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FOCUS

China vows more cooperation internationally to control rapid spread of disease

China vows closer international cooperation with Russia and other countries to control the novel coronavirus pneumonia pandemic, which experts say further demonstrates its vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind.

In a phone conversation on March 19 night with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, President Xi Jinping said that the epidemic broke out ferociously, and China had to rise to the challenge and respond to it bravely.

That is because it not only concerns the lives and health of the Chinese people but also the public health security of the whole world, he said, calling for closer international cooperation in epidemic prevention and control, experience sharing on containment and treatment and facilitation of joint research.

Xi stressed that at this special moment when both countries are fighting the disease, China and Russia have been supporting each other and cooperating closely, which has demonstrated the high level of China-Russia relations in the new era.

Putin said that remarkably effective measures taken by the Chinese government have not only contained the spread of the disease inside China but also made important contributions to safeguarding the health of people in other countries.

Russia greatly appreciates and is pleased with China's efforts, he said, adding that China has set a good example for the international community by lending a helping hand to other pandemic-affected countries in a timely manner.

What China has done represents a resounding answer to the provocation and stigmatization by a certain country over COVID-19, the Russian president said.

Li Yonghui, a researcher of Russian studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that the virus can be defeated only by concerted efforts.

"Joint efforts such as cooperation in vaccine development, providing assistance across borders and sharing of epidemic information are a reflection of the connotation of the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind," Li said.

Ruan Zongze, executive vice-president of the China Institute of International Studies, said the pandemic further enhances the global community's understanding of this vision.

"The epidemic concerns people's health and lives, regardless of borders or skin color. The most powerful weapon against it is solidarity and cooperation," Ruan said.

The Chinese government has announced it would provide assistance, including testing kits, masks and protective suits, to 82 countries, and the World Health Organization and the African Union, with many shipments having already arrived in recipient countries.

"China is practicing its vision with actual deeds by providing assistance within its ability to other countries," Ruan said, "and this will further improve and enhance China's relationship with international society."

Meanwhile, a certain country that is trying to politicize the pandemic, label the virus and stigmatize China is running into opposition from the global community and such attempts are contemptible, Ruan added.

China has been actively engaged in international cooperation on the prevention and control of the epidemic in an open, transparent and responsible manner. The fight against the epidemic requires the solidarity and coordination of the international community, and China will work with other countries to jointly safeguard global public health security.

XI'S REMARKS

Humanity must respect, protect, and stay in harmony with nature in its development activities; otherwise nature will take its revenge. This is a law that everyone should observe.

——Excerpt from President Xi Jinping's Speech at the 41st group study session of the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee

BIODIVERSITY IN YUNNAN

Yunnan: Care for wild animals

Dubbed "Kingdom of Animals" and "Kingdom of Plants", Yunnan province is one of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots with the richest species diversity. In recent years, Yunnan has made consistent efforts in protecting wild animals and their living environment. It has greatly improved the nature reserve system. And the idea of green development has deeply rooted in the heart of the people living in the province.

Wang Zhaorong gives a lecture publicizing knowledge on black-necked cranes. **Photo by Zhang Guangyu**

Wang Zhaorong: Protecting wild animals is protecting our humans

"I'll devote my whole life to protecting black-necked cranes. They and my wife are like the two wings of my life. Without any one of them, I won't fly high, " Wang Zhaorong, one of the founders of the Zhaotong Volunteers Association for Protecting Black-neck Cranes(ZVAPBC), said frankly during a recent interview with our reporters.

Since the association was set up in 1998, Wang has voluntarily spent over 9,000 hours protecting black-necked cranes. However, his story with the birds dates back to 1994.

The story was about love. In 1994, Wang traveled more than 100 kilometers to Dashanbao of Zhaotong where his girlfriend worked as a doctor and the black-necked cranes wintered. In those days, the cranes flying overhead always drew the attention of the two lovers with their calls.

It might be the fate that brought Wang and the cranes closer. In early 1998, Wang was appointed as the assistant to the head of Dashanbao Township government. Later on, he met Mr. Sun Dehui, an eco-photographer who had committed himself to the protection of black-necked cranes for years. "Sun was just like a teacher. I learned from him knowledge about the cranes and their harsh living conditions. I was moved by his devotions and decided to join hands with him to protect the birds," said Wang.

To pool more efforts and wisdoms to protect the birds, Sun initiated the set-up of a non-governmental organization. And in December 1998, the ZVAPBC was founded. In 22 years, the number of its members has grown to 510. They are civil servants, teachers, journalists, authors, students, farmers and businesspeople.

In January 2003, Dashanbao was listed as a national nature reserve by the State Council. Each year, more than 1,400 black-necked cranes winter there, along with more than ten thousand birds of other species like bar-headed geese, mallards, ruddy shelducks and pochards.

"We have only one earth where the grass, trees, birds and beasts live freely in nature. And they the hosts of the earth like our human beings. Thus, protecting wild animals is protecting ourselves," Wang believed the nature will repay human beings for our protection efforts.

Newborn monkeys bring joy to rangers

"One more baby monkey!" Lai Jiandong, Head of the Wildlife Protection Station, Yunnan Baima Snow Mountain National Nature Reserve is jubilant these days, as the reserve has welcomed five newborn Yunnan snub-nosed monkeys, one of the world's most endangered primates, during the period from January 25 to March 6.

