

NEWS FROM CHINA

CHINA-INDIA REVIEW

**PEOPLE'S WAR
CHINA SHALL OVERCOME**



PEOPLE POWER MARCHING TOGETHER





China Unites to Win People's War

A nation's strength is tested in difficult times. The Chinese leadership and people have united and joined hands to defeat the deadly COVID-19 (novel coronavirus pneumonia) epidemic. The Chinese government has taken the most comprehensive, rigorous and thorough prevention and control measures. We have been working literally 24x7 to win this "People's War," as President Xi has said.

The results of these cumulative efforts show a new dawn breaking through darkness. The recovery rate of COVID-19 patients in Hubei Province surged from 7.14% on Feb. 12 to 53.81% on March 2. There is a sharp drop in the fatality rate, with 3,728 patients in severe and critical conditions cured of the infection. Till today, more than 50,000 patients have recovered and been discharged from hospitals. The number of new suspected cases in China continues to decline to less than 200 a day.

Clearly, the last few weeks since the outbreak of the deadly epidemic have been trying, but at the same time it has brought out the best in the Chinese people. As we continue to wage this epidemic war, I would like to highlight three keywords: Confidence, Compassion and Cooperation.

As President Xi Jinping points out, we have full confidence, capability and determination to prevail over the epidemic at an early date. Our confidence comes from the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China. President Xi Jinping gave instructions on the prevention and control of the epidemic as early as January 7 when he convened the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. On January 25, the very first day of the Spring Festival, the most important holiday in China, President Xi convened another meeting of the Standing Committee

of the Political Bureau and decided to set up the Central Leading Group on Responding to COVID-19 Outbreak. It has never happened before in Chinese history to have this highest-level meeting on the first day of the Spring Festival. It demonstrated that for President Xi curbing the epidemic is foremost priority and he is ready to leave no stone unturned in this mission.

In this battle against the epidemic, we are reassured by growing international support and solidarity with China. In this context, I will like to thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for writing a letter to President Xi, expressing India's solidarity with China. Like true neighbours and friends, China and India are actively collaborating on epidemic prevention and control. We have taken care to keep India informed and updated of the epidemic situation in China at various levels. We promptly provided necessary assistance and convenience for the return of Indian citizens in Hubei, and ensured the health and safety of Indian nationals in China.

Friends, difficult situations also reveal the true nature and depth of friendship. I am touched by spontaneous expressions of support by ordinary Indian people. This epidemic, by default, offers new opportunities for deepening China-India cooperation in the 70th year of establishment of formal diplomatic relations between our two countries. I am confident that the 70th anniversary events planned for this year will not be affected. Let us join hands to work together as China's early victory over the epidemic will be beneficial to the development of both China and India as well as the global economy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be '孙卫东' (Sun Weidong).

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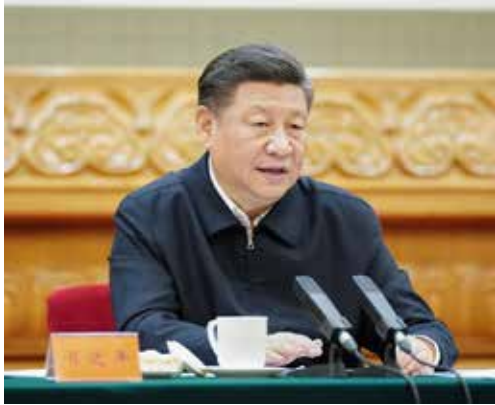
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China is Courageous, will Rise & Overcome: Xi



On February 23, Chinese President Xi Jinping stressed unremitting efforts in the prevention and control of the novel coronavirus disease epidemic and coordination in advancing economic and social development.

The Chinese nation has experienced many ordeals in its history, but it has never been overwhelmed. Instead, it has become more and more courageous, growing up and rising up from the hardships, President Xi said on February 23. The Chinese leader underlined that the epidemic situation remains grim and complex and it is now a most crucial moment to curb the spread, and exhorted the party functionaries and the local governments to increase coordination to speed up the country's economic and social development.

Xi Jinping, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, has asked the party committees and the local governments to continue to make unremitting efforts in the prevention and control work, and resume production in an orderly manner. Efforts should be made to fully unleash the huge potential and powerful driving force of China's development and strive to achieve the goals and tasks for economic and social development this year, he said.

On behalf of the CPC Central Committee, the Chinese leader extended sincere greetings to party members, officials, and the general public, especially those in the Hubei Province and its capital Wuhan, and expressed respect to

the medical workers, officers and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army and comrades from various sectors who have been fighting on the front line of epidemic prevention and control.

He expressed his sincere gratitude to compatriots in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and overseas Chinese, as well as to countries, international organizations and friendly people for providing support to the epidemic prevention and control.

President Xi also expressed deep condolences to compatriots and medical personnel who lost their lives in the fight against the epidemic, and sincere sympathy to patients and their families who are struggling with the disease, as well as to the families of those who died on duty and the deceased patients.

The Chinese nation has experienced many ordeals in its history, but it has never been overwhelmed. Instead, it has become more and more courageous, growing up and rising up from the hardships, President Xi said on February 23.

The February 23 meeting was presided by Premier Li Keqiang and attended by CPC Central Committee members, including Li Zhanshu, Wang Yang, Wang Huning, Zhao Leji and Han Zheng.

Positive Trend Expanding

President Xi said that since the start of the outbreak the CPC Central Committee has attached great importance to the issue, made swift deployment, strengthened the centralized, unified leadership of the party, requiring Party committees and governments at all levels to put people's lives and health as the top priority and adopt effective measures to curb the spread of the virus.

The CPC Central Committee has made it a prominent task to improve the admission and cure rates and reduce the infection and mortality rates, President Xi said, noting that Wuhan and Hubei have emerged as the country's main battlefield against the epidemic.

Efforts have also been made to strengthen the emergency supply of medical materials and daily necessities, safeguard social stability and win the support of the international community, he added.

The COVID-19 outbreak is a major public health emergency that has spread with the fastest

speed, caused the most extensive infection and is the most difficult to contain in the country since the founding of the People's Republic of China, said President Xi. "This is both a crisis and a big test for us," he said, adding that after arduous work, the positive trend in the prevention and control work is now expanding. "It has been proven that the CPC Central Committee's judgment on the situation of the epidemic is accurate, all work arrangements are timely, and the measures taken are effective," President Xi said. "The results of the prevention and control work have once again demonstrated the notable advantages of the leadership of the CPC and the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics," he said.

Impact Manageable

The impact of the epidemic on China's economic and social development is temporary and generally manageable, President Xi noted.

He said the COVID-19 epidemic will inevitably deal a relatively big blow to China's economic and social development. However, at such a time it is even more important to view China's development in a comprehensive, dialectical and long-term perspective, and to strengthen and firm up confidence. In general, the fundamentals



of China's long-term sound economic growth remain unchanged, President Xi said.

Resumption of Work & Production

Stressing orderly resumption of work and production, President Xi outlined specific requirements to achieve that end. Each region should adopt a precise approach when advancing resumption of work and production based on local health risks, he said. Regions with relatively low risks should reorient their disease prevention and control strategies as soon as possible to focus on forestalling imported cases and comprehensively restoring the order of production and life, he said.

Medium-risk regions should promote work and production resumption in an orderly manner based on local epidemic-control situations, while high-risk regions should continue to be fully committed to doing a good job in epidemic prevention and control, he said.

President Xi stressed strengthening the regulation role of macro-economic policies, calling for more positivity in the country's proactive fiscal policy and the roll-out of more targeted interim policies in cutting taxes and fees to help micro, small and medium-sized firms tide over difficulties.

The CPC Central Committee has made it a prominent task to improve the admission and cure rates and reduce the infection and mortality rates, President Xi said.

Besides, the prudent monetary policy should feature more flexibility and moderation, President Xi said, calling for making good use of existing financial support policies and introducing new policies and measures in due course. China will step up efforts to keep employment stable, with all-round measures to cut corporate burdens, keep the payroll stable, and create more jobs, he said. He stressed that in addressing the outstanding problems of serious scarcity of workers in some enterprises, high pressure in keeping the payroll stable, and difficulty of key groups to obtain employment, efforts should be given to support flexible employment through multiple channels

President Xi's Plan of Action

President Xi called for firm, solid and meticulous efforts in the epidemic prevention and control, urging party committees and governments at all levels to remain vigilant and make unremitting efforts in the epidemic prevention and control work. No victory should be lightly announced until there is a complete victory, he said, while giving these instructions:

- Hubei Province, as well as its capital city Wuhan, should be safeguarded with resolute efforts, with focal attention paid to containing the spread of the virus and treating patients;
- The epidemic prevention and control work in Beijing should be carried out with all-out efforts. Both imported cases and spread within the city should be prevented;
- Medical resources and key supplies should be allocated in a scientific manner, providing more protection for the medical workers;
- Scientific research should be accelerated in terms of drug and vaccine development. Effective diagnosis and treatment plans should be summarized and promoted in time;
- International and regional cooperation should be expanded. Good communication with the World Health Organization and experience sharing with relevant countries should be continued;
- Public communication through news media should be more effective. Release of epidemic information should be improved;
- Social stability should be well safeguarded. Illegal activities disturbing medical treatment, epidemic prevention, and market and social order should be severely punished.



and facilitate employment of college graduates.

The country should resolutely accomplish the task of alleviating poverty despite the impact of the epidemic, he said. He called for intensifying efforts to help poor workers return to their posts in an orderly manner, support leading poverty alleviation enterprises and workshops to resume work as soon as possible, and improve mechanisms to prevent people from returning to poverty.

The Chinese leader underscored efforts to push for the resumption of work and production with precise epidemic prevention and control strategies, while smoothing travels and logistics channels and lifting cargo transport bans to push all links in the industrial chains to resume work and production in a coordinated way.

The country should actively expand effective domestic demand, fast-track the progress of projects under construction and new ones, as well as enhance guarantees for labor, land, funds and other production factors.

In the meantime, China will ensure timely agriculture work in spring, President Xi said.

In doing so, he called for efforts to address the issues in spring farming preparation and ensure well-organized production, transportation and supply of farming materials. He also noted that people's basic livelihood should be guaranteed, such as the supply of staple and non-staple food. Enhanced efforts should be made to take care of those in need as well as those losing their family

members due to the epidemic. Efforts should also be made to coordinate medical treatment for patients with other diseases. The country should keep the foreign trade and investment stable amid the epidemic outbreak, the Chinese leader stressed.

Foreign trade policy tools like export tax rebates and export credit insurances should be put to full play to ensure smooth operation of foreign trade industrial chains and supply chains. Major foreign investment projects should be well implemented, while opening-up of finance and other services should be expanded. Business environment should continue to be optimized to strengthen foreign businesses' confidence in long-term investment and operation in China, he said. In order to win the people's war against the epidemic, the party's leadership should be strengthened, President Xi said, stressing that cadres at all levels, especially the leading officials, to take initiative in fulfilling duties.

Cadres who make outstanding contributions should be awarded, while those who fail to perform their duties should be held accountable, he noted. Stressing more care for primary-level cadres, he called for solving their practical difficulties in a timely manner and resolutely rectifying the practice of formalities for formalities' sake and bureaucratism.

He also required summing up experience and drawing lessons from the weak links exposed in the epidemic to improve the ability to deal with major public health emergencies.

Xi Vows to Win People's War Against COVID-19



General Secretary of the Communist Party of China's (CPC) Central Committee and President Xi Jinping expressed confidence that China will win the people's war against the pneumonia-causing novel coronavirus epidemic in the country.

President Xi, who is also the chairman of the Central Military Commission, visited a residential community, a hospital and a district center for disease control in Beijing, on February 10. The inspection came at a time when many people have begun resuming work, mostly outside the hard-hit Hubei Province, after an extended spring holiday.

The Chinese leader said that although the situation remains serious, the country will achieve a full victory in the fight against the epidemic.

He first went to the Anhuali Community in

Chaoyang District to learn about the epidemic prevention and control at the primary level and stressed the role of the community in effectively containing the spread of the epidemic. At Beijing Ditan Hospital, a designated institution for treating the virus infection, President Xi checked the treatment of patients and talked to the medical staff on duty via a video link. He called on the

“Wuhan is a heroic city, and people of Hubei and Wuhan are heroic people who have never been crushed by any difficulty and danger in history,” Xi Jinping said, speaking to officials in Hubei in a video-conference.

medical staff to continue to improve the diagnosis and treatment plan, save patients at all costs and reminded them to take good self-protection.

