

CHINAFRICA

中國與非洲



12 issues a year at a subscription rate of 180 RMB/R360

An Africa-oriented English monthly covering China and Africa published by BEIJING REVIEW,
ChinAfrica is the leading publication in China featuring news, views and analysis for an African audience.

SUBSCRIPTION HOTLINES: (8610) 6831 0644, +27 (0)71 613 2053 Email: circulation@bjreview.com.cn, casa201208@hotmail.com

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BUSINESS: POST-EPIDEMIC OUTLOOK P.36 | SPORTS: KEEPING FIT AMID EPIDEMIC P.44

BEIJING REVIEW

VOL.63 NO.9 FEBRUARY 27, 2020

北京周报 WWW.BJREVIEW.COM



HOLDING STRONG

The whole nation comes together
to fight against COVID-19

RMB6.00
USD1.70
AUD3.00
GBP1.20
CAD2.60
CHF2.60
JPY188

ISSN 1000-9140



9 771000 914208 0 92
邮发代号2-922 · 国内统一刊号: CN11-1576/G2



Racing Against Time

China battles novel coronavirus



EDITOR'S DESK

02 A Unique Advantage

THIS WEEK

COVER STORY

16 Joining Forces

Sichuan medical workers lend a hand to Wuhan

18 Leading by Example

Expert contributes to virus control with professionalism and dedication

19 Holding Down the Fort

Ordinary people volunteer in communities amid epidemic

20 A Record Sixteen Days

Entrepreneur goes all out to send medical supplies

22 China Responds

Authorities show transparency and effectiveness

WORLD

26 One World, One Fight

Top Chinese diplomat's view

32 Silencing the Guns

African countries meet to build peace

Cover Design: Wang Yajuan

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12 COVER STORY

Braving Novel Coronavirus
Medical workers continue
frontline battle

WORLD

P.30 | Beyond East and West
Countries must transcend differences

BUSINESS

P.36 | Bouncing Back
Stephen Roach shares his views on
post-epidemic Chinese economy

BUSINESS

P.38 | Sharing for Support
Companies promote
job-sharing for labor shortages



OUT OF POVERTY

34 Heritage Boosts Income

Traditional handicrafts help
people become prosperous

BUSINESS

40 Market Watch

SPORTS

44 Thrown Off the Track

Sports events affected
during epidemic

FORUM

46 The Art of Strategy

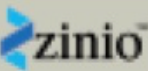
EXPAT'S EYE

48 Journey to the West

The beauty of Tibet



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Beijing Review (ISSN 1000-9140) is published weekly for US\$61.00 per year by Cypress Books, 360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48, South San Francisco, CA 94080, Periodical Postage Paid at South San Francisco, CA 94080. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Beijing Review, Cypress Books, 360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48, South San Francisco, CA 94080



北京周報

BEIJING REVIEW

A News Weekly Magazine
Published Since 1958

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Published every Thursday by

BEIJING REVIEW, 24 Baiwanzhuang Lu,

Beijing 100037, China.

Overseas Distributor: China International Book Trading

Corporation (Guoji Shudian), P. O. BOX 399,

Beijing 100044, China

Tel: 86-10-68413849, 1-416-497-8096 (Canada)

Fax: 86-10-68412166

E-mail: fp@mail.cibtc.com.cn

Website: <http://www.cibtc.com>

General Distributor for Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan:

Peace Book Co. Ltd.

17/FI, Paramount Bldg, 12 Ka Yip St, Chai Wan, HK

Tel: 852-28046687 **Fax:** 852-28046409

Beijing Review (ISSN 1000-9140 USPS 2812) is published weekly in the

United States for US\$61.00 per year by Cypress Books,

360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48, South San Francisco, CA 94080

News Postage Paid at South San Francisco, CA 94080

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Beijing Review*,

Cypress Books, 360 Swift Avenue, Suite 48,

South San Francisco, CA 94080

EDITOR'S DESK

A Unique Advantage

China's political-sociocultural system has enabled it to mobilize all its resources with lightning speed to fight the novel coronavirus.

It is the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics espoused by the Communist Party of China (CPC) that has helped concentrate medical experts and resources to provide treatment to people infected with the virus on a massive scale and then mobilize other resources to limit the infections while keeping life and the economy going.

In the fight against the epidemic, China's institutional advantages have been evident, primarily in two aspects. First, the entire country has united as one and taken swift action.

On January 25, President Xi Jinping, also General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, chaired a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Party's Political Bureau, where it was decided that a group would be formed to lead the work on epidemic prevention and control. Under the group, several working groups were set up to cover seriously affected areas, such as Hubei Province in central China.

Following the meeting, all 31 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions on the Chinese mainland activated a top-level public health emergency response, which included drawing up preventive measures for communities. The measures were immediately carried out

by communities throughout the country, presenting a striking contrast to the situation in the United States when it grappled with the H1N1 outbreak in 2009. At that time, it took former U.S. President Barack Obama six months to declare the flu a national emergency.

Health workers and medical resources from all over China have been rapidly concentrated and sent to support Wuhan, capital city of Hubei, which has been the worst affected. With infection control in Wuhan the top priority, the Central Government has sent more than 32,000 health workers to Hubei. Medical supplies such as protective suits, surgical masks, medical gloves and goggles from the national medical reserves are being transported to Wuhan on an urgent basis, and production of medical equipment has been accelerated across the country to ensure a steady flow of supplies.

The comprehensive planning has also seen the Central Government pair up 19 provinces and municipalities with 16 cities and prefectures in Hubei other than Wuhan to assist them. Two hospitals that together provide about 2,500 beds for severe cases were built in Wuhan in 10 days each. Several of these measures have been lauded by the international community, media and medical organizations.

