or forestry degrees. “I hope that more Lao students will study agriculture and

forestry in China to meet the needs of Lao domestic development,” he said.

“I hope that the two countries will increase cooperation in the realm of education. It is also my hope that the Chinese government will continue help our country develop and provide opportunities for Lao students to seek further educational opportunities in China,” Mr. Bounsonh Thammavongxing added. He also believes that higher education institutions in Laos and Yunnan should increase exchanges, thus building a bigger platform for both Lao people learning the Chinese language, and Chinese people studying the Lao language.

(Qin Xuedan)

XI’S REMARKS

“China will continue to adhere to its fundamental national policy of opening-up and pursue development with its door wide open. I wish to make it clear to all that China’s door of opening-up will not be closed and will only open even wider! What has happened proves that opening-up was key to China’s economic growth over

the past 40 years and in the same vein, high-quality development of China’s economy in the future can only be achieved with greater openness.

—Excerpt from keynote speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference held on April 10, 2018

TOURISM

‘Smart’ toilets among efforts to boost Yunnan tourism

Southwest China’s Yunnan Province has further strengthened efforts to provide smart tourism services, Governor Ruan Chengfa said at a press conference in Beijing on August 12.

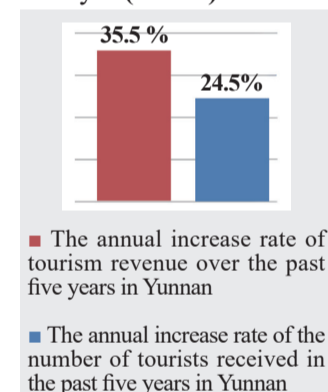
Tourists can use an app to find information during their stay in the province, including details about food, transportation and shopping. One notable feature of the app is Smart Toilet, which enables tourists to check information about toilets in real time and find less-crowded bathrooms.

Due to the higher altitude of Yunnan and the possibility that some tourists may faint in bathrooms, the app will remind working staff to check if it is occupied for more than 20 minutes by the same person.

Ruan said authorities have

also increased their response time to traveller complaints to five hours, on average.

Another measure to boost tourism services is the establishment of centers at airports and key tourist attractions to deal with complaints about shopping. Customers are now guaranteed they can return goods purchased in Yunnan within 30 days. (ECNS)



IN-PICS

Beijing Horticulture Expo ushers in ‘Yunnan Day’



From August 11th to 13th, the Beijing Horticulture Expo 2019 Yunnan Day, a.k.a. the Yunnan Business Promotion, was held at the Beijing World Horticulture Expo Garden. Exhibited at the event were tea, coffee, vegetables, fruits and handicrafts that are recognized in China as well as examples of intangible cultural heritage.

Visitors could also enjoy the ethnic music and dancing show Colourful Yunnan, as well as China’s first large-scale acrobatic drama on environmental protection,

entitled Fantasy Forest. The Yunnan Garden also staged immersive interactive performances throughout the day to present before the world Yunnan’s local characteristics, unique cultures and artistic charms.

(Chen Fei)



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