Heroic Wuhan

The Chinese leader talked to the medical workers in three hospitals in Wuhan and encouraged them to resolutely carry on the fight to defend the city, the capital of Hubei. He expressed deep condolences to the bereaved families of the victims who died from the virus and stressed that the party, the armed forces and the people of all ethnic groups in China should stand together to help the people of Hubei and Wuhan.

“Wuhan is a heroic city, and people of Hubei and Wuhan are heroic people who have never been crushed by any difficulty and danger in history,” Xi Jinping said, speaking to officials in Hubei in a video-conference.

Noting that Hubei and Wuhan are the top priority for epidemic prevention and control, he called for greater efforts in hospital admission, treatment, social management, public communication and unified commanding in the epidemic control work. He also urged more caring for the frontline medical personnel.

Economic Impact Temporary

President Xi chaired a meeting at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Chaoyang District, where he listened to a report on the epidemic control work in Beijing. He highlighted the urgency of measures to address the rising risk of spreading the virus during the post-festival travel peak season. He called for efforts to find more effective treatment plans to reduce the rates of infection and mortality, and demanded resolute punishments on illegal activities such as price gouging. President Xi also stressed that the fundamentals of China’s long-term economic development remain unchanged and the impact of the epidemic on the economy is short-lived.

He called for more efforts to minimize the impact of the epidemic on the economy and reach this year’s goals of economic and social development. Close attention must be paid to employment generation, and large-scale layoffs should be avoided, he added.

Xi the Commander

President Xi is the commander of the people’s war against the epidemic. Over the past few weeks, he has called multiple meetings, heard reports, made important instructions on the prevention and control work and discussed the topic with foreign leaders. One message is consistent and crystal clear: People always come first. Xi has stressed putting people’s lives and health as the top priority. On January 25, the Chinese leader chaired a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and demanded that epidemic prevention and control be taken as the most important task.

In the last week of January, he entrusted senior officials to inspect epidemic control work in Wuhan, made instructions to party organizations, members and officials as well as the military and met the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. In early February, President Xi again chaired a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee on epidemic prevention and control and later a high-level meeting on overall law-based governance, requiring strong legal guarantee to epidemic control.

Under President Xi’s leadership, China has carried out national mobilization, across-the-board deployment and swift responses, adopted the most comprehensive and rigorous prevention and control measures and launched a people’s war against the epidemic.

He called for more efforts to minimize the impact of the epidemic on the economy and reach this year’s goals of economic and social development. Close attention must be paid to employment generation, and large-scale layoffs should be avoided, said Xi Jinping.

Improve Mechanism for



General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and President Xi Jinping has stressed improving the mechanism for epidemic prevention and control and the national public health emergency management system.

Addressing the 12th meeting of the central committee on deepening reforms on February 14, President Xi, who is also and chairman of the Central Military Commission, specified the requirements to boost the country's mechanism to tackle various health emergencies.

Noting that safeguarding people's life and health is a major mission of the Party in governing the country, he stressed the need to strengthen areas of weakness and close the loopholes exposed by the current novel coronavirus epidemic. The Chinese leader said the fight against coronavirus pneumonia is a

Stressing the need to strengthen legislation on public health, he called for revising laws and regulations concerning infectious disease prevention and treatment, as well as wildlife protection. He also highlighted speeding up establishing a law on bio-security to be included in the system of national security.

Epidemic Control: Xi

major test of China's system and capacity for governance.

Stressing the need to strengthen legislation on public health, he called for revising laws and regulations concerning infectious disease prevention and treatment, as well as wildlife protection. He also highlighted speeding up establishing a law on bio-security to be included in the system of national security.

The president called for reforming the health system to prevent major outbreaks, strengthening primary-level capacity as well as improving a coordinated system for major public health risk analysis, evaluation, decision-making, and prevention and control. He also stressed enhancing the coordinated mechanism for scientific research, disease control, and clinical treatment.

The system of treatment for major epidemics should also be improved, President Xi said. He encouraged the application of digital technologies including big data, artificial intelligence and cloud computing for epidemic monitoring, tracing virus sources, prevention and treatment, and resource allocation. "I also call for improving the medical insurance for major diseases and a unified system for providing emergency response supplies," he said.

The meeting was attended by Li Keqiang, Wang Huning, and Han Zheng, who are members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and deputy heads of the central committee for deepening overall reform.

New Measures

According to a statement issued after the meeting, the CPC Central Committee has adopted its 2019 work report and 2020 highlights, as well as documents on the socialist market economy, pension system, infrastructure development, and other areas. To speed up the economy, the new

A modern infrastructure system that is efficient, cost-effective, green, safe and reliable is an important pillar of economic and social development, the statement said.

development concept must be fully implemented, including resource allocation and leveraging the government's role, the statement said. Efforts should also be made to create a sustainable national pension system and establish a multi-layer social security system, it said.

A modern infrastructure system that is efficient, cost-effective, green, safe and reliable is an important pillar of economic and social development, the statement said.

Despite domestic and external challenges, the central committee for deepening overall reform has successfully implemented developmental plans in 2019, the meeting observed.

The committee vowed to introduce another round of reforms in 2020, focusing on better mechanisms for result-oriented outcomes through evaluation and inspection, the statement said.

The system of treatment for major epidemics should also be improved, President Xi said. He encouraged the application of digital technologies including big data, artificial intelligence and cloud computing for epidemic monitoring, tracing virus sources, prevention and treatment, and resource allocation.

LI INSPECTS EPIDEMIC PREVENTION WORK AT BEIJING STATION

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, on February 14, inspected the novel coronavirus epidemic prevention and control work at Beijing West Railway Station and called for various measures to handle the return-trip rush to Beijing after the New Year holiday to minimize epidemic transmission.

The epidemic prevention and control, and economic and social development should be promoted under overall planning, said Mr Li, who also heads the group of the Communist Party of China Central Committee on the prevention and control of the epidemic. The Premier visited the station platform, extended greetings to arriving travelers, learned about protective measures taken on trains, and inspected the station's work of

body temperature monitoring and railway dispatching.

He also heard report by officials with transportation authorities that road, rail and air transport will not see travel peaks as in the past years. Effective measures to curb the rush hour traffic have lowered the chances of transmission of the virus, the officials said. Mr Li affirmed the efforts of transportation departments in epidemic prevention and control, and in ensuring smooth traffic flows. He called for orderly resumption of work and production while preventing and controlling the epidemic. He also stressed the role of transportation in ensuring supplies and maintaining economic and social order.





CHINA

PUSHES FOR DIFFERENTIATED MEASURES TO BATTLE CORONAVIRUS

A high-level meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang stressed differentiated measures for different regions to fight the novel coronavirus outbreak.

The leading group of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on the prevention and control of the novel coronavirus outbreak also demanded efforts to improve patient treatment and expedite research on drugs.

Epidemic prevention and control in Hubei Province, particularly in the capital city of Wuhan, remain the top priority, said the group headed by Mr Li, who is also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, on February 13.

While ordering Wuhan to speed up hospital admission and suspected cases for quarantine, the team instructed the hard-hit cities in Hubei, such as Xiaogan and Huanggang, to carry out strict measures as in Wuhan in surveillance, quarantine, and treatment.

The demand for more medics in Hubei and Wuhan should be fulfilled, the meeting stressed. Multiple steps such as spacing out return trips, have prevented large-scale flows of people after the Spring Festival, said the meeting. Each province is responsible for formulating differentiated epidemic prevention and control strategies based on their own conditions.

No one-size-fits-all approach should be taken, and unfair and extreme practices must be corrected without delay, said the meeting. Effective drugs and treatment are the keys to contain the epidemic, the meeting noted, stressing more studies on the nearly 6,000 cured cases to improve treating plans.

The meeting also highlighted the importance of speeding up the clinical trial of drugs. Mr Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and deputy head of the leading group, also attended the meeting.



Wang Updates Munich Conference on China's Battle Against COVID-19

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi apprised the participants on China's fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic while promoting multilateralism at the Munich Security Conference.

Mr Wang highlighted the health measures launched by his government under the leadership of President Xi Jinping and underlined that China is confident of winning the battle against the coronavirus infection that causes pneumonia.

"Under the strong leadership of President Xi Jinping, the Chinese government is engaged in a vigorous effort to combat the sudden outbreak

of a novel virus. The 1.4 billion Chinese people are united as one in fighting this "war without smoke". We resolve to protect the city of Wuhan, protect Hubei province, and protect every fellow countryman," he told world leaders and experts in Munich.

"As many world leaders noted, it is admirable that the Chinese government and people have shown firm resolve in dealing with the epidemic. The high speed and massive scale of China's response are rarely seen in the world. China's speed, scale and efficiency all demonstrate the strengths of China's system," he said.

"Wuhan may be the front line in this battle, yet

Wuhan is not fighting alone. We Chinese across the country stand firmly with our brothers and sisters in Wuhan and Hubei. Let me highlight a few examples of our united effort.”

Mr Wang pointed out that scientists and researchers, who have been working day and night, isolated the first virus strain and developed the test reagent in less than seven days. “Hailed as heroes in harm’s way, over 20,000 healthcare workers in 100 plus medical teams converged in Hubei, the hardest hit province, from across the nation to support epidemic control. Exemplifying professional dedication, all medical workers are saving and protecting lives around the clock despite the risk of infection and exhaustion from overwork,” he said. “After the storm comes the rainbow. We are confident that China will emerge stronger from the epidemic. Its pent-up consumer demand and growth potential will be quickly unleashed and China will enjoy more sound and sustainable economic and social development,” he said.

Chinese Resilience

“The Chinese nation has been through all kinds of trials and tribulations in its history, which forged a national character of perseverance and resilience,” said China’s State Councilor and Foreign Minister.

“Fighting this epidemic will be no exception. It will only make us stronger and more tenacious. Our country will march on in more determined strides to usher in moderate prosperity in all respects, to eradicate absolute poverty, and to realize the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation,” he said.

“I believe after the epidemic, the Chinese economy will stride forward on a healthier and more sustainable track. The Chinese people will become more resolute to build a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way, eradicate the absolute poverty and achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation,” Mr Wang said.

He said the epidemic has made mankind realize that traditional and non-traditional security threats are interwoven in today’s world. A regional issue can become a global one, and vice versa. Therefore, no country can stay alone

“After the storm comes the rainbow. We are confident that China will emerge stronger from the epidemic. Its pent-up consumer demand and growth potential will be quickly unleashed and China will enjoy more sound and sustainable economic and social development,” said Wang Yi.

and be immune to threats. Instead, all countries are inter-connected and share a common destiny, Mr Wang said.

“Strengthening global governance and international coordination is urgent right now. We need to get rid of the division of the East and the West and go beyond the difference between the South and the North to build a community with a shared future for mankind,” he added.

Mr Wang said that China’s proposal to build a community with a shared future for mankind is based on the Chinese cultural tradition: “All under heaven are of one family”, reflecting the profound thinking and humanistic care of the future for mankind.





Chinese Firms Fast-track Vaccine Development

Several Chinese institutions are working with their foreign counterparts to speed up vaccine development, aside from working on their own to develop vaccines against the novel coronavirus. Peter Hotez, professor of molecular virology, microbiology, and pediatrics at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, told the Global Times that his team is cooperating with researchers from Fudan University in Shanghai as it has a strong virology group.

“The vaccine that we developed and manufactured could go into clinical trials very soon,” Prof. Hotez said. He added that the team is now looking for vaccine development and manufacturing groups in China to partner with. SARS and coronavirus bind to the same host-cell-receptor and have 80 percent similarity in their genetic code.

Prof. Hotez’s team is exploring whether the SARS vaccine might help China fight coronavirus. He said that SARS vaccine will soon likely be deployed in China and may partially protect the healthcare workers and the elderly people at risk.

Prof. Hotez said he believes that the Chinese government is doing its best under very difficult circumstances, but he suggested China set up a coordination department for a vaccine for it to organize all the developers and manufacturers to advance vaccine development.

On February 16, samples of the new vaccine by a group of Chinese scientists were tested on more than 100 mice. If successful, initial clinical trials will start in April to test the vaccine’s safety in a group of people, according to a news report.