Actions speak louder than words. The handling of a severe epidemic has shown the worth of China's system. ■

WRITETOUS



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CHINA.....RMB6.00 U.S.A.....USD1.70 AUSTRALIA.....AUD3.00 UK.....GBP1.20 CANADA.....CAD2.60 SWITZERLAND.....CHF2.60
JAPAN.....JPY188 EUROPE.....EURO1.90 TURKEY.....YTL5.00 HK.....HKD9.30 NEPAL.....RS40

主管单位：中国外文出版发行事业局

主办单位：北京周报社

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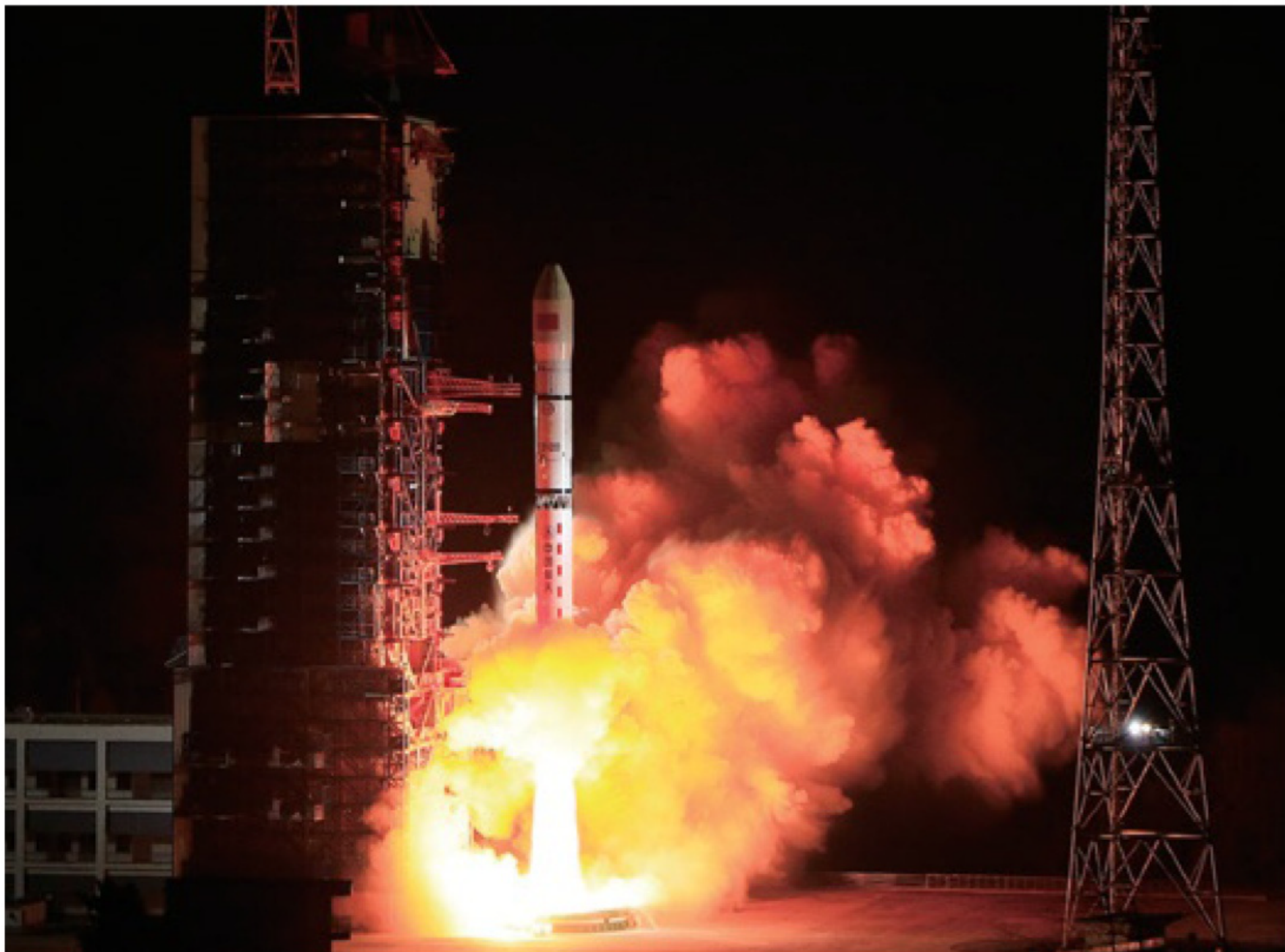
总编室电话：(010) 68996252 发行部电话：(010) 68310644

印刷：北京华联印刷有限公司

北京周报 英文版2020年 第9期 ISSN 1000-9140 国内统一刊号：CN11-1576/G2 邮发代号：2-922

广告许可证0171号 北京市期刊登记证第733号

国内零售价：人民币6.00元



BLASTING INTO SPACE

A Long March-2D carrier rocket takes off from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China's Sichuan Province on February 20. The rocket launched four new technology experiment satellites, which have entered the planned orbit and will be used mainly for a new Earth observation technology experiment.



XINHUA

over 10 hospitals in Beijing, as well as in Guangdong Province in south China and Hunan Province in central China, and has shown fairly good efficacy, according to Sun.

She gave the example of a 54-year-old patient in Beijing who was admitted to hospital four days after showing symptoms. After taking the drug for a week, all his health indicators improved.

So far, no obvious serious adverse reactions to the drug have been found among the over 100 patients enrolled for clinical trials, she said.

New Jet

A new model of a China-developed short-haul aircraft will make its maiden flight in the second half of the year, according to the developer.

Manufacturing of the Xinzhou-700 has resumed at a research base in Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi Province in northwest China, the Xi'an Aircraft Industry Company (XAC) said.

The turboprop aircraft is a new-generation regional jet, notable for its more effective body design and advanced technology. It can carry up to 70 passengers.

"We are simultaneously assembling two Xinzhou-700s," Yang Guorong, the chief manufacturing engineer for the project, said. "The aircraft to be used for the maiden flight is in the final stages of assembly."

So far, 285 orders have been received for the Xinzhou-700 from 11 domestic and foreign airlines.

XAC started developing the aircraft in 2013, with the aim of claiming a larger share of the global market.

BeiDou Satellites

Four satellites of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) have recently passed tests in orbit and started operation in the network, the Satellite Navigation System Management Office said.