Lai shared some exciting moments about these new arrivals. On the morning of March 4, a reserve staff was conducting quantity monitoring when he spotted a newborn in the family of "Shuaige" （handsome guy）. Based on the data collected, the staff determined that the cub was born overnight. Good news kept pouring in: two days after, on March 6, the family of "Xingsheng"(Prosperity) greeted a new baby as well.

The survival of the Yunnan snub-nosed monkeys hinges on their habitats, said Lai, as better ecological environment provides abundant food for them. Thanks to the conservation efforts, the number of Yunnan snub-nosed monkeys in Baima Snow Mountain has been on the rise in recent years.

Young Kunminger bridges gap between humans and elephants

"I still remember how excited I was when I traveled to Xishuangbanna to do my research about Asian elephants for the first time. In order to film wild elephants, I even bought a new video camera myself," said Chen Shu.

"Unlike what we have seen in many documentaries, wild animals are in fact very difficult to be spotted. In most time, we can only find their traces left behind," she said.

Chen Shu, a young lady native to Kunming, Yunnan province, has engaged herself in wildlife conservation since 2011. At present, she works as one and the only Chinese staff member of the Zoological Society of London (ZSL).

"Our program in China consists of three parts," Chen told us. "In the first place, we work with a number of key universities and institutes, studying the distribution and living environment of wild animals, helping monitor their habitats, and later making practical conservation plans together."

Chen has taken an active role in organizing educational activities, aiming at raising people's awareness of wildlife conservation in China. In November 2017, she launched the "We Care" project, together with a number of young elephant researchers and the Elephant Books – a local bookstore in downtown Kunming. By holding salon events on a regular basis, they attempt to share interesting facts, knowledge as well as stories about animal protection with the citizens. As many as 15 story-sharing sessions have taken place so far. "By studying the behaviors of elephants and mankind, we hope to create a shared future for the both sides," Chen said.

(Yunnan Daily)

Chen Shu took a photo with an elephant cub. **Photo from the interviewee**

IN-PICs

Heroes are back home

1,135 Yunnan medical workers fly back to Kunming from Hubei province recently as the COVID-19 outbreak has subdued in the hard-hit province. After the outbreak of the epidemic in China, a total of 1,156 Yunnan medics were sent to Hubei to join the battle against COVID-19 in ten batches.

"We fought shoulder to shoulder to win the battle, and harvested lifelong friendship," said Cui Pengyu, team leader of the second batch of Yunnan medics assisting Hubei. "It's our responsibility to stand with the Wuhan citizens, to let solidarity be the antidote to our shared threat," he said.

Photo by Yang Zheng

Photo by Huang Zhechun

The Yunnan medical teams fought the virus mainly in Wuhan and Xianing, two cities of Hubei province. After the outbreak of the epidemic, China adopted the policy of "pairing-up support" to help cities and prefectures of Hubei(excluding Wuhan) to combat the disease. And Yunnan was assigned the task of helping Xianning city. As of March 17, the Yunnan medical teams to Xianing had cured 98.21% of the patients. And those in Wuhan treated more than 600 of the infected.

(Yunnan Daily)

China launches first clinical trial of coronavirus vaccine

The first clinical trial of the novel coronavirus vaccine in China has kicked off as volunteers taking part in the project started to share their experience on social media, the Science and Technology Daily reported on March 21.

The clinical trial was filed on Chinese Clinical Trial Registry on March 17, the newspaper said.

According to its registration information, the trial is jointly sponsored by the Institute of Biotechnology, Academy of Military Medical Sciences, People's Liberation Army and CanSino Biologics Inc based in Tianjin.

The trial is being carried out on healthy adults between the ages of 18 and 60 in two medical facilities in Wuhan, Hubei province. The study is set to be completed by Dec 31, according to the registry.

All 108 volunteers are from Wuhan that was hit hard by the outbreak. They will receive a series of follow-up examinations within six months after injection to see if their bodies have generated antibody to the virus, the registry said,

Wang Junzhi, a senior expert on drug and vaccine development, said earlier this month that China is simultaneously conducting nine vaccine development projects, and most of them are expected to complete preclinical trials and begin human tests in April. In general, China's vaccine development against COVID-19 is among the world's front-runners, he added.

(China Daily)

Foreign trade firms quicken pace to resume production

China's foreign trade firms quickened its pace to resume production slowed down by the novel coronavirus as a raft of supportive policies started to take effect, a commerce ministry official said March 19.

About 67 percent of the country's key import and export firms recovered over 70 percent of production capacity, said Jiang Fan, the official. The figures did not include those in Hubei Province that has been hard-hit by the virus outbreak

To facilitate the sector's production resumption, the ministry has resorted to policy tools such as export tax rebates and export credit insurances for foreign trade firms and introduced measures to help them secure orders and maintain market shares, according to Jiang.

Noting that the outbreak has rippled around the world and inflicted negative impacts on the global industrial chain, Jiang said that China has confidence in keeping its foreign trade stable.

China's foreign trade sector has a strong resilience and sound development prospects, and will remain open to the outside world, Jiang added.

The ministry also vowed to take targeted measures to help firms tackle issues such as the lack of labor, capital and raw materials while encouraging localities and business organizations to provide necessary legal and information-related services.

(Xinhua)