The vaccine was developed by the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Medical School of Shanghai Tongji University and Shanghai-based biotechnology company Stemirna Therapeutics.

Several Chinese biotech companies announced cooperation with the US technology companies in researching and developing a vaccine against coronavirus. The Georgia-based GeoVax Labs biotech company signed a letter of intent with the Wuhan-based BravoVax Company on January 27 to jointly develop the vaccine. The Beijing-based Adcaccine Biopharmaceuticals and Inovio Pharmaceuticals,



On February 16, samples of the new vaccine by a group of Chinese scientists were tested on more than 100 mice. If successful, initial clinical trials will start in April to test the vaccine's safety in a group of people, according to a news report.

a US enterprise, signed a memorandum of understanding on January 27 to develop a 2019-nCoV vaccine, according to a document Adcaccine sent to the *Global Times*. The China Association for Vaccines said that as of February 6, 17 Chinese institutions and companies were developing vaccines for the novel coronavirus.

A Chinese immunology expert, requesting anonymity, said that the test is still required for the vaccine's safety and immune protection after which it will be administered to the high-risk groups first such as frontline medical staff.

A Chinese immunology expert, requesting anonymity, said that the test is still required for the vaccine's safety and immune protection, after which it will be administered to the high-risk groups first such as frontline medical staff.



China Ensures Medical Supplies for Frontline Medics

The key supplies for medical personnel on the frontlines to fight the novel coronavirus epidemic in central China's Hubei Province are guaranteed, and the supplies of living materials are basically abundant.

Lian Weiliang, deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission, made the remarks at a video press briefing in Wuhan, the epicenter of the epidemic.

On Feb. 19, 336,000 N95 masks and 133,000 protective suits were collected across the country and supplied to Hubei, said Mr Lian.

With the growing number of medical workers sent to Hubei to aid the fight against the virus, as well as the confirmed and suspected patients admitted to hospitals for treatment, there will be a huge demand for medical supplies. There are still some structural problems in the varieties of medical material provisions, according to Mr Lian.

Meanwhile, to increase the number of hospital beds to take in more patients, Wuhan has built eleven makeshift hospitals and set up over 400 medical quarantine sites, Ding Xiangyang, deputy secretary-general of the State Council, or the cabinet, said. The designated hospitals, makeshift hospitals and quarantine sites in Wuhan are expected to offer about 70,000 hospital beds, added Mr Lian.

Since the coronavirus outbreak, the central government has subsidized over \$100 million to improve the medical treatment capability of the province. In addition, about 2,000 tonnes of pork have been transported to Wuhan from other regions of the country to increase local supplies. More tonnes of staple foods, meats, vegetables and other food will be provided to Hubei.

With the growing number of medical workers sent to Hubei to aid the fight against the virus, as well as the confirmed and suspected patients admitted to hospitals for treatment, there will be a huge demand for medical supplies.





Drug Trials for Coronavirus Show Efficacy, says Chinese Official

Several antiviral drugs have been applied in clinical trials against the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and some have shown fairly good clinical efficacy, according to a top Chinese health official on February 15.

Chinese researchers have narrowed down their focus to a few existing drugs, including Chloroquine Phosphate, Favipiravir, and Remdesivir, after multiple rounds of screening, said Mr Zhang Xinmin, director of the China National Center for Biotechnology Development under the Ministry of Science and Technology, at a press conference.

Vitro experiments have shown that Chloroquine Phosphate, an antimalarial drug that has been widely used for many years, can effectively inhibit the novel coronavirus infection, Mr Zhang said.

It has been known to block virus infections by changing the acidity and basicity value inside the cell and interfering receptors of SARS coronavirus. It also shows immune-modulating activity, which may enhance its antiviral effect in vivo and is widely distributed in the whole body, including the lungs, after oral administration.

The drug is now under clinical trials in more than 10 hospitals in Beijing and Guangdong, which enrolled a total of over 100 patients. Clinical trials on the drug will also be launched in central China's Hunan Province soon, Mr Zhang said, adding that the preliminary clinical results show that Chloroquine Phosphate is effective in treating coronavirus, he said.

Favipiravir, an influenza drug available on overseas markets, has been put in a clinical trial in Shenzhen in south China's Guangdong Province,



Vitro experiments have shown that Chloroquine Phosphate, an antimalarial drug that has been widely used for many years, can effectively inhibit the novel coronavirus infection, Mr Zhang said.

with 70 patients enlisted, he said. The initial outcome of the trial shows the drug has obvious efficacy and low adverse reactions.

“Three to four days after treatment, the group that takes the drug has a significantly higher turning-negative rate in the viral nucleic acid than the parallel-group,” he said. Remdesivir is developed against Ebola infections by Gilead Sciences, an American pharmaceutical company. It has shown fairly good antiviral activity against the novel coronavirus at the cellular level.

Clinical Trials at Hospitals

The China-Japan Friendship Hospital and the Institute of Materia Medica under the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences have been authorized to conduct a clinical trial on the drug in over 10 hospitals in Wuhan, the center of the

epidemic in central China’s Hubei Province.

The randomized, double-blind clinical trial started on February 6, and about 66 percent of the COVID-19 patients enrolled in the trial will have a chance to take the antiviral drug.

Usually, the ratio of patients taking the trial drug against those in the parallel group is 1:1. However, the ratio in the Remdesivir trial is 2:1, so that more critically ill patients may get better treatment, said Mr Zhao Jianping from the Wuhan-based Tongji Hospital earlier.

The trial will adopt a strict randomized double-blind method, which means both patients and doctors do not know who has taken the trial drug. The effect of Remdesivir will only be revealed after the trial is completed.

The trial will last until the end of April. “Next, we will make timely recommendations on the



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COVID-19 treatment according to the results of these clinical trials," Mr Zhang said.

According to him, the researchers scanned more than 70,000 drugs or compounds through computer simulations and in vitro enzyme activity tests and selected 5,000 potentially effective drug candidates.

Then they were tested at the cellular level against the common coronavirus infection, and about 100 drugs were chosen for further experiments, which helped to select the final drugs for clinical trials, Mr Zhang said.

Improving Cure Rate

The most urgent scientific research task is to improve the cure rate and reduce the mortality, which relies on effective clinical treatments, he noted.

New products and technologies have been adopted to treat severe and critically ill patients, a key approach to reducing mortality, and some have achieved good clinical effects, he said.

The development of convalescent plasma has shown some progress. It is processed from the plasma collected from recovered patients, which contains a large number of protective antibodies.

So far, 11 severe patients from several hospitals in Wuhan have received the convalescent plasma therapy, with all their clinical indicators getting better and no obvious adverse reactions.

Clinical Studies

Clinical studies on stem cell therapy, which can inhibit the overreaction of the body's immune



system, have also been carried out to treat severe patients, he added.

A cause of death for severe and critically ill patients infected with the COVID-19 is "cytokine storm", which is an overreaction of the immune system, according to Zhou Qi, an academician with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

"We are also searching for existing drugs that can curb the appearance of cytokine storm, including drugs against rheumatism. Some of the drugs that are proven effective at the cellular level have been applied in clinical trials," Mr Zhou said at the press conference.

A trial has been conducted on 14 severe or critically ill patients aged up to 82 in an affiliated hospital of the University of the CAS, and the results appeared encouraging, he said.

"Now, a multicenter, randomized, parallel-group clinical trial is underway. If the initial results show a drug is effective, we may speed up the process and provide severe patients with effective treatments as soon as possible," Mr Zhou added.

The most urgent scientific research task is to improve the cure rate and reduce the mortality, which relies on effective clinical treatments.

Robots, the New Chinese Vanguard Against COVID-19

From round-the-clock disinfection services, cleaning, food and medicine deliveries to consultations, robots are proving to be an efficient soldier in the battle against coronavirus in China. The communist state has deployed dozens of robots at the front-lines to contain the spread of the virus, which claimed hundreds of lives in the country.

In Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak, more than 30 robots were deployed for the disinfection drives at the major hospitals and for assisting the staff in other daily chores.

The Shanghai Enterprise, one of the manufacturers, has especially designed and equipped the robots for assisting during an epidemic.

The White Robot

For instance, the white robot has a hydrogen peroxide sprayer on its “head” and nine ultraviolet lamps in its “belly,” and can perform multiple forms of disinfection in environments where humans and machines co-exist, said Mr Pan Jing, the CEO of the Shanghai TMiRob, the manufacturer of the robot.

Mr Pan said the navigation technology enables the robot to avoid obstacles autonomously.



Currently, the robots have been widely used for the disinfection tasks in the isolation wards, ICUs, operating rooms and fever clinics of Wuhan’s major coronavirus hospitals, including the Central Hospital, to provide around-the-clock disinfection service.

On February 13, a total of 3,143 new cases of coronavirus were reported, bringing the total number of cases to 31,161 from 31 provinces. Some 636 people had died on the same day.

AI Battles Virus

China has called on the country’s artificial intelligence (AI) sector to lend their technological hands to help battle the epidemic. Research and development and industrial cooperation are encouraged to contribute to the discovery,



awareness, and control of the coronavirus, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology said in a proposal on February 11.

Related AI technologies could be applied to roll out smart devices to support diagnosis and treatment. It can also be used in telecommuting, online education and intelligent production to ensure minimal disruption to people's lives.

Robots are joining China's fight against the epidemic to reduce cross-infection risks and improve efficiency.

Siasun, another major robot manufacturer, has donated 21 robots and 10 electric adjustable beds to local hospitals and other institutions on the front lines of the virus battle in Shenyang in northeast China's Liaoning Province.

With advanced technologies such as laser positioning, intelligent navigation, and human-computer interaction, robots can help health workers spray disinfectants and handout medicine to patients.

The electric adjustable beds allow infected patients to eat in bed and assist them to sit up and roll over, while the food delivery robots, which can recognize human faces and voices, can provide services in hard-hit to avoid close contact between people.



"Intelligent robotic products can effectively replace doctors and nurses in some work, thus reducing their chance of being infected," said Mr Teng Weiyu, vice president of the First Hospital of China Medical University, where some of Siasun's robots were put into use.

Robots are joining China's fight against the epidemic to reduce cross-infection risks and improve efficiency.

Siasun and the Shenyang Institute of Automation of the Chinese Academy of Sciences are also developing a robot that can replace nurses in conducting throat testing for the virus.

Robots Patrol Streets

In Shanghai, several robots patrol the parks and streets to inform the public about epidemic prevention and control.

Robot maker CloudMinds and China Mobile's Shanghai branch donated the first batch of 5G-powered robots to a Shanghai hospital on February 10. With the 5G network, the robots can help medical staff carry out tasks involving consultations, disinfection, cleaning, and drug delivery.

"After seeing the front line of the fight against the virus, I understand more deeply the value of smart products. We will try our best to protect the medical staff from the virus-contaminated environment with advanced technologies," said Mr Du Pu, a regional sales director of Shanghai TMiRob.

DESTINATION

HUBEI

SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER

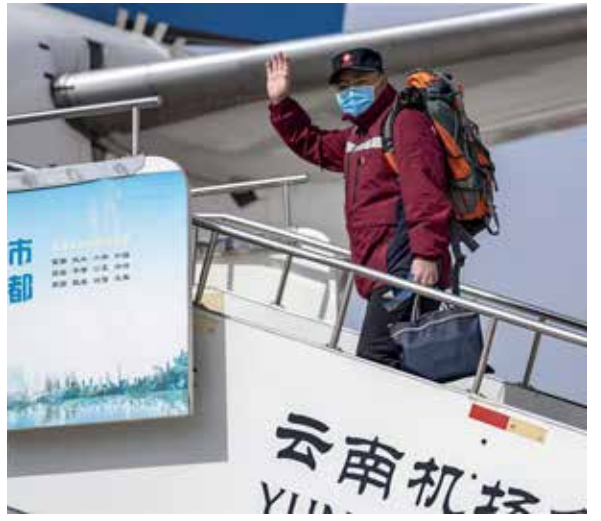




Animated by a feeling of solidarity, medical workers from all over China headed to Hubei to aid the fight against the coronavirus. The Chinese government has launched a multi-pronged all-out effort to curb the spread of the deadly virus.







In Sickness & In Health: A Couple Joins Hands...