These are the 41st, 49th, 50th and 51st satellites of the BDS family.

The 41st satellite, launched on November 1, 2018, is operating in geostationary orbit, and the 49th satellite

Hi-Tech Prevention

A medical worker uses a food delivery robot in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province in south China, on February 7. Hi-tech has been introduced in many cities in the prevention and control of the novel coronavirus.

Two Sessions Face Postponement

The annual sessions of China's top legislature, the National People's Congress (NPC), and the top political advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), dubbed the Two Sessions, are likely to be postponed due to the current epidemic in China.

In December 2019, it was agreed that the NPC's annual gathering would start on March 5. Customarily, the CPPCC annual session starts on March 3.

However, the authorities are now mulling postponing the sessions as it is now at a crucial moment for the prevention and control of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the government has said no effort should be spared to ensure progress in this work.

Many national legislators and CPPCC members, especially those from the medical and health circles, are on the frontline fighting the epidemic.

NPC leaders, after careful deliberation, consider it necessary to delay this year's plenary meeting, said Zang Tiewei, a spokesperson for the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee, on February 17.

The NPC Standing Committee will meet later this month to reach a decision on postponing the annual session.

The Chairperson's Council of the CPPCC also met on February 17, where it reviewed postponing the annual session. According to the CPPCC Charter, the CPPCC National Committee holds a plenary session once a year. To postpone it, the Chairperson's Council has to make a proposal.

COVID-19 Treatment

Based on the result of clinical trials, Chinese experts have confirmed that Chloroquine phosphate, an anti-malarial drug, has some curative effect on the novel coronavirus, a Chinese official said on February 17.

The experts have unanimously suggested the drug be included in the next version of treatment guidelines and applied in wider clinical trials as soon as possible, Sun Yanrong, deputy head of the China National Center for Biotechnology Development under the Ministry of Science and Technology, said at a press conference.

Chloroquine phosphate, in use for more than 70 years, was selected from tens of thousands of existing drugs after multiple rounds of screening, Sun said.

The drug is under clinical trial in

was sent into inclined geosynchronous Earth orbit on November 5, 2019. Both were developed by the China Academy of Space Technology.

The 50th and the 51st satellites, launched on November 23, 2019, are operating in medium Earth orbit. They were developed by the Innovation Academy for Microsatellites of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Over the past two years, 28 BDS-3 satellites and two BDS-2 satellites have been successfully sent into orbit.

Plans are underway to send two more BDS satellites into geostationary orbit in the first half of the year to complete the global network.

IOC Conference

The Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (BOCOG) held a high-level video conference with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on the preparations for the Beijing 2022 Olympics Winter Games on February 17.

The video conference was attended by Beijing's Vice Mayor and BOCOG Executive Vice President Zhang Jiandong, IOC Vice President and Chair of the Coordination Commission for Beijing 2022 Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr. and IOC Executive Director for Olympic Games Christophe Dubi.

They discussed global ticket sales, hospitality programs and the promotion of sustainable and legacy projects.

"Amid the Chinese people's

fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic, this video conference on preparations for the 2022 Games represents the understanding and support from the IOC," Zhang said.

After the outbreak, IOC President Thomas Bach sent letters to the Chinese Olympic Committee, expressing his confidence that the Games' preparations will not be affected. Samaranch has praised China's effort to contain the epidemic and his confidence in the victory of the efforts. The BOCOG has been in close communications with IOC officials, reporting important updates.

Fertilizer Supply

The central authorities said a steady supply of fertilizer will be ensured for spring farming.

Fertilizer enterprises are encouraged to resume production in a well-organized manner, according to a guideline released by 16 central departments, including the National Development and Reform Commission.

Priority will be given to ensuring a steady supply of the raw materials needed, including coal and natural gas, to increase fertilizer output for spring farming.

The guideline also underscored the need to ensure smooth transportation of fertilizer and urged strengthened coordination of fertilizer reserves and fertilizer imports.

Financial institutions are encouraged to increase credit support for fertilizer production and



Voluntary Help

Volunteers take a driver's temperature at the entrance of a community in Changde, Hunan Province in central China, on February 15. Many young people are offering voluntary services to prevent and control the novel coronavirus in the city.

transportation enterprises. Hoarding and price gouging will be severely punished.

COVID-19 martyrs

Medical workers and other personnel who died fighting the novel coronavirus epidemic will be honored as martyrs.

According to a circular by the Ministry of Veterans Affairs and the Political Work Department of the Central Military Commission, the

plan covers those who had direct contact with suspected or confirmed cases and were infected with the virus while performing their duties, including diagnosis, treatment, nursing, infection control, specimen collection, pathogen detection and patient transfer.

Others who sacrificed their lives could also be recognized as martyrs if certain criteria are met.

The circular also stressed comforting and compensating the families of martyrs.



More Relief Personnel

Medical workers board a plane at an airport in Kunming, capital of Yunnan Province, southwest China, on February 15, as members of the fourth provincial medical team sent to Hubei Province, central China, to help combat COVID-19.

Support From Stock Exchange

The Shanghai Stock Exchange (SSE) stepped up efforts to support China's fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic.

The SSE encouraged enterprises in the field of technological innovation related to epidemic prevention and control to be listed on the domestic sci-tech innovation board (STAR), according to a statement on its website.

Firms are encouraged to conduct roadshows through the Internet and phone calls, make timely adjustments to their offering schedules and hold listing ceremonies online, said the exchange.

Noting firms' difficulties in completing auditing work and disclosing their 2019 annual report and 2020 first-quarter report on time amid the

epidemic, the exchange postponed the disclosure of annual reports for more than 70 firms and extended the time limit on mergers and acquisitions.

The SSE also granted special support to Hubei Province, waiving initial listing costs and this year's annual fee for companies from the region, as well as approving the first exchange-traded fund supporting Hubei's infrastructure construction.

Enterprises from Hubei and other regions severely affected by the epidemic, as well as companies raising funds for epidemic control, are provided with direct financing and a "green channel" for issuance review of corporate bonds and asset-backed securities.

