



CHINA • YUNNAN



FOCUS

China vows coordination as virus grows

China vowed on January 31 to work with the international community to uphold regional and international health security, and reiterated it has the confidence and capability to win the battle against the novel coronavirus epidemic.

The pledge came as the World Health Organization declared on January 30 that the outbreak constitutes a public health emergency of international concern, or PHEIC, following an emergency meeting in Geneva, Switzerland.

Besides China, the virus has also spread to several other Asian nations and reached Australia and Europe as well.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States said January 30 that an Illinois woman who recently returned from China had transmitted the coronavirus to her husband — the first known case of person-to-person spread of the pathogen in the US.



Cambodian families of children with congenital heart disease who received free treatment in Yunnan donated masks to China. (Yunnan Daily)

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in an online statement on January 31 that since the outbreak, China has been in close communication and cooperation with the WHO. "China will continue

working with the WHO and other countries to safeguard regional and global public health security," Hua said.

Saying the Chinese government has been taking the most

comprehensive and rigorous prevention and control measures for people's health and safety, Hua added that many of the measures go well beyond the requirements of the International Health Regulations.

"We have full confidence and capability to win this fight against the epidemic," she said.

Also on January 31, the National Health Commission called on the international community to understand and support China's efforts in preventing and controlling the epidemic.

The commission hopes countries from around the world will work with China to jointly prevent and contain the disease in line with the International Health Regulations as well as the recommendations of the WHO in order to safeguard regional and global public health security, according to a statement issued by the commission on its website.

(China Daily)

BELT AND ROAD

Chinese and Lao railway builders spend Spring Festival on construction site

During the Spring Festival (Chinese New Year), the China-Laos Railway construction site outside Luang Prabang was still a lively scene. Seven construction teams were busy building with bridges, culverts, tunnels and roadbeds.

To ensure that the China-Laos Railway, a major project of the Belt and Road Initiative, can be completed on schedule, many Chinese railway builders spent the Spring Festival on the construction site, including 160 employees of the China Railway Eighth Bureau's Third Division.

"Now the project is at a critical stage. While the weather is good, everyone has sped up construction. The railway builders could only to send their best wishes to their families on their mobile phones," said Deputy Project Manager Zhang Yunhu. "We will basically complete our part of the project this year. I hope to celebrate the Spring Festival with my family in China next year."

At the China-Laos border, a construction technician of the China Railway Eighth Bureau named Liao Jing has also spent two Spring Festivals in Laos.

On the early morning of the Spring Festival's Eve (January 24th), Liao went to the construction site in his working suit as usual. First he came to No. 3 Natong Tunnel which was holed through last June. He carefully checked the tunnel's safety door and power distribution box before taking the records. Although the Fifth Bureau has completed the under-track work of its section and suspended construction during the Spring Festival, the rear personnel still patrolled the construction site every day to guarantee safety within the section.

Liao was still on the patrol when his mobile phone rang. It was a video call from his family and he saw all his family members sitting around the table for a reunion dinner.

His child said, "Dad, mother and I miss you!"

"I miss you too! Next year the China-Laos Railway will be completed. I promise I will come home to celebrate the Spring Festival with you!" Liao said with his eyes welling up with tears. He quickly turned his mobile phone camera towards the completed bridge and continued, "Look, this is the China-Laos Railway we are building! I'm patrolling the construction site. I will call you later."

Tian Huiyi, a post-90, joined the China-Laos Railway construction in June 2018 and has also spent two Spring Festivals on the construction site. "I wish to go home for the Spring Festival, but I choose to stay here so that the railway can be completed as scheduled," said Tian. (Xinhua)

WHO: Confident in China's ability to contain virus

Discourages or even opposes restrictions of travel and trade

Speaking at a press conference after a closed-door meeting of the emergency committee, World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stressed that the WHO discourages or even opposes restrictions of travel and trade.

"The Committee does not recommend any travel or trade restriction based on the current information available," a statement published after the emergency committee meeting said January 30.

"Countries must inform the WHO about any travel measures taken, as required by the International Health Regulations (IHR). Countries are cautioned against actions that promote stigma or discrimination, in line with the principles of Article 3 of the IHR," the statement added.



The construction of the Wuhan Huoshenshan Hospital took only 10 days. Here are medical workers. (Xinhua)

PHEIC declaration is not a vote of no confidence in China

Under the IHR, the WHO director-general has the authority to determine whether an outbreak constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). The designation is aimed at mobilizing more international resources to deal with the epidemic.

He said the declaration was not a vote of no confidence in China. Rather it is necessary because

human-to-human infections have been confirmed in other countries.

"We would have seen many more cases outside China by now, and probably deaths, if it were not for the government's efforts and the progress they have made to protect their own people and the people of the world," Tedros said, adding that this is the main reason behind the PHEIC declaration.

China setting a new standard for outbreak response

"The speed with which China detected the outbreak, isolated the virus, sequenced the genome and shared it with WHO and the world are very impressive and beyond words. So, is China's commitment to transparency and to supporting other countries," Ghebreyesus said. "In many ways, China is actually setting a new standard for outbreak response," he added.

Ghebreyesus said he believes China will effectively contain and eventually defeat the epidemic, adding that China's efforts to combat the disease deserve respect and appreciation and are worth learning from.

Now, the situation is still developing, and more research is needed; particularly, countries with fragile health systems should enhance their responses, the WHO chief said.

(CGTN and China Daily)

Hospital president's heroic race against time

"As my life is counting down, I desperately make full use of every single minute," said Zhang Dingyu, president of Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital, in the capital of Hubei Province.

The 57-year-old, who was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, which attacks nerve cells that control muscles, in October 2018, has been working with more than 600 others at the hospital for a month since it received the first few cases of pneumonia caused by a novel coronavirus.

"My leg muscles have become weaker because of atrophy, then my body will lose sensation gradually... I have to run, competing against time to finish important missions. I have to run faster to get more patients back

from the critical pandemic."

What makes the unyielding man weep is that his wife was infected with the novel coronavirus while working at another hospital in Wuhan. She received treatment and has now recovered.

"Maybe I'm a good doctor but not a qualified husband," Zhang said, adding they'd been married for 28 years and he was afraid of losing her.

Zhang and his team got some relief on January 2, when medical aid in the form of 150 people from Army Medical University arrived at the hospital.

"Our nation is strong in scientific research and economically, and we have Chinese people's wills united like a fortress. I believe that we'll conquer this disease." (China Daily)

First novel coronavirus patient in Yunnan released from hospital

For Ms. Che, the 2020 Spring Festival will be unforgettable in her lifetime.

On January 31, when she walked out of the Infectious Disease Department of the First People's Hospital of Honghe Prefecture in Yunnan, she turned back repeatedly to thank the medical workers. "I'm grateful to all the medical staff," said Che.

Che was not only the first confirmed novel coronavirus patient in Honghe prefecture, but also the first to be cured and discharged from hospital in Yunnan province.

Born in Mengzi, Honghe, Che worked in a supermarket in Wuhan. On January 16, she returned to Mengzi for the

Spring Festival holiday with her family. On January 24, she was diagnosed positive of novel coronavirus and hospitalized.

"Seeing everyone trying their best to cure me, my fear was gone," Che said. During her stay at the hospital from January 24 to 31, a psychologist also encouraged Che to fight against the virus.

By January 31, two consecutive nucleic acid tests showed that Che was already negative for the novel coronavirus, and her inflammatory indexes were normal again. The expert group decided she had recovered and could be released from hospital.

(Yunnan Daily)