It's called bonding in difficult times. A married couple in China has shown how one can balance the call of duty – the battle against epidemic – and family life. Pang Zhen and Chen Meiru work as nurse at intensive care unit of Beijing Ditan Hospital affiliated to Capital Medical University. Their department, including 16 doctors and 61 nurses, began to receive COVID-19 patients since January. “We’re family after work and comrades in the battle against the epidemic. We will strive to win the battle,” says Pang Zhen.





1. Pang Zhen (L) and Chen Meiru make preparations before entering a contaminated area at Beijing Ditan Hospital in Beijing.

2. The couple help each other to check goggles before entering the contaminated area in the hospital.

3. The couple offers treatment to a patient. 4. Pang Zhen (L) and Chen Meiru pose for a photo at ward area in the hospital.

5. The couple walk hand in hand on their way to work.





Makeshift Hospital: Rising to the Occasion

More than 1,000 patients infected with the novel coronavirus had been admitted to a makeshift hospital in Wuhan, the epicenter of the virus outbreak. The hospital has reached its full capacity, with all beds occupied, including those in the ICU, said Zhang Sibing, head of the Huoshenshan (Fire God Mountain) Hospital, one of the two newly-built temporary hospitals for treating patients infected with the virus. The majority of the patients receiving treatment at the hospital have shown trends toward a stable condition, according to Mr Zhang. The hospital provides patients with personalized treatment in combination with nutrition therapy, psychological counseling and rehabilitation training. Huoshenshan Hospital, built in 10 days, received its first batch of patients on Feb. 4. All patients admitted to the hospital were transferred from designated hospitals in Wuhan.



1. A view of the makeshift hospital set up in Wuhan.
2. A patient poses for photos at a temporary hospital converted from “Wuhan Livingroom” in Wuhan, central China’s Hubei Province
3. Medical staff distribute food at the temporary hospital.
4. Medical staff ties a wrist band to a patient at the temporary hospital.
5. Medical staff pose for a photo at the temporary hospital.

China Achieves Notable Results in Blocking Covid-19 Human-To-Human Transmission: Joint Team

China's unprecedented public health response to the COVID-19 outbreak has yielded notable results in blocking human-to-human transmission of the virus, preventing or at least delaying hundreds of thousands of cases, said a joint expert team consisting of experts from China and the World Health Organization.

This assessment was shared at a press conference on February 24 in Beijing after the 25-member team conducted a nine-day field study trip in Beijing, Guangdong, Sichuan and Hubei.

China has also played a critical role in protecting the international community, buying precious time for countries to adopt active prevention and control measures and providing them with worthwhile experience, the team said. China is taking prudent, phased and orderly steps to gradually restore order in social, economic, education and healthcare sectors, it said, adding that other countries should swiftly reassess the measures taken toward China.

Underlining that the novel coronavirus is a

new pathogen, the team said more information is needed to better understand the transmission dynamics and the severity of the disease, adding that global prevention and control work still faces severe challenges.

Advice to Countries

The team advised countries to take active monitoring measures, strive for early detection, diagnosis, quarantine and treatment, and closely trace and quarantine close contacts.

Countries with imported cases or witnessing a surge of cases are advised to immediately activate national emergency plans to ensure governments at every level take necessary intervention measures to block the spread.

Countries should be prepared and make emergency response plans and adopt stricter measures if necessary, the team said. It also called on countries to strengthen exchange of information on the outbreak and stay united to jointly deal with the challenges brought by the COVID-19.



Encouraged by China's Coronavirus Measures: WHO Chief



The World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called for solidarity in fighting the epidemics at the 56th Munich Security Conference (MSC) in Germany. “We must be guided by solidarity, not stigma,” he reiterated, adding that the greatest enemy is not the virus itself but the stigma “that turns us against each other.” “We must stop stigma and hate,” he stressed.” The outbreaks of Ebola and COVID-19 underscore once again the vital importance for all countries to invest in preparedness and not panic,” he told the audience on February 15.

The WHO chief pointed out that the world spends billions of dollars preparing for a terrorist attack, but spends little preparing for the attack of a virus, which could be far more deadly and far more damaging economically, politically and socially.

“This is frankly difficult to understand and dangerously short-sighted,” he said. Also, the WHO head said that he is encouraged about the steps China has taken to contain the outbreak at its source, which are slowing the spread of the epidemic to the rest of the world.

He is also encouraged that international experts are now on the ground in China, working closely with their Chinese counterparts to understand the outbreak and to inform the next steps in the global response.

Talking about his praise for China, the WHO chief underlined that he has given credit where it’s due. “I will continue to do that, as I would and I did for any country that fights an outbreak aggressively at its source to protect its people and the people of the world, even at great costs to itself.”

World Leaders Support, Laud China's Anti-Epidemic Efforts

Since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus epidemic, China has taken unprecedented measures and initiatives under the leadership of President Xi Jinping to curb the spread of the deadly disease. The international community has promptly rallied in support of China, with world leaders expressing solidarity and lauding the Chinese leader and people for their relentless efforts in curbing and combating COVID-19.

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General

My appeal is for a strong feeling of international solidarity and a strong wave of support to China in these difficult circumstances but also to other countries that might be impacted. We also need strong concern to avoid stigmatization of people who are innocent and victims of that situation. I believe that China has mobilized enormous resources and has enormous capacity to respond to the outbreak, and we fully recognize that effort.

Vladimir Putin, President of Russia

Russia fully supports China in fighting the epidemic and plans to provide necessary medical supplies and send a delegation of anti-epidemic experts to China to jointly carry out research and development of vaccines and drugs. China's resolute measures under the leadership of President Xi will contain the epidemic and minimize losses.

US President Donald Trump

The United States fully supports China's fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic and is willing to send experts to China and offer assistance in various other forms. That China built special hospitals for novel coronavirus patients in such an incredibly short time is impressive and demonstrates China's outstanding organizational and response capabilities. I'm confident that under Xi's leadership, the Chinese people will undoubtedly win the battle against the outbreak.

French President Emmanuel Macron

France expresses its solidarity for the Chinese government and people as they are united in this fight against the outbreak, as well as his admiration for China's timely, vigorous measures and high degree of openness and transparency. France is ready to provide further assistance on top of the medical provisions already delivered. France respects WHO's professional recommendations and has responded in a generally objective way. France will continue to work with China to fight the epidemic and, in this process, enhance bilateral cooperation in the health sector.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson

Britain fully supports the prevention and control efforts of the Chinese government, and is willing to work side by side with China and continue to provide assistance. I congratulate the Chinese authorities on the speed with which they posted the news of the outbreak that has serious international implications.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel

Germany is paying close attention to the decisive measures taken by the Chinese government have been strongly supported by the Chinese people. Germany is willing to strengthen cooperation with China in preventing and controlling the epidemic, continue to provide China with medical aid, and do all it can to help China win the fight against the epidemic.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali

China's whole-of-nation response to the outbreak has not only effectively contained it in China, but also played an important part in curbing its spread across the world. Ethiopia is proud of what China has managed to do, and firmly believes that under the wise and strong leadership of President Xi, China will overcome the epidemic at an early date and minimize its impact on economic and social development.

Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, UAE

The UAE fully supports China's fight against the epidemic and its readiness to provide continued help to the Chinese side as a friend and comprehensive strategic partner of China. UAE has full confidence in the ability of the Chinese people to win an early victory against the epidemic under the strong leadership of President Xi Jinping.

Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, King of Saudi Arabia

The Saudis highly appreciate the vigorous measures taken by the Chinese government to combat the epidemic and believe that China will surely win the battle. Facing the current difficulties, Saudi Arabia will spare no efforts to provide support and assistance to China in the battle against the epidemic.

Qatar Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani

Qatar reaffirms solidarity with the Chinese people, who are the good friends of the Qatari people. Qatar will strictly follow WHO's advice and that he will instruct the health authorities of Qatar to step up exchanges and cooperation with China. Qatar will continue to help China whenever there is any need and that Qatar looks forward to working with China for still bigger progress in the bilateral relations.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo

At this difficult moment for China, Indonesia would stand firmly by the Chinese people as a sincere partner and work with China to triumph

over the epidemic at an early date. Indonesia has already provided a batch of medical supplies to China and will offer more assistance in response to China's needs. Indonesia-China friendship will emerge stronger from the test of the outbreak and the bilateral ties will scale a new height.

ROK President Moon Jae-in

ROK appreciates China's strenuous efforts to fight the epidemic. There is no doubt that under the strong leadership of President Xi, the Chinese people will work in unison and secure an early victory. The ROK and China are close neighbors. China's suffering is the ROK's suffering. The ROK will stand firmly with China and is ready to assist further.

Kristalina Georgieva, IMF Managing Director

We support China's efforts to respond, including recent fiscal, monetary, and financial actions. We are confident that China's economy will remain resilient.

Alexander Lukashenko, President of Belarus

Chinese leaders' efficient response and the heroism of the Chinese people are admirable. Belarus, always a reliable and loyal friend of China, will send medical supplies to help the Chinese people battle the epidemic.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia

When China has encountered difficult times, the Cambodian people have stood firmly with the Chinese people as they undergo and overcome common difficulties – the two countries are truly steadfast friends. Cambodia will continue to carry out normal cooperation and exchange with China and remains committed to working with China to build a community with a shared future.

Paul Biya, President of Cameroon

I offer sympathy and support to the Chinese people on behalf of the Cameroonian people as the Chinese government and people fight a heroic battle against the epidemic.

Cote d'Ivoire President Alassane Ouattara

The government and people of Cote d'Ivoire firmly support the efforts by the Chinese government and people in fighting the epidemic.

Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh, Prime Minister of Mongolia

The people of Mongolia empathize with the Chinese government and people as they face the challenges posed by the epidemic. The Mongolian people believe that under the strong leadership of the Chinese government and with the concerted efforts of the Chinese people, China will soon rein in the epidemic.

Bidhya Devi Bhandari, President of Nepal

We appreciate and support the Chinese leaders' extraordinary efforts to contain the epidemic and we thank China for caring for Nepalese citizens in China.

Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan

Pakistan strongly believes that China will leverage its unique institutional advantages to overcome the epidemic. Pakistan will mobilize all the country's medical supply reserves to assist China and firmly stand alongside the brotherly Chinese people.

Jorge Bom Jesus, Prime Minister of Sao Tome and Principe

I offer my sympathy and support to the Chinese government and believe that China will defeat the epidemic.

Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of Singapore

Singapore will closely cooperate with China to jointly combat the epidemic. China is taking effective measures to control the illness and Singapore is already prepared, so there is no need to panic.

Maha Vajiralongkorn, King of Thailand

The international community has been greatly impressed by the efforts and determination of the Chinese government to fight the epidemic and the extensive epidemic prevention measures it has

taken. The Thai people and I will pull together with the Chinese people in times of trouble.

Kais Saied, President of Tunisia

Under the strong and wise leadership of Xi, the Chinese government's efforts to combat the epidemic and contain the outbreak will soon pay off.

Ban Ki-moon, Chairman, Boao Forum for Asia

Chinese President Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized the priceless value of life. The Chinese value on life and wisdom accumulated across the past five thousand years will enable China to overcome this epidemic. I will stand with the Chinese people in their battle against the epidemic.

Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa

Extended sympathy to China and wished it an early victory in the battle against the epidemic.

Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos

Extended deep condolences to the Chinese people and expressed the hope that China's resolute measures and unremitting efforts will contain the epidemic in a rapid manner.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Said that under the strong leadership of Chinese President Xi Jinping, China will eventually contain and eliminate the epidemic.

Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune

Said that tremendous efforts made by the Chinese government to combat the epidemic have positively contributed to the global and regional public health security.

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar

Praising and supporting China's anti-epidemic measures, said that his country stands ready to provide China with any assistance within its capacity.

PM Modi Writes Goodwill Letter to Xi, China Thanks India

China has thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his letter of goodwill and solidarity he wrote to President Xi Jinping in the wake of the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus.

“We thank and appreciate India’s support for China’s fight against the COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia, the official name for coronavirus,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said.

“India’s acts of goodwill fully demonstrate its friendship with China,” Mr Geng said during an online media briefing while replying to a question on Mr Modi’s letter to Xi.

In a letter to President Xi, Mr Modi had condoled the loss of lives in China since the outbreak of the disease in the country’s Hubei province. He also conveyed his appreciation to the Government of China for facilitating the safe return of the Indian citizens from Hubei.



Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi met in Mahabalipuram for their second informal summit in October 2019.



'Unite Together, Fight Together: China Confident of Winning'

Underscoring China's robust resolve to win the battle against the coronavirus threat, Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong updated journalists in New Delhi about multifarious efforts by the Chinese government and Chinese people to curb this deadly infection.

Addressing a press conference at the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi on February 18, the Chinese Ambassador called for greater China-India solidarity in the face of the epidemic and urged New Delhi to resume normal trade and travel between the two countries.

The Chinese envoy also underscored high stakes of the global community, including India, in China's early victory over the epidemic. "China's early victory over the epidemic will be beneficial to the development of both China and India as well as the global economy. It will help bilateral economic and trade cooperation get

back on track. In this context, helping China is actually helping yourself," he said.

The Ambassador said that many health measures adopted by China were beyond the international regulations and recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), which have enabled the control of the disease and the rapid cure of the infected people. China has earned the recognition of the international community for these efforts, but it also needs its support to face the health emergency that confronts its people, the Ambassador said.

Underlining China's commanding place in the global supply chain, the envoy said that "China's economy is stable and strong like a mountain." "The fierce wind could blow down the trees but not the mountain. It's easier to shake a mountain than China. We firmly believe that with the strong leadership of the CPC, the strength of the China's system, the unity of the great Chinese people and the strong support from the international community, we will win this battle against the epidemic."

(Opening Statement by Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong at the press conference in New Delhi on February 18, 2020)

The sudden outbreak of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus pneumonia) has brought severe challenges to China and the world. The Chinese government has taken the most comprehensive, rigorous and thorough prevention and control measures. Many measures are well beyond the requirements by the International Health Regulations and the recommendations of the WHO. They have embodied China's responsibility and won the recognition of the international community. Through arduous efforts day and night, the epidemic is generally under control, and the dawn has begun to appear. As of February 17, outside Hubei province, the number of confirmed cases has been declining for 14 consecutive days across China. That is a cumulative drop of over 50 percent. The epidemic in Hubei and Wuhan is also being managed more effectively. There is a rapid increase in the cure rate, from 1.3% to today's 8.2%, and over 12,000 people have recovered and been discharged from hospitals. The case fatality rate is 2.29 percent nationwide and just 0.55 percent outside Hubei. The number of new suspected cases in China continues to decline, from a peak of more than 5000 a day to less than 2000 a day. These figures show that by and large, the epidemic is preventable, controllable and curable, and China's decisive response is both right and effective.

3C: Confidence, Compassion & Cooperation

On this epidemic war, I would like to highlight three keywords: Confidence, Compassion, and Cooperation.

The first keyword is Confidence

As President Xi Jinping points out, we have full confidence, capability, and determination to prevail over the epidemic at an early date. Since the outbreak of the epidemic, many foreign friends, including Indian friends, have been encouraging Wuhan and China, calling "Stay strong Wuhan", "Stay strong China". Thank you for this. We have full confidence to win.

Our confidence comes from the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China.

President Xi Jinping made instructions on the prevention and control of the epidemic as early as January 7th when he convened the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. Since then, he has been repeatedly asking all-level party committees, governments, and relevant departments to put people's safety and health first, take effective



Journalists at the press conference addressed by China's Ambassador to India Sun Weidong in New Delhi.

measures to resolutely curb the spread of the epidemic. He clearly required Hubei Province to implement comprehensive and strict control over the personnel outflow. On January 25, the very first day of the Spring Festival, the most important holiday in China, President Xi Jinping convened another meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau and decided to set up the Central Leading Group on Responding to COVID-19 Outbreak. It has never happened

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before in Chinese history to have this highest-level meeting on the first day of the Spring Festival. It demonstrated President Xi attaches great importance to the epidemic, his keen insight, and outstanding leadership. He also went to Beijing local hospital to review the diagnosis and treatment of patients and inspected community prevention and control work in Beijing.

The Chinese government has built an all-round and multi-level prevention and control system focusing on Wuhan city and Hubei province. Premier Li Keqiang went to Wuhan, the epicenter, to guide the prevention and control work. The State Council has established a joint mechanism. All 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities in mainland China have activated Level 1 emergency response to major public health emergencies. We are doing everything we can, leaving no stone unturned, in our efforts to contain and mitigate this epidemic on the land of 9.6 million square kilometers of China. This is an unprecedented endeavor. China's rapid and effective response to the epidemic shows the strong leadership of the CPC and decisive measures of governments at all levels.

Our confidence comes from the strong actions of China's ability to mobilize all the resources for big undertakings.

We pooled national resources to support Wuhan and Hubei and mobilized 19 provinces to support 19 cities in Hubei. As of February 14, 2020, China has allocated more than 80 billion RMB for epidemic prevention and control. Banks and financial institutions have provided more than 537 billion RMB in credit to fight against the epidemic. The National Health Commission sent 217 medical teams with more than 30,000

medical staff and 3 mobile P3 laboratories to support the medical treatment in Hubei. We have opened 11,000 high-way green channels for emergency and protective supplies throughout the country. Highway vehicle tolls nationwide have been exempted from yesterday to the end of epidemic prevention and control. Under the unified dispatch, medical supplies such as masks and protective suits, as well as food and daily necessities, have been continuously delivered to all cities in Hubei.

In the process of this battle, we have renewed "Chinese speed" time and time again. In order to relieve the shortage of medical resources, it took us only 10 days each to finish the building of two makeshift hospitals, Huoshenshan & Leishenshan hospitals. To build these two hospitals, hundreds of designers came up with the design scheme within 24 hours, 1,500 builders with a reserve team of 2,000 people and 280 sets of construction machinery and equipment have been working day and night. Wuhan has opened 10 "mobile cabin hospitals", receiving around 7,000 patients. Our next goal is to make sure that every patient is hospitalized and treated, leaving no one unattended or under-attended. China's system advantages are fully demonstrated. Here I would like to present a video clip on the construction of Huoshenshan hospital.

Our confidence comes from strong Chinese people with tenacity and spirit of sacrifice.

Emergency actions have been taken by all party committees, local governments, military units, public institutions, and enterprises. The broad masses of the people have worked as one, and people's war against the epidemic has been launched. Tens of thousands of medical workers

In the process of this battle, we have renewed "Chinese speed" time and time again. In order to relieve the shortage of medical resources, it took us only 10 days each to finish the building of two makeshift hospitals, Huoshenshan & Leishenshan hospitals.

have been fighting against the epidemic in the front line. Scientists have stepped up scientific and technology research. Workers in factories and companies have worked at full capacity. Soldiers and policemen have devoted themselves to this battle. A large number of village cadres and community workers have stayed put at their posts. Wuhan has mobilized 16,000 people to conduct a complete search of all communities, with the percentage of people surveyed exceeding 99%. Tens of thousands of volunteers have transported various supplies and provided assistance to the epidemic area. There are numerous touching and moving stories happening now in China. I will share with you later.

Our confidence comes from China's strong economy, and we have full confidence to maintain the long-term and stable development of China's economy.

As the world's second-largest economy, our economic strength is the strong material foundation for us to win this battle. Huoshenshan and Leishenshan hospitals are equipped with modern medical facilities all "made in China", with 5G high-speed network that can support the needs of 25,000 people and set up a platform for remote diagnosis and treatment. Tencent, Alibaba, and other major technology companies use big data, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and robots to conduct viral gene analysis, temperature monitoring, material distribution, remote diagnosis, and treatment.

January 25, the very first day of the Spring Festival, the most important holiday in China, President Xi Jinping convened another meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau and decided to set up the Central Leading Group on Responding to COVID-19 Outbreak. It has never happened before in Chinese history to have this highest-level meeting on the first day of the Spring Festival.



The epidemic has brought a certain impact on some industries such as transportation, tourism, and caterings as well as small and medium-sized enterprises. In the short term, the downward pressure on China's economy will increase, but the impact is local, temporary and limited. China is a major country with strong resilience, great potential and ample room for manoeuvre. We will stick to meeting this year's targets for economic and social development.

Firstly, the Chinese government has strong macro regulation capabilities and sufficient resources and policy tools to cope with economic fluctuations. Since the outbreak of the epidemic, governments at all levels have introduced policies and measures to encourage economic growth, such as increasing capital input, reducing taxes and fees in stages and increasing preferential credit support. Governments have taken timely measures to ensure material supply, resume production and operation, support small and medium-sized enterprises and ensure employment and people's livelihood.

Secondly, withstanding the test, China's economic structure has become more rational and its system has been strengthened. At present, a new business of China's digital economy is full of vitality and has formed a new growth point. Public consumption is also turning to e-commerce, generating new consumption potential.

Thirdly, our market is big enough. The subdued consumer demand will be released rapidly when the epidemic is over. The dynamism of China's economy will rebound strongly, and the market size will continue

to grow. The Chinese government is actively encouraging enterprises to resume production, encouraging major projects to start construction, and striving to stabilize household consumption. 99.7% of state-owned enterprises in Beijing and 80% in Shanghai have resumed production. The outbreak of the epidemic will not change the sound fundamentals of China's economy. We have the capability to minimize the economic impact of the epidemic. Both the World Bank and IMF have full confidence in Chinese economic resilience.

China's economy is stable and strong like a mountain. The fierce wind could blow down the trees but not the mountain. It's easier to shake a mountain than China. We firmly believe that with the strong leadership of the CPC, the



strength of China's system, the unity of the great Chinese people and the strong support from the international community, we will win this battle against the epidemic.

The second keyword is Compassion.

There are so many lovely people who deserve our respect and should be remembered in this fight against the epidemic.

First, Medical Workers. Among them, you can find some "leading figures" in the Chinese medical community. Mr. Zhong Nanshan, at the age of 84, rushed to Wuhan at the epidemic

outbreak. Without a seat ticket on that day, he could only find a seat in the dining car. Another academician Mme. Li Lanjuan is 73 years old, and she slept only 3 hours a day but worked around the clock with her team to find effective treatment measures as soon as possible.

The majority of medical workers are ordinary people. In order to protect lives and fight the epidemic, they demonstrated unparalleled courage and professionalism, made extraordinary choices, sacrifices, and dedication.

A female nurse who just graduated from the university spent four days and three nights to go back to the hospital she works in. Because of the absence of public transportation, she completed 300 kilometers by hitchhiking, biking or walking. In order to reduce the risk of infection, many female medical workers cut their hair with tears, to put on the protective suits easier. Working for a long time created blood marks on their faces, and their hands were wounded after repeated disinfection. Many medical workers worked too much. They were extremely exhausted. In order to save time, they just took chairs and even the floor as resting places.

Lunar New Year's Eve is the most important festival of reunion for Chinese families. But exactly on that day, more than one hundred medical workers from the Military Medical University set out to Wuhan. This is a mother who was comforting her crying daughter.

This is a husband seeing off his wife with tears who is a doctor going to leave for Wuhan. This is a nurse from Huoshenshan hospital, her mother suddenly died of illness. She could only bow down in the direction of her hometown to express her deep grief and soon returned to her work.

"My motherland needs me. That is my bounden duty." Fear was conquered by the mission and responsibility. These people are the backbones of China. Their performance reassured the people in China and the world.

Second, Grassroots Workers. Communities are at the forefront of epidemic control. After the outbreak, a large number of grassroots workers stuck to their posts and performed their duties, and all the strength came together to fight against the epidemic.

Their persistence ensured that people lived a normal life and the epidemic was effectively controlled. After the whole city of Wuhan was locked down, community workers became “waiters” and “couriers”. Many township cadres, policemen, community workers, and volunteers gave up their Spring Festival holidays and rushed back to their working position, strictly managing the flow of personnel, carefully recording the passing of vehicles, and patiently publicizing epidemic prevention knowledge. Recently, many places saw heavy snow in China. Even working in the snowstorm of minus 20 degrees, a community worker still carefully recorded the temperature of each person entering the community.

Third, Ordinary Workers. Workers in Wuhan have shown incredible tenacity and selflessness. Their slogan is “All for one, one for all”. Chinese collectivism and devotion are fully displayed in the fight against the epidemic.

Mr Qin, a vegetable farmer, rode an electric tricycle for 40 kilometers and delivered 24 boxes of fresh vegetables to the medical team. He said, “I picked the freshest ones for you, and all for free.”