Rising Leverage

The leverage ratio of China's real economy increased last year,

according to a report released by the National Institution for Finance and Development.

The overall debt ratio of households, non-financial enterprises and governments rose to 245.4 percent in 2019, up 6.1 percentage points from the previous year.

The rise followed a debt growth slowdown in 2017 and a leverage level drop in 2018. But the increase rate was much lower than that from 2008 to 2016, providing evidence that the country is determined to deleverage.

The pickup was mainly driven by the household debt ratio, which rose 3.7 percentage points year on year to 55.8 percent in 2019. The debt ratio of the Chinese Government increased 2.1 percentage points during the same period, the report said.

Meanwhile, the non-financial enterprises' debt ratio went up

merely 0.3 percentage point, it said.

With looming downward pressures and the impact from the novel coronavirus outbreak, the report predicted China's leverage in the real economy would rise by 10 percentage points in 2020.

FDI Inflow

Foreign direct investment (FDI) into the Chinese mainland saw steady growth in January as authorities pledged better services and a better environment for foreign-funded enterprises, official data showed on February 17.

The FDI expanded 4 percent year on year to 87.57 billion yuan (\$12.5 billion) in January, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM). A total of 3,485 new foreign-funded enterprises were established during the period.

Foreign investment in hi-tech industries surged 27.9 percent year on year to 31.35 billion yuan (\$4.4 billion), accounting for 35.8 percent of the total FDI. Inflow to hi-tech manufacturing came in at 8.4 billion yuan (\$1.2 billion), while that to hi-tech services surged 45.5 percent to 22.95 billion yuan (\$3.2 billion), the data showed.

Investments from the Republic of Korea and Japan surged 157.1 percent and 50.2 percent, respectively, while those from countries participating in the Belt and Road increased 31.3 percent.

As China goes all out to contain the coronavirus outbreak, authorities have stressed efforts to help foreign-funded companies resume production and operation in an orderly manner.

A MOFCOM circular recently stressed support for large foreign investment projects, calling for coordinated efforts to solve difficulties and minimize the impact of the epidemic.

Localities should further optimize online administrative services and actively facilitate the introduction of foreign investment and capital through online consultations



Strong Support

Two staff members from a local electricity company offer door-to-door service to an enterprise that has resumed work in Cixi, Zhejiang Province in east China, on February 15. The local government has taken a multitude of measures to encourage local enterprises to resume production and help address shortages of staff, facilities and funds. So far, more than 600 companies have restarted work in the city.



XINHUA

Uninterrupted Work

Villagers pick vegetables for pickling in Fuling District, Chongqing Municipality in southwest China, on February 13. With proper epidemic prevention and control measures, Fuling has encouraged local enterprises and cooperatives to carry on production, a key driving force behind local economic growth, to ensure rural residents' income.

and teleconferences, it said.

Boosting Foreign Trade

The General Administration of Customs issued 10 measures to support foreign trade enterprises to resume business on February 16, in a bid to limit the impact of the novel coronavirus on the economy.

The measures will increase support to ease the difficulties of enterprises, including simplifying business registration and filing procedures.

The administration will speed up the inspection and release of imported production equipment and raw materials urgently needed by enterprises.

It will hasten the process of granting permission to agricultural products and food imports, shorten the length of time for quarantine examination and approval, and allow applications that meet the requirements to be submitted and

approved at the same time.

It will also support enterprises to further expand exports, according to the administration.

Industrial Workforce

China's industrial workers in sectors like transportation and mining have been expanding rapidly since 2017, nearing 200 million, official data showed.

The country is also home to about 170 million skilled workers, while highly-skilled workers amount to some 48 million, data from the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) showed.

China has taken measures to further cultivate its industrial workforce like hosting more than 60 professional skill competitions every year and expanding union membership, following the release of an official reform plan in 2017.

The plan characterized industrial workers as a pillar for creating social

wealth and innovation, as well as building China into a world manufacturing power.

The ACFTU helped fund 80 innovation projects for workers totaling 12.8 million yuan (\$1.8 million) in 2017 and 2018, while apprenticeship programs led by the Ministry of Education cover 90,000 people each year.

Online Businesses

More online businesses are resuming work on China's e-commerce platform Taobao as the logistics sector continues to warm up, according to a report released by Alibaba on February 17.

Since February, more than 30,000 people have opened new stores on Taobao every day, with the number in the second week of February surging 22 percent compared to the previous one.

Guangdong, Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces reported the largest number of new stores.

Statistics from Cainiao, Alibaba's logistics arm, showed more than

half of the couriers in China have returned to work based on the package collection and signing-in rates.

In Wuhan, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak, 400 delivery outlets have resumed operation. Previously, Cainiao and online shopping sites Taobao and Tmall had jointly set up a 1-billion-yuan (\$143 million) fund to subsidize the supply chain and logistics.

According to Taobao, in the week, 4,000 factories, 500 properties on sale, 400 4S auto stores and 5,000 real estate consultants started selling through its livestreaming services.

Over 10,000 vegetable greenhouses across the country have been turned into livestreaming rooms, with farmers hosting broadcasts.

Affected by the epidemic, many agricultural products became inaccessible to consumers. E-commerce companies such as Alibaba and JD.com launched campaigns to facilitate sales online. From February 6 to 12, 12,000 tons of fruits and vegetables were sold through Alibaba's campaign.



XINHUA

Tech Power

A worker tests an intercom system for communication between medical staff and patients at a technology company in Shenyang, Liaoning Province in northeast China, on February 14. Amid the outbreak of the novel coronavirus epidemic, China's hi-tech enterprises have facilitated medical treatment through smart products.