A family who runs a Halal restaurant in Wuhan delivered food for free to medical staff, points men and sanitation workers. “As residents of Wuhan, I think we have responsibilities to help the front-line workers in need,” they said.

Cheng Dong is a driver. During the period of outbreak, he became a 24-hour standby driver of a special medical car. He had to start his work before dawn every day. After delivering doctors, he went to the community as a volunteer to help carry the donated materials.

SuQiyun, a 54-year-old sanitation worker, has been cleaning and disinfecting public toilets in Wuhan every day since the outbreak. More than 1,000 public toilets are still open in Wuhan, and each of them with a sanitation worker as a “guardian”.

The construction worker of the Huoshenshan hospital Mr. Luo Mingliang, one of the workers, said he didn’t do this job for money. As soon as he got his salary, he spent all the money on milk and nutrition for the medical staff.

They are all the most ordinary people. They are construction workers, sanitation workers,



teachers, company employees, volunteers, but everybody did their best to fight against the epidemic, showing that the Chinese people are always indomitable and united.

The third keyword is Cooperation.

Since the sudden outbreak, China has been actively cooperating with the international community with openness, transparency and a high sense of responsibility. In a short span of over one week, we identified the pathogen and shared genetic sequence with the WHO and other countries. This has played an important role in other countries to prepare timely testing and diagnostic tools for early prevention. To prevent the virus from spreading to other areas and rest of the world, China took decisive measures such as lockdown of Wuhan city, imposing restrictions on traffic of key epidemic areas and suspending outbound travel groups before the Spring Festival. While there are more than 70,000 confirmed cases in China, by contrast, there are about 700 cases

In recent days, I have received a lot of messages from all sectors in India expressing sympathy and solidarity. These people, who I may not even know their names, expressed their understanding and support to China’s fight against the epidemic in various ways.

which are less than one percent of all cases in the rest of the world. The measures we have taken stop the spread of the disease on a global scale. China has made tremendous efforts for the global public health security at great sacrifices.

Director-General of WHO Dr Tedros said that the containment and mitigation measures taken by China have gone well beyond WHO recommendations and China is actually setting a new standard. Here I would like to quote his remarks, "This is a time for facts, not fear. This is the time for science, not rumours. This is the time for solidarity, not stigma." In this case, everyone should not panic nor overreact to the outbreak, nor should they discriminate against the Chinese. Now here is what Director-General of WHO Dr Tedros said on China's anti-epidemic efforts through a video clip.

The international community supports China's strong actions. As of February 14, leaders of over 160 countries and international organizations have expressed their sympathy and support to China through telegrams or letters. Nearly 20 regional organizations including the BRICS and SCO, have spoken in support of China. As of February 14, 33 foreign governments and four international organizations have assisted China with medical supplies. 17 foreign governments and one international organization announced that they will offer medical supplies. Recently, some countries have voluntarily adjusted or lifted excessive travel restrictions on China.



China and India have been keeping close communication on the epidemic. Recently, Prime Minister Modi sent a letter of condolence to President Xi Jinping, expressing his recognition of the tremendous effort made by the Chinese government to deal with the outbreak. The Indian side assures readiness to stand by China and provide the assistance that India can to face this challenge. During a telephonic conversation with State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, External Affairs Minister Dr. Jaishankar said that it is important to evaluate the outbreak in an objective and rational manner and not take actions that may complicate the situation. We appreciate and thank solidarity and support rendered by India.

Indian students in Hubei have been taken good care of. The relevant universities have designated personnel to deliver masks and other protective materials to the students and send food and daily necessities to their residence on a regular basis.

China and India are actively collaborating on epidemic prevention and control, focusing on the following: First, we keep India informed and updated on the epidemic. The Chinese Foreign Ministry and relevant local governments have held briefings in China. The Chinese Embassy has also established a contact mechanism with the Ministry of Health of India.

Second, we provided necessary assistance and convenience for the return of Indian citizens in Hubei and ensured the health and safety of Indian nationals in China. I made a special inquiry and learned from Hubei Province that as of today, there is no case of infection among the remaining Indian citizens in Hubei.

Third, the Indian students in Hubei have been taken good care of. The relevant universities have designated personnel to deliver masks and other protective materials to the students and send food and daily necessities to their residence on a regular basis. We give priority to their health and safety. The universities also provide necessary psychological counseling and online courses for those in need. At present, according to epidemic

prevention and control situations in different provinces, the universities and colleges have issued notice to delay the starting of the 2020 spring semester and notified each international student by email or mobile. For Indian students who are planning to go back to China to continue their studies, please contact their universities in China to confirm the date of registration.

In recent days, I have received a lot of messages from all sectors in India expressing sympathy and solidarity. These people, who I may not even know their names, expressed their understanding and support to China's fight against the epidemic in various ways. Some of them recorded videos to cheer for China and Wuhan to stay strong like this.

A Chinese citizen in India told me that he met an Indian boy selling masala chai on the street the other day. When the vender came to know that he is Chinese, he gave him a big hug to show the support.

At this difficult moment, I am deeply touched by the kindness of Indian friends and I can feel the sincere friendship between the two peoples.

All these remind me of the time when Dr Kotnis rescued the wounded and saved many lives and made great contributions to the Chinese people's liberation cause. It also brings back my memory of what I experienced during the outbreak of SARS in April 2003 when I was a division director in the Asian Department of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. At that time, I received a delegation led by then-Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes who visited Shanghai during the epidemic. In an interview with PTI, he criticized the foreign media for exaggerating the epidemic and creating panic among the public.

After returning to India, he took concrete actions to support China's epidemic combat by instructing the Indian Army to donate medicine to China. This sort of act of kindness will never be forgotten by the Chinese people.

China and India are the only two major developing countries in the world. As ancient civilizations, both countries have the wisdom to offer inspiration to address challenges facing the world today. Improving public health security is our common goal. We can strengthen cooperation and exchange of experience in this regard.

Currently, China and India enjoy close cooperation in various areas. More than one million people travel between the two countries every year and the bilateral trade volume is over 90 billion US dollars. In addition, China is now in a significant position in the global supply chain. Therefore, China's early victory over the epidemic will be beneficial to the development of both China and India as well as the global economy. It will help bilateral economic and trade cooperation get back on track. In this context, helping China is actually helping yourself.

China's economy is stable and strong like a mountain. The fierce wind could blow down the trees but not the mountain. It's easier to shake a mountain than China.

When we look at the history of human society, we have been struggling with the virus. There have been outbreaks of SARS, MERS, H1N1, and Ebola in recent years. We will certainly come up against some unknown viruses in the future.

A virus is borderless and a common threat to everyone in the world. Facing this common challenge, we need to enhance mutual understanding, strengthen cooperation, show solidarity, and jointly overcome difficulties. This is what it means to build a community with a shared future for mankind. I have full confidence, with joint efforts of the Chinese people and the international community, we will win this battle against the epidemic.



A statue of Dr Dwarkanath Kotnis, an icon of China-India friendship.

Ambassador Sun Answers Questions from the Press

(Transcript of the Q&A Session)

Embassy news TV: Is there a possibility the virus was released by accident from the Wuhan Institute of Virology laboratory but not the seafood market? How do you see the stigma related to the coronavirus?

Ambassador Sun Weidong: About the virus itself, we still don't have enough knowledge. Scientists are doing their best to know more about this novel virus. Based on the analysis of the genomic sequence, what we could know now is that this virus originates from nature, not man-made.

The virus is terrible, but the rumor is more terrible. It will create panic and overreaction, and harm people-to-people relations. We must ensure the truth outweighs the rumors, the science prevail over ignorance.

Stigma and discrimination come from panic, lack of understanding and empathy. Only through mutual understanding and cooperation, can we truly overcome the epidemic. We hope that the international community can view the epidemic in a rational and calm way.

ABP News TV: Did China receive any request from the Government of India to carry further air evacuation from China?

Ambassador Sun Weidong: We provided necessary assistance and convenience to the Indian citizens in Hubei to get back to India. Prime Minister Modi expressed his appreciation for China's support in his letter to President Xi Jinping.

We attach great importance to the health and safety of foreign nationals in China and will take good care of the Indian citizens in China like our own. I did learn about the situation of Indian students in Hubei Province before this briefing. They are taken good care of with good health, sufficient daily necessities, accommodation, and food. So far there's no report of infection for the Indian citizens in China.



China is now at the critical stage for epidemic prevention and control. We will carefully assess the situation, as prevention work requires, and is willing to stay in close communication with India on this issue.

UNI: How do you see the travel and trade restrictions taken by the Indian government? We have learned that some Chinese suppliers have been detained by the Indian side. What is your comment? How can China and India conduct effective cooperation in response to this epidemic? It is learnt that the Government of India is offering the supply of medical equipment to China in order to cure the epidemic. What type of medical assistance does China require from India?

Ambassador Sun Weidong: The WHO has repeatedly not recommended even opposed any travel and trade restrictions. We should follow the WHO's professional advice. Countries around the world need to maintain normal flows of people and trade and refrain from overreaction.

We understand that some countries take reasonable and necessary measures like thermal screening at ports of entry. In fact, most countries have not overreacted to the outbreak, and even some countries began to adjust strict measures exceeding the WHO's recommendation.

We are grateful that Prime Minister Modi sent a letter to President Xi Jinping and assured readiness to stand by China and provide the assistance that India can to face this challenge. These acts of goodwill fully demonstrate the Indian people's friendship with the Chinese people.

In the epicenter of Hubei Province and Wuhan City, there is a large consumption of medical materials, causing a shortage of some specific personal protection materials.

We hope the Indian side could review the epidemic situation in an objective, rational and calm manner, implement the two leaders' instructions, handle with China's much-needed items in a humanitarian spirit, and resume normal personnel exchanges and trade between our two countries.

Times of India: There are lots of concerns about supplies of consumer electronics, smartphones, pharmaceuticals imported from China here in India. What sort of impact does the epidemic have on the global economy? How long will China restore the supply chains?

Ambassador Sun Weidong: In the short term, the downward pressure on China's economy will increase, which will have some impact on the global economy. But in the long run, while the epidemic is contained, China's economy is back on track, its impact on the global economy should be gradually mitigated.

Currently, China is fighting against the epidemic on the one hand, resuming the production on the other hand. As I have just mentioned, the Chinese government is taking various measures to restore and resume the production and operation of enterprises. The supplies will gradually return to normal. The

problems you are concerned about will also be gradually solved.

In this battle against the epidemic, we hope the other countries can support China. The earlier we win this battle, the earlier the supply chain will be resumed. The international community should work together and resume normal personnel and trade exchanges. Only in this way can we provide strong support for the stable growth of the world economy.

Xinhua News Agency: 2020 is a special year for China-India relations. What sort of impact it will have on scheduled bilateral engagements this year? Do you think it will impact 70 events planned for the 70th-anniversary celebrations?

Ambassador Sun Weidong: Yes indeed. This year marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic ties and the "Year of China-India Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges". I think the difficulties are temporary and will be overcome. I believe bilateral exchanges will not be blocked by the virus and China-India relations not be affected by the epidemic.

We need to implement the important consensus reached by the two leaders during the second informal summit in Chennai. We need to maintain high-level exchanges, hold institutional meetings and a series of celebratory activities, expand personnel exchanges and trade and scale the bilateral relations to a new height.

China and India are the world's only two countries with more than one billion population. We are facing similar challenges in public health. And there's huge potential for cooperation. We are ready to explore opportunities with India for cooperation in areas of public health and science. This is in the common interests of our two peoples.



INDIAN STUDENTS: China will Win the Battle



With the ever-increasing exchanges between China and India, the number of Indian students studying in China is also surging. There are already more than 20,000 Indian students studying in China. The novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic not only affects the lives of Chinese people, but also worries families of Indian students studying in China. In recent interviews, two Indian students in China said they were confident in their own safety and China's victory over the epidemic.

I'm Safe on Campus

"I came to China in 2014. China is my second home. I especially like Chinese culture." An Indian who studies at Anhui Medical University was advised not to go outdoors but stay in his dorm.

Over the past four years, he has spent the Spring Festival holidays in China. While enjoying the beautiful scenery of China, he has also witnessed the rapid development of China. In the face of the current epidemic, he said, "I told my parents not to worry about the current situation because it is safe on campus. I have confidence in the Chinese government, medical staff and researchers. I believe China is really doing its best to stop transmission and cure the disease."