JAPAN

A bus leaves with passengers who had disembarked from the *Diamond Princess*, a cruise ship which had been quarantined for 14 days in the port of Yokohama, on February 19. There had been more than 600 confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus infection on the ship, which initially carried around 3,700 passengers and crew from more than 50 countries and regions



PAKISTAN

A health worker gives a polio vaccine to a child in Peshawar on February 18 as the country commenced a nationwide vaccination campaign, targeting some 39.6 million children under the age of 5



CROATIA

President Zoran Milanovic (right) and his predecessor Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic are seen together after Milanovic's swearing-in ceremony in the capital city of Zagreb on February 18



AFGHANISTAN

Hawa Alam Nuristani, head of the National Election Commission, announces the final results of the presidential vote and declares incumbent President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani winner of a second term in Kabul on February 18



SINGAPORE

The Bayi Aerobatic Team of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force performs during the Singapore Airshow at the Changi Exhibition Center on February 15



BELGIUM

An exhibitor introduces chocolate products to visitors at the Seventh Brussels Chocolate Salon in the capital city on February 13



↓ NEW PARTY CHIEF OF HUBEI

Ying Yong, mayor of Shanghai since 2017, was appointed secretary of the Hubei Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), replacing Jiang Chaoliang, and also chief commander of the prevention and control of the novel coronavirus in the province, according to a decision released by the CPC Central Committee on February 13.

Born in 1957 in Zhejiang Province, east China, Ying began his career in 1976, focusing largely on public security and political and legal affairs.

Since the outbreak, the Central Government has sent an inspection group to guide the epidemic control work in Hubei, and a number of local officials have been questioned and punished for failing to fulfill their duties.

In his effort to combat the virus in Shanghai, Ying emphasized grassroots level unit strength. He also conducted detailed and thorough discussions with people working in residential communities, listening to their opinions concerning the containment work.

Since assuming his post in Hubei, he has called for a prevention work mechanism with a quick and decisive response, and the coordination of high-quality medical resources and strengthened treatment capacity by organizing scientific research to increase recovery rates and reduce fatalities.



Testing Governance Capability

People.cn

February 10

Due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, many businesses in China delayed work resumption in order to prevent and control the disease. Although this measure is effective, many enterprises must now reopen under the pressure of operations and production.

Local governments will have to balance containing the virus, resuming work and ensuring people's livelihood. Different levels of administrations should be adopted for personnel and locations.

In a document about orderly resumption

of work for companies, the State Council asked that local administrations and companies design targeted strategies with the principles of science, moderation and efficiency. Under the premise of ensuring people's health, they should coordinate and solve problems related to resumption and get back on track.

For instance, Zhejiang Province in east China has taken positive steps by reducing costs and burdens on enterprises, strengthening fiscal and financial support and guaranteeing employment. Combined with other policies for people's livelihood and epidemic control, it has achieved some results in terms of balanced and inclusive public governance.

Containment actions should be extended from a medical and health issue to all-around efforts, which means work on the epidemic and enterprises' operations should be the emphasis of administrations at all levels.

Big Data's Contribution

Workers' Daily

February 12

Compared to the severe acute respiratory syndrome outbreak in 2003, the development of big data has played an outstanding role in building solid epidemic prevention with the support of the Internet during the current novel coronavirus epidemic.

It can collect, store and analyze data in huge quantities scattered in diverse formats. With its results, relevant administrations can find problems and their trends. People can also search for information about the epidemic such as whether they are close contacts or if flights have infected patients aboard.

With the accelerated progress of the artificial intelligence (AI) industry, big data technology has also seen rapid growth. At the same time, smartphone Internet users reached 99.1 percent of the total at 854 million. So telecommunication operators and major Internet companies with user information can successfully provide data during disease prevention and control.

For instance, China Telecom has adopted the technology to analyze the mobility of its customers visiting Hubei Province in central China to support the government in making decisions and early warnings.

It is also used to reduce personnel flow and create huge convenience for infected disease control.

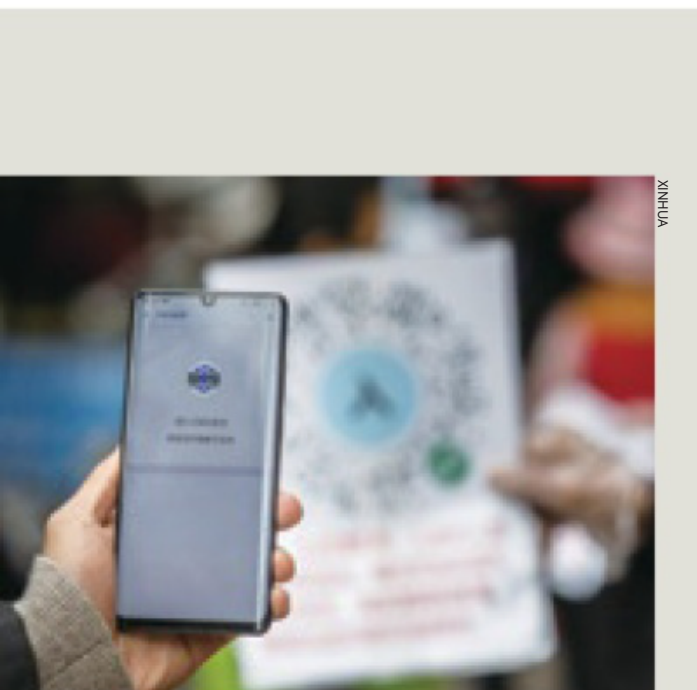
Many provinces have carried out services online. Enterprises are encouraged to

**"The night has left, the dawn arrives.
The sky awakes with the chime bells.
Cherry blossoms are blooming in the
warm breeze of spring. Wuhan, we are
waiting for you."**

Jean-François Maljean, Belgian pianist, in the song *Chime of the Dawn Bells* he composed to encourage Chinese people to fight and eventually defeat the novel coronavirus

**"It's important to withstand
loneliness when doing scientific
research. One shouldn't be drawn to
the noise of outside influences."**

Duan Zhengcheng, the inventor of the full body gamma knife, who died of the novel coronavirus on February 15, at a lecture several years ago



A person scans a QR code at the gate of a community before entering as a preventive measure based on big data in Kunming, Yunnan Province in southwest China, on February 15

organize video conferences and use online office platforms instead of workers commuting to offices. Schools have launched online courses since they have delayed reopening. In addition, big data also contributes to the guarantee and allocation of supplies.

In fact, the outbreak also offers an opportunity to test the social application of advanced technologies such as big data, AI and cloud computing.

So we should enhance the capacity of solving public health events and risks, and further promote the progress of big data. It is expected that more innovative development can be achieved for big data with more competitive advantages.

Grassroots Strength

Xinhuanet.com

February 13

Recently, over 1,100 communities in Wuhan, Hubei Province of central China, carried out activities to obtain every piece of information about people's health.

The investigations covered each community's residents in order to provide infected patients with treatment as soon as possible. It was also an important part of eliminating the disease at its source.

Members of the Communist Party of China were asked to take responsibility in the process to get a clear picture of the situation, upholding the spirit of bearing hardship. The activity was carried out in an orderly and meticulous manner. Areas with confirmed or suspected cases were regarded as key locations.

Communities are the basic link of concentrated treatment according to patients' condition, where each measure for containing disease should be implemented. New technologies can be helpful in the process as they can help pinpoint the spreading routes of the disease and provide an accurate basis for policies.

As long as residents are motivated, infected people are likely to be identified, treated and cured. Communities can serve as a strong fortress of epidemic prevention in society.



NEW HEAD OF WUHAN

Wang Zhonglin was appointed secretary of the Wuhan Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and a member of the Standing Committee of the Hubei Provincial Committee of the CPC, replacing Ma Guoqiang, on February 13, as the new head of Wuhan, the center of the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Born in 1962 in Shandong Province, east China, Wang graduated from the department of criminal law at East China University of Political Science and Law in Shanghai in 1984 and started his work on public security in Zaozhuang in Shandong. Before the current reshuffle, he was a member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and Party chief of the capital Jinan since 2018.

Famous for a decisive working style, Wang has visited inspection points in the field to guide prevention and control work. He has called for launching a comprehensive investigation in communities. Each district is asked to identify patients at home to ensure they can get treatment in time. District leaders will be accountable if cases are discovered after the investigation.



“What’s really playing out in China and the world is not just the human story of a medical epidemic. It’s also a chapter in our generation’s defining struggle with the unnerving perils of a connected age.”

Joshua Cooper Ramo, Co-Chief Executive and Vice Chairman of Kissinger Associates, in an article published in *Los Angeles Times* on February 11

“The novel coronavirus will have a profound impact on companies and industries in the future... off-site contact and online collaboration will be normalized, and a corporation culture of borderless communication will become more and more popular.”

Qin Shuo, former editor-in-chief and founder of *China Business News*, posting on his official WeChat account on February 16



COVER STORY

BRAVING NOVEL CORON

More stories of bravery and dedication emerge as medical workers continue the fight to save lives By Wang Hairong



Members of a medical team from Shanxi Province pose for a photo before departing for Hubei Province on February 2

AVIRUS

Zhu Haixiu is a nurse from the intensive care unit of the Third Affiliated Hospital of Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province in south China. The 22-year-old left for Wuhan in the central province of Hubei, the city hit the hardest by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), as part of a medical team on January 24, the

Chinese New Year's Eve.

The dark circles around her eyes from fatigue were captured by the lens of China Central Television during an interview with patients and medical staff on February 11 at Hankou Hospital, where Zhu was working.

Asked whether she was afraid, she said she was at the beginning but after seeing the situation in the city, she no longer is. When reporters asked her to talk to her parents in front of the camera, she politely declined, saying it would make her cry and she did not want to cry because it would make the protective goggles she was wearing blurry, and then she would not be able to see well when she went back to work.

The video went viral after the program was aired, touching the hearts of viewers with the dedication of medical workers.

Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, hailed them as heroes who have been putting themselves in the way of danger to save lives.

"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 told the international community at the 56th Munich Security Conference in Germany on February 15.

The fight against COVID-19 has its casualties, like military battles. According to the National Health Commission (NHC), as of February 11, a total of 1,716 medical workers had been infected and six had died.

Show of solidarity

"We should all be proud of the medical staff of our country," Guo Yanhong, an NHC official, said while speaking of their spirit and contribution at a press conference on February 17.

Since the most important task in current epidemic prevention and control work is to do everything possible to treat patients, the nation has mobilized to support Hubei to reduce infection and the mortality rate and improve treatment and the recovery rate.

By February 17, more than 32,000 medical personnel had been sent by 29 provincial-level regions and the military to support Wuhan and other cities in Hubei. They are mainly doctors and nurses from respiratory, infection and intensive care departments, Guo said. Nearly 11,000 doctors and nurses specializing in the treatment of critical illnesses are in Wuhan, about 10 percent of all such specialists in China.

In addition, 22 national emergency medical rescue teams with sophisticated

equipment have arrived in Wuhan. Three biosafety level-3 mobile laboratories have been set up to speed up diagnosis. These labs, equipped with a high degree of containment measures, are used for diagnostic or research work with animal pathogens that may be harmful.

Nineteen provinces and municipalities have been paired up with 16 cities and prefectures in Hubei other than Wuhan to offer assistance. Other cities in Hubei where the epidemic is relatively severe, such as Huanggang, Xiaogan and Jingzhou, are being partnered with two provinces each.

Zhou Yuehui, an associate professor at the Party School of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and National Academy of Governance, called this counterpart assistance arrangement a reflection of China's institutional advantage in pooling resources to do important tasks. The same mechanism was used for reconstruction in Sichuan Province in southwest China after it was devastated by an 8-magnitude earthquake in May 2008, and also for poverty alleviation work.

According to the NHC, medical teams from outside Hubei must have medical, management and endemic prevention staff. They should also provide medical and other supplies.

With all these efforts, the prevention and control work is progressing. By February 19, 16,155 patients had been cured and discharged from hospital. While 74,576 cases had been confirmed and the epidemic had taken 2,118 lives, the number of new cases was dropping.

Duty before all

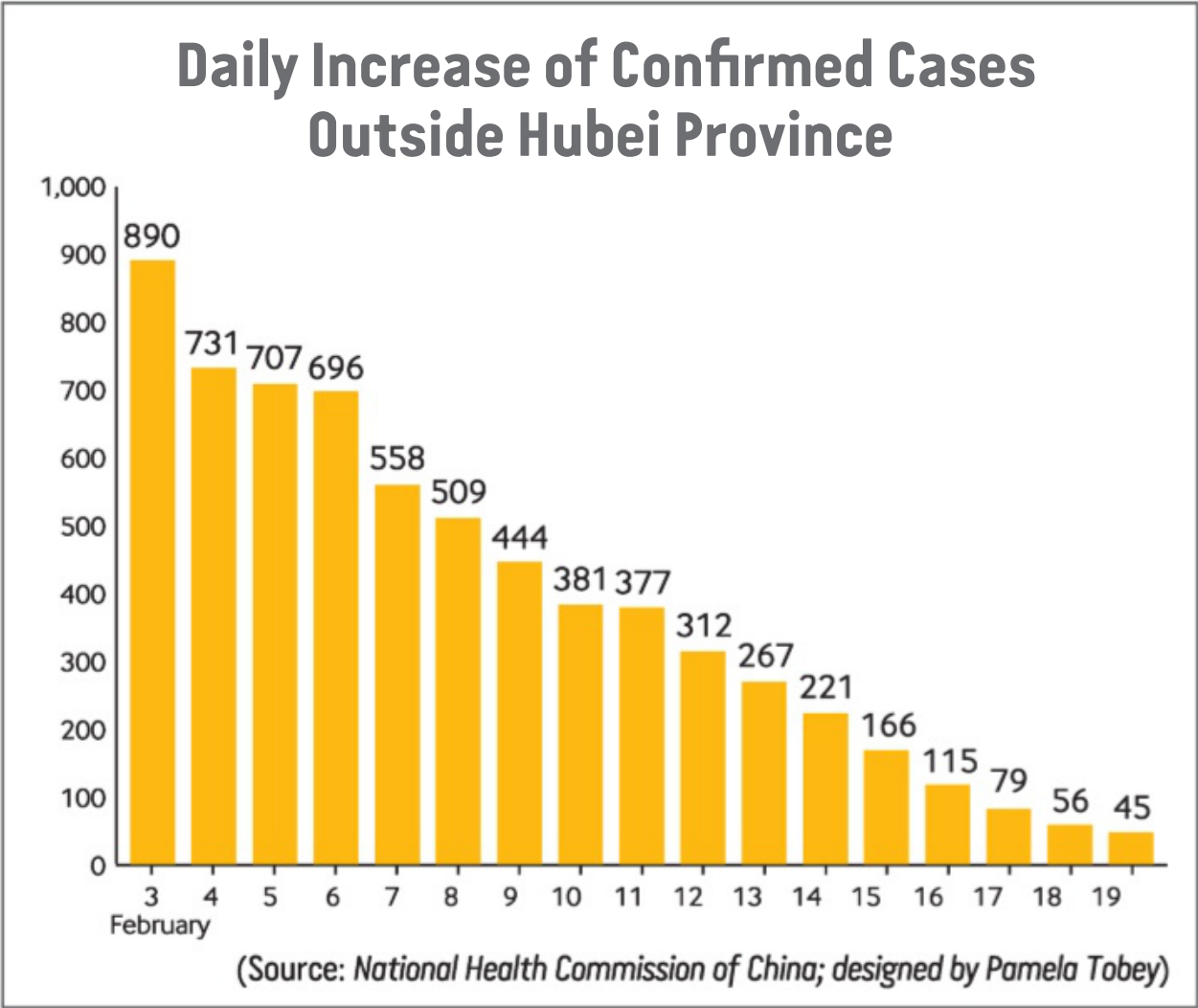
The medical workers battling in Hubei have been mobilized by their institutions with senior officials leading the teams. When the renowned Peking University Third Hospital in Beijing asked for volunteers to support Wuhan, it received over 1,500 applications within 24 hours. The first medical team and supplies were assembled on the night of January 25, the Chinese New Year's Day. The next day, a team of 20 doctors and nurses departed for Wuhan.

By February 20, the hospital had sent 137 medical workers in three groups, with its president Qiao Jie leading one team.

"From receiving the notice to departure, it was less than 24 hours," recalled Liang Chao, a member of the first group. "My son, who is 3 and a half years old, didn't understand the purpose of my trip. He is obsessed with science fiction superhero Ultraman. Before I left, I held him in my arms and told him, Daddy will become an Ultraman warrior and go to a place called Wuhan to kill a



Wang Yani (left), a nurse from the Longde County People's Hospital in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, poses with her teammates in Wuhan, Hubei, after they all got haircuts to reduce chances of coronavirus infection on February 9



monster. Since it is a ferocious monster, Daddy will have to spend some days there. On hearing this, he smiled cheerfully."

Many medical workers have put their professional duty before family duty to join the battle.

After Gao Weibo, a doctor at the Peking University People's Hospital, went to Wuhan,

his wife, a doctor at the Peking Union Medical College Hospital, also departed for the virus-hit city as part of another medical team. They have two young children, whom they left in the care of others.

"I will take care of my younger brother and protect our family," Gao's 8-year-old elder son promised in a note to his father.

Wang Yani, a 27-year-old nurse sent to work in Wuhan by the Longde County People's Hospital in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, northwest China, kept a diary that shows how medical workers in Wuhan have confronted the danger with their dedication, morale and warmth. Her diary was published in the *China Report ASEAN* magazine.

She arrived in Wuhan on February 4 as part of a medical team, where she was assigned to work in a makeshift hospital converted from a cultural building complex. On February 9, she and four other team members decided to get a haircut to reduce chances of infection. She described the experience in her diary:

"A local barber sighed from behind his face mask. 'This is my third time chopping off the hair of doctors and nurses,' he said. 'Thank you for the sacrifice you are making for Wuhan.'"

"No problem," she muttered to him, trying to stay upbeat. "I'm cutting it short for security. I'll come back to Wuhan next time with waist-length hair to eat your famous hot dry noodles."