With the ever-increasing exchanges between China and India, the number of Indian students studying in China is also surging. There are already more than 20,000 Indian students studying in China.

“Our school counselor is very concerned about us,” he explained. “She asks us to check in the class WeChat group every day to record the health status and location of each student. Even students outside China need to update their conditions in real time. She also told us how to take preventive measures. The school also notified that the class will not start before February 17. My parents hope that I can go home and have a good rest. If I must go home, I will take all precautions and at the same time isolate myself for at least 14 days.”

Students' Safety Top Priority

Rohit, an Indian student studying at Huazhong Agricultural University in Wuhan, believes that China will overcome the epidemic and put everything on the right track. During the time of winter holiday, most Chinese students have been reunited with their families for Spring Festival. Rohit said that Huazhong Agricultural University in which he is studying currently has only one main gate open. Students must report to the school before leaving the campus. This can effectively prevent potential infections and guarantee the health and safety of students at school. The school and local authorities have provided helplines for students who stayed on campus, and constantly reminded them to wear masks, drink more hot water, use disinfectant and avoid outdoor activities unless necessary. The school also guarantees that they have all the necessities of life, including fruits and vegetables. Rohit said that since the outbreak of pneumonia



caused by the novel coronavirus, the Chinese government has sent a large number of medical teams to Wuhan to provide support and updated information on the situation of the epidemic in a timely manner. Wuhan has built two new hospitals dedicated to treating infected patients. Rohit believes that China's move to build hospitals is commendable. This can effectively isolate infected patients from the main body of society and further protect citizens' health and safety.

On January 31, 2020, Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong gave an interview to Asian News International (ANI). Mr Sun said that since the outbreak of the epidemic, President Xi Jinping has attached great importance and given several important instructions, and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has set up a leading group for comprehensive prevention and control of the epidemic. The Chinese government and people are making every effort to combat the epidemic. The central and local governments have built an all-round and multilevel prevention and control system, with the focus on Wuhan City and Hubei Province. The battle against the novel coronavirus is advancing in an open, transparent, scientific and orderly manner.

Mr Sun also said that as a responsible country, China has always given top priority to the health and safety of all Chinese and foreign nationals in Wuhan, and we will continue to do so. China has been in communication with India to keep it informed of the development of the epidemic and China's prevention and control efforts. “We have done a lot of work to ensure the health and safety of Indian nationals in China,” he said.



Indians Express Solidarity: China not Alone, We are With you



Many Indians who have recently been to China or have learned about the sufferings and the loss of lives caused by COVID-19 in the neighbouring country have expressed their solidarity and firm support to the Chinese people.

Inside a brightly lit spacious hall at the upscale Noida locality on the outskirts of New Delhi, a special prayer meeting was held for China.

"Stay strong China, we are with you," read the placards that participants held in their hands. The meeting at the Institute of Photography on February 24 started with two minutes of silence in the memory of people who lost their lives in China due to the outbreak of coronavirus. The participants, mostly young students, came to

express their solidarity with Chinese people, especially the doctors and paramedical staff who are on the forefront working with dedication.

A traditional oil lamp was lit in the middle of the hall. "Light from the lamp removes darkness and is a metaphor for the transformation involved in the quest for enlightenment, and through this light of oil lamp we wish to pray for our partner country in its mission to control the outbreak," Himadrish Suwan, chairman of Confederation

of Young Leaders, told Xinhua. The Chinese government “has shown its solid commitment and confidence to win the battle against the outbreak,” he said.

Mr Suwan, who is also an advisor to the Confederation of Indian Universities, said they have gathered to express their support and solidarity to their counterparts in China. During the meeting, the attendees expressed their appreciation for the Chinese government’s role in ensuring the safe return of Indian nationals. Recently, many Indian students were brought from China and kept in isolation at a facility on the outskirts of Delhi.

“We are here to echo our concern and express solidarity with China,” said Markandey Rai, a senior advisor of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

Mr Rai expressed his confidence in China’s efforts to combat the virus outbreak, saying it was admirable the country has effectively dealt with the outbreak. “In these tough times, we stand in solidarity with the friendly people of China,” he said. “China is doing great work in stopping the virus from spreading.”

Coronavirus Cases in India

India reported three cases of novel coronavirus from its southern Indian state of Kerala. Local authorities declared the outbreak as a “state

calamity.” However, the alert was withdrawn after the patients’ health improved. On February 23, the health department in Kerala said it has placed 3,252 people under surveillance, out of which 34 have been admitted to selected isolation facilities. Several cases were also reported in other states, but so far none was tested positive.

Students who attended the meeting said they were hopeful that China would overcome this situation soon.

Abdul Suboor Sultani, a student of photography from Afghanistan, expressed firm belief that “this situation would pass.” The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the recent novel coronavirus epidemic a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

India’s Union health ministry has launched a 24/7 helpline number to answer queries on the novel coronavirus. Health teams have been deployed at 21 airports across the country to screen visitors. The health ministry is also circulating precautionary measures recommended by the WHO to prevent the spread of the virus.

Despite an uphill battle to contain the outbreak, China isn’t alone.

“I was in China a few days back. The love and concern they showed to us is highly appreciative,” the institute’s director Rajesh Goyal said. “We are ready to do whatever we can for the people in China.”



Chinese Envoy Updates India on Steps to Combat Coronavirus

Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong met with Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and exchanged views on the bilateral relations, as well as the coordination on combating coronavirus infections.

The ambassador briefed Mr Shringla on the latest progress in the fight against the epidemic, saying that the World Health Organization highly appreciates China's efforts and does not recommend any travel or trade restrictions. As neighbors, he said, "We hope that India will make an objective, fair, calm and rational assessment of the epidemic and continue to understand and support China's efforts to combat the epidemic."

Mr Shringla said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping held two Informal Summits successively, marking an important milestone in India-China relations. This year marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and China.

The two sides should make preparations for a series of celebrations, maintain high-level and institutional exchanges, keep the momentum of trade and investment, conduct more people-to-people exchanges and properly handle differences, he said.

The foreign secretary also conveyed an appreciation to the Chinese government for the passage of the Indians from Wuhan and expressed willingness to cooperate with the Chinese side to deal with the outbreak.

On his part, the ambassador said that China and India are ancient civilizations and the only two emerging countries with over one billion population in the world, both of which are at an important stage of development. China-India relations go far beyond the bilateral scope and are of regional and global significance.

Mr Li Ya, Political Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy and Dr Amit Telang, Director of the East Asia Division, Ministry of External Affairs, were also present at the meeting on February 7.

India's Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla conveyed his appreciation to the Chinese Government for the passage of Indians from Wuhan and expressed willingness to cooperate with the Chinese side to deal with the outbreak.



Objectively Assess Virus Outbreak: China to India

Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong met Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan and exchanged views on the novel coronavirus epidemic in China. The envoy urged her not to impose any travel or trade restrictions, stressing that the virus has been under control.



The Ambassador briefed Ms Sudan about the preventive measures taken by China to stop the spread of the virus not only in China but around the world. While the World Health Organization (WHO) supports China's efforts and disfavors imposing any travel or trade restrictions on the country, China hopes India would objectively evaluate the outbreak, and continue to give its support in this regard, he said.

Ms Sudan expressed her confidence that China would win the battle against the outbreak.

Envoy Discusses COVID-19 Situation with ICCR DG

Chinese Ambassador Sun Weidong met Dinesh K. Patnaik, Director General of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) at the Chinese embassy in New Delhi on



February 20. They exchanged views on the cooperation programs of 2020, which mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between two countries and the "Year of China-Indian Cultural and People-to-People Exchange".

Ambassador Sun also briefed the ICCR chief on steps taken by the Chinese government to combat the novel coronavirus pneumonia in China. The envoy appreciated Mr Patnaik's confidence in China on winning the epidemic war.

Chinese Ambassador Meets Commerce Secretary

China's Ambassador to India Sun Weidong met India's Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan and exchanged views on China-India economic and trade relations. They also discussed strengthening coordination and cooperation for combating the novel coronavirus outbreak during their meeting on February 10. Besides them, other senior officials of the commerce ministry and the Chinese Embassy were also present.

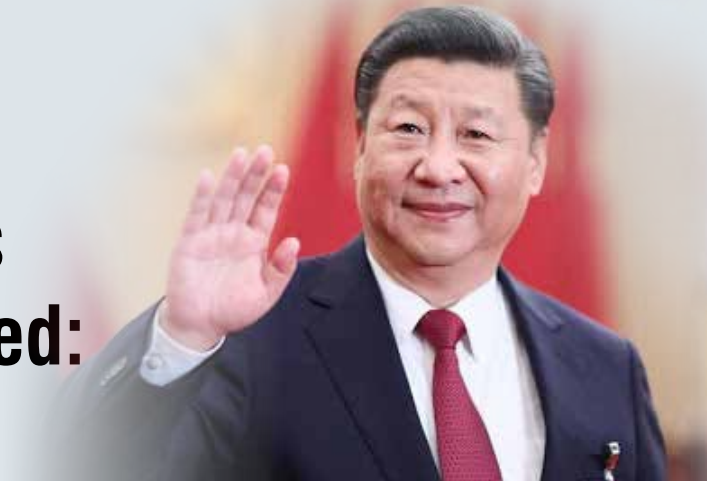


BJP Leader Expresses Solidarity with China

China's Ambassador to India Sun Weidong briefed BJP Leader Vijay Jolly on the preventive and control efforts against novel coronavirus epidemic in the country during their meeting on February 1. Mr Jolly expressed his support and solidarity with China and its people suffering from the deadly epidemic.



Long-term Economic Growth Fundamentals will Remain Unchanged: President Xi



The fundamentals of China's long-term economic development remain unchanged and the impact of the novel coronavirus epidemic on the economy is short-lived, said President Xi Jinping, who is also the general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPI) Central Committee.

President Xi made the remarks on February 17 while inspecting the coronavirus prevention and control work in Beijing. He called for greater efforts to minimize the impact of the epidemic on the economy and reach the socio-economic goals this year. He also underlined the need for paying close attention to employment generation and preventing large-scale layoffs.

President Xi made the remarks on February 17 while inspecting the coronavirus prevention and control work in Beijing. He called for greater efforts to minimize the impact of the epidemic on the economy and reach the socio-economic goals this year.



Li Calls on Industries to Resume Production for Growth, Stability



In a meeting of the State Council, Premier Li Keqiang has called for normalizing production for economic growth and social order, even as the preventive measures for coronavirus continue. He said that enhanced macro-economic regulation as well as accelerated production, allocation, and supply of key materials will be needed to boost growth.

The meeting also reviewed the provision of the key supplies and the progress of the departmental works, besides the orderly resumption of production.

There is a sharp increase in the supply of essential daily necessities, such as coal, electricity, oil and gas, and medical supplies, the meeting observed. Steps such as spacing out return trips have prevented large movement of people after the Spring Festival break.

The meeting underscored the need to encourage enterprises to resume production in an orderly category-specific manner. "While ensuring effective outbreak response, a category-based approach should be adopted in resuming production," Mr Li said.

The immediate priority for the Hubei Province is to stay focused on the epidemic control while ensuring the normal functioning of the industries and the key urban services.



There is a sharp increase in the supply of essential daily necessities, such as coal, electricity, oil and gas, and medical supplies, the meeting observed. Steps such as spacing out return trips have prevented large movement of people after the Spring Festival break.

“Other provinces shall take well-targeted measures in epidemic control, based on local needs. Cities that have the least number of coronavirus cases should resume production,” he said.

The meeting asked key medical suppliers to resume production in full capacity to meet the front-line epidemic control needs. “Transportation arteries and key logistics hubs must be kept unimpeded. In places, where the situation is not serious, coach services and urban public transportation can be resumed,” he added.

“We must make every effort to ensure the supplies for outbreak response and daily necessities are met to maintain the economic progress and people’s life,” Mr Li said.

The State Council also urged the administrations to arrange the workers’ orderly return to their jobs, including better services for migrant workers. Any one-size-fits-all practices to stop non-local vehicles and personnel from coming in must be redressed, it observed.

The regional governments to set special mechanisms to help companies, especially private and smaller firms, to cope with the outbreak and ease difficulties, it heard. Temporary measures, such as waiving rent for private firms in state-owned properties, lowering lending rates, and improving tax relief policies were also discussed.