After the haircut, "we instantly changed from five young ladies into five lads," she wrote jokingly. When she showed her new hairstyle to her mother during a video chat, her mother supported her. "You look handsome," she said. "The new hair will be better."

Fearless of difficulties

As Wang Yani started her work in Wuhan, members of several other medical teams had been working there for about a week. The first team from the Peking University Third Hospital started to treat critically ill patients at Tongji Hospital on 3 a.m. on January 29. After changing into their protective suits, the team members all looked alike. So to distinguish one another, they wrote their respective names and "Cheer up" on their clothing.

Wang Junhong, a doctor on the team, described how she felt on the first work day in Wuhan in her diary: "There is tension and anxiety, just like what soldiers may feel before going to war; but there is greater confidence and conviction."

Wang Yani also had an entry in her diary: "Weighed down by layers of isolation clothing under an exposure suit, we felt like robots. Our movements were clumsy and it was difficult to breathe. To ensure efficiency in the infected ward and extend the use of the limited protec-



Doctors from the Peking University Third Hospital tend to a patient in Wuhan, Hubei, in February

tive gear, we did not eat or drink during the 10-hour shift to avoid going to the toilet."

However, no one complained because "we all understood the severity of the situation," she wrote.

Li Ran, a doctor from the Peking University People's Hospital, described the oxygen deficiency he suffered under the protective suit as more serious than what he experienced in the rarified environment of Lhasa's high altitude in Tibet Autonomous Region, southwest China.

Yet after completing his shift on February 9, when he found out his first patient of the day, who had been suffering shock and low blood oxygen on arrival, had returned to a stable condition, he felt happy. "All efforts are worthwhile," he said.

Besides medical care, doctors and nurses also offer solicitude. "They all wore heavy protective suits, masks and goggles. Although I could see only the outline of their faces, I could still really feel their warm smiles... I felt much better, as if the virus was not so terrible," a patient surnamed Fan told China News Agency after being cured and discharged from a hos-

pital in Wuhan. He wrote a letter of gratitude to the medical personnel from Sichuan who treated him.

"From time to time, the doctors chatted with us, asking if we felt uncomfortable and encouraging us to stay optimistic, drink more water and get out of bed for a walk," he said. "Seeing how they were not afraid at all, my tension ebbed and my fear dissipated."

Since quarantined patients are not accompanied by family members and only see medical staff in protective suits every day, they may feel fear and uneasiness. By talking with them, comforting them and dancing with them, medical staff can boost patients' confidence in winning the battle against the disease, Zhao Yanfang, a nurse from the Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital in Tianshui, Gansu Province in northwest China, told *Tianshui Daily*. Realizing patients not only need physical treatment but also emotional healing, she tried to cheer them up by dancing with those with mild symptoms. Now, several videos featuring dancing medical staff and patients in Wuhan are circulating online.

While doctors race against time to save patients, medical scientists are also burning the midnight oil to find an effective drug or vaccine. Clinical trials have confirmed that

Chloroquine phosphate, an anti-malarial drug, has some curative effect on COVID-19, Sun Yanrong, deputy head of the China National Center for Biotechnology Development under the Ministry of Science and Technology, told a press conference on February 17.

The medical staff on the frontline is not only working under high pressure and risk of infection, but also under great psychological pressure. To support them, the NHC and other government departments have issued a directive on improving their working conditions. It proposed ensuring a reasonable work and rest time, psychological counseling and improving logistics services for them.

Some places such as Hubei, Chongqing and Tianjin cities have introduced policies giving medical workers temporary work subsidies, purchasing special life insurance for them and giving their children assistance in school enrolment, Xinhua News Agency reported. ■

COVER STORY

JOINING FORCES

Medical workers from Sichuan lend a hand to Wuhan

As the government mobilizes medical personnel and resources from all over the country to reinforce the work of doctors and nurses in Wuhan, the epicenter of the novel coronavirus outbreak in Hubei Province, central China, a team from the southwestern province of Sichuan is working around the clock at the Wuhan Red Cross Hospital to treat patients.

Many of its members from the West China Hospital of Sichuan University have experience grappling with death and devastation in the wake of the killer earthquake in Sichuan in 2008. Though they face unknown risks, their dedication and morale have never wavered, triggering admiration and applause from all over the world. ■

(Photos courtesy of Hubei Daily)

Copyedited by Sudeshna Sarkar
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1. A doctor passes through a corridor full of medical equipment in the isolation zone of the Wuhan Red Cross Hospital on February 9
2. Nurses from Sichuan tend to a patient in an ICU ward on February 9
3. In an isolation ward, a Sichuan doctor finishes his shift and finally gets to check his messages on February 9
4. A doctor from Sichuan helps a colleague disinfect his gloves in a ward on February 9
5. Two nurses from Sichuan crosscheck medicines for patients on February 9



5





4



3

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Infectious disease expert saves lives, kills rumors and inspires others

By Li Fangfang

A 21-hour work schedule is the new normal for Zhang Wenhong, a leading infectious disease expert in Shanghai who has been in the forefront of many medical battles, including the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic in 2003.

On January 28, a typical day in the life of the director of the Infectious Disease Department of Huashan Hospital, Zhang monitored the novel coronavirus situation in Henan Province in central China, where he had been sent by the national health authorities, during the day. At midnight, he took a flight back to Shanghai, then updated the situation on his department's WeChat social media account with his analysis. It was 3 a.m. when he went to sleep, but by 6 a.m. he was up to get back to his hospital where patients were waiting for him.

After that day's work, Zhang attended a press conference on the prevention and control of the outbreak, where he warned that people have to prepare for a prolonged battle.

The first novel coronavirus case in Shanghai was reported on January 15. At that time, little was known about the dangers involved. "The first batch of medical staff dared to expose themselves to the virus without knowing anything about the risk, transmissibility and pathogenicity of the disease," Zhang said.

He set up the medical observation criteria for his younger colleagues, explaining which patients should be kept under observation and which ones should be discharged. As he sees it, infectious disease doctors' responsibility goes beyond treatment to making reasonable decisions, precise assessments and suggestions