The supply of essential goods, including grains, oil, vegetables, meat, eggs, and dairy

Temporary measures such as waiving rent for private firms in state-owned properties, lowering lending rates, and improving tax relief policies were also discussed.

products will be reinforced. Illegal activities, such as price gouging will be dealt with firmly, while seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and animal feeds will be guaranteed to facilitate the production of agriculture and animal husbandry supplies.

Employment is another priority, and massive lay-offs must be prevented, the meeting said. Local governments will be encouraged to tap the unemployment insurance funds to help businesses keep their payrolls stable. In places where conditions permit, deferral or refund on social insurance contributions and other possible means will be encouraged.

“All ministries and departments under the State Council must act on the requirements of the State Council’s inter-agency task force, and introduce, in a timely way, supportive policies as the outbreak situation evolves to promote social and economic development on all fronts,” Mr Li said.



Stimulating Economy: Latest Initiatives



Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, China has adopted a step-by-step action plan to give a fresh impetus to the economy as it combats the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak. The government has adopted a more precise and targeted approach to minimizing the impact while accelerating the fight against the epidemic. The latest moves can be summarized as follows:

Work Resumption

- Local authorities are ordered to take region-specific approaches when advancing resumption of work and production based on local health risks.
- Regions with relatively low risks should focus on preventing imported cases and

comprehensively restoring production and normalizing life. The medium-risk regions should resume work and industrial production based on local situations, while the high-risk regions should continue to be fully committed to epidemic prevention and control.

Monetary Policy

- China will implement the “dynamic adjustment” of targeted reserve requirement ratio cut policies soon for better use of inclusive financing to shore up the virus-hit economy, according to China’s central bank, the People’s Bank of China.
- The central bank has issued special re-loans worth 300 billion yuan (\$42.7 billion) to provide preferential interest rate credit support to key enterprises engaged in epidemic prevention and control.
- The financial authorities have instructed lenders to roll over the loans of companies that have trouble repaying their debts as a result of the outbreak. They have also rolled out preferential policies in loan risk classification for the impacted industries such as catering and tourism.

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- As the epidemic weighed on the economy, the banking regulator vowed to moderately raise its tolerance for non-performing loans from local financial institutions with adequate provisions to cover bad loans and capital adequacy ratio remaining high.
- The central bank also pledged a big increase in the issuance of special bonds to provide sufficient funds to commercial lenders for supporting smaller enterprises.

Fiscal Moves

- Facing the potential economic shock, China’s fiscal authorities have pledged to make fiscal policies more proactive to shore up the economy and alleviate the corporate burden, especially to help smaller firms pull through.
- The Ministry of Finance has allocated 1.85 trillion Yuan worth of new local government



bonds ahead of schedule so far this year to shore up the economy.

- Tax and fee cuts have been offered to industries heavily impacted by the epidemic such as transportation, catering and tourism, as well as those supporting people’s daily life such as public transport and courier services.
- The government has decided to temporarily exempt social insurance payments and defer the collection of housing provident funds to ease enterprises’ cash strain and ensure stable employment.

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Employment

- Policies have been rolled out to prevent employers from cutting jobs through measures like lowering unemployment insurance and supporting vocational training.
- The authorities have given priority to helping the poor resume work and provide timely assistance to those having difficulties finding jobs due to the epidemic via ways such as putting them on public service positions.

Insurance Support

- Chinese insurers have donated 11.58 trillion yuan worth of insurance to frontline personnel fighting the epidemic. Insurance companies have set up green channels to process the claims for COVID-19 patients, simplified the procedures of settlement and provided online settlement services.
- The current insurance claims of property insurance companies involving the novel coronavirus epidemic stood at 24.6 million yuan, while 6.57 million yuan of the total amount was for frontline medics.

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Foreign Enterprises

- The Ministry of Commerce has pledged to facilitate foreign-invested enterprises to resume production, especially to those industrial leaders to keep global supply chain stable.
- Particular support would go to large foreign investment projects, helping foreign investors solve their difficulties and minimize the impacts of the epidemic.
- Efforts will be made in further opening-up by improving the use of foreign investment in sectors including telecommunication, medicare, education and financial services while shortening the foreign investment negative list in pilot free trade zones and nationwide.



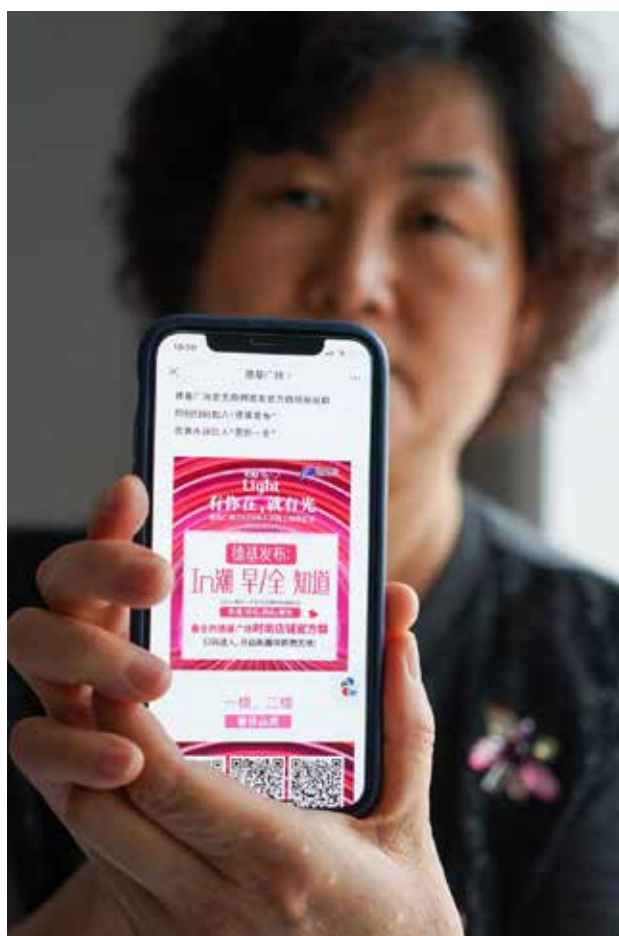
CHINESE FIRMS BOOST IMMUNITY TO CORONAVIRUS FALLOUT

Although the novel coronavirus outbreak is to have a temporary negative impact on the world's second-largest economy, Chinese companies have never given up hope of finding a way out of this dilemma and strengthening their immunity against the infection. Since the contagion coincided with the Spring Festival holiday, various industries in China, including catering, retail, manufacturing, and tourism, have been heavily impacted.

Hotels, restaurants, shopping malls, and tourist sites, which should have been in full operations at the moment, are quiet and empty. As more and more workers have gone back to work since the extended holiday ended, domestic firms are racing to cut losses with the help of the government.

Rapid Adjustment

Mr Zhang Liqing is the owner of a restaurant that serves Chinese Huaiyang cuisine in east China's Jiangsu Province. "People used to stand in a long line to wait for a table, especially during the Spring Festival. This year, however, we have already lost about 1 million yuan (about \$143,000) due to the shutdown of the restaurant since the first day of the Lunar New Year," Mr Zhang said. Although he does not know when he can reopen his restaurant, he said he has to do something. "I'm training my employees online and also learning new business models such as take-out food and non-contact orders. I think



these measures will help me prevent the damage of the epidemic in the future," he said.

Due to the huge demand for medical materials during the outbreak such as masks and protective outfits, in particular, some Chinese enterprises

Chinese companies have never given up hope of finding a way out of this dilemma and strengthening their immunity against the infection



have accelerated their adjustment of production structure. In the city of Wuxi, Jiangsu Hongdou Industrial Co., Ltd., a clothing maker, has pitched in. "We transformed a factory into a workshop for disposable medical protective clothing and upgraded technologies to produce such products," said Mr Gu Jinlong, executive vice president of the company.

The company completed its first general protective suit on February 3, and its daily output has now increased to about 40,000 pieces. It is now waiting for the permission of the government to produce medical protective suits.

Ms Shi Yun, 29, who lives in the city of Nanjing, found a new way to kill time since the residents were advised to stay at home to avoid virus infections. She found that many shopping malls in Nanjing are displaying their

new products, including the latest collections of clothes online through group chats on WeChat or other apps.

"It feels like virtual window shopping," said Ms Shi, who only needs to browse on her computer or mobile phone, instead of in a mall. In order to pull through, brick and mortar retailers have been forced to run their businesses through social media platforms.

According to Mr He Huan, a manager at Deji Plaza, a Nanjing-based shopping mall complex selling luxury goods, the mall has set up various group chats based on commodity categories and even launched an online shopping app to cater to customers. "So far, sales for cosmetics and fashion brands are satisfactory. We are willing to keep improving our online services," he said.



Foreign Firms Resume Business Amid China Epidemic



It was a quiet start for many foreign companies resuming business after an extended Spring Festival holiday due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

Over 20 factories of the U.S. agribusiness giant Cargill have resumed production across China, after the local governments guaranteed non-stop power supply amid the outbreak. However, one of its feed plants in Hubei Province, the hardest hit by the disease, has not yet resumed work.

“The health and safety of our employees are of primary consideration, and we strictly apply comprehensive measures to protect our employees, resume production and fight against the epidemic,” said Mr Liu Jun, China president of Cargill.

According to Mr Liu, the internet technology has immensely helped the company in connecting with its customers and generating business. “We can stay efficient with emails, calls and online video chats with communication apps of all kinds,” said Mr Liu.

The Commerce Ministry issued a circular urging authorities to provide better services for foreign enterprises amid the coronavirus outbreak. Efforts should be made to help the foreign-funded companies resume production and operation in an orderly manner, it said.

Eighteen of Honeywell’s 21 factories in the Chinese mainland have resumed production as of February 17, while 95 percent of the company’s office clerks will work from home this week. The company hosted an online meeting with over 3,000 employees joining live through the internet.

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There are some 50,000 foreign-invested companies in Shanghai, according to the Shanghai Association of Foreign Investment. Those manufacturing anti-epidemic materials and daily necessities did not halt their productions, while others are gradually resuming production.

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Work From Home

Many foreign companies have turned to telecommunication to better protect their employees. Mr Jiang Zhuo, an engineer of a Shanghai-based foreign automaker, used to take 18 metro stations from home to work. "I will work at home for at least one week and be able to stay with my daughter amid the epidemic. I feel fully cared for by the company," Mr Jiang said.

"China has taken decisive and powerful measures to control the epidemic, and we firmly believe that Chinese and Japanese enterprises will work together to tackle the difficulties," said Mr Tatsuo Sugiyama, the regional general manager of the East Asia Region of Nippon Express Co., Ltd.

Mr Liu said the current epidemic outbreak will have an impact on his company's business as well as China's society and economy to a certain degree. However, the trade volume will see growth after the epidemic." We are prepared in accordance with possible economic fluctuation," Mr Liu said.

Coronavirus Impact on China, World Economy to be Limited: Economist

The impact of novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, on the Chinese economy will be limited, said Mr Khairy Tourk, a professor of economics with the Stuart School of Business of the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. "In the first quarter, there's definitely going to be some negative impact, but in the rest of the year, things would go back to normal," Mr Tourk told Xinhua in a recent interview.

"The World Health Organization commended China for its quick response. China achieved an almost real-time response," Mr Tourk refuted the rumor of China being late in responding to the virus outbreak. Mr Tourk compared the fatality of COVID-19 with other epidemics such as Zika and Ebola, saying that it's much lower than other epidemics. "So all in all, there has been too much exaggeration of the negative effects of this epidemic," he said.

"One positive thing about the Chinese economy is that it has already developed a digital economy. So it's relatively easy for students to study online. I was surprised to hear that some of the Chinese courts are conducting trials online," Mr Tourk said.



"Chinese people are very inventive and they have taken so many steps to lessen the effect of the spread of the disease. The country is moving in the right direction as dealing with its crisis," he said. Mr Tourk also called for worldwide efforts to fight the disease. "Nothing spares cooperation among nations like emergencies that deal with questions of life and death," he said. "A healthy China means a healthy world economy," Mr Tourk added.

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BACK IN BUSINESS



Signalling better times ahead, around 60 Chinese enterprises have resumed production in Linghu Township in an orderly manner amid epidemic prevention and control efforts.



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Fight against **CORONAVIRUS**
We stand with China

A sand sculpture created by celebrated Indian artist Sudarsan Pattnaik to show solidarity with China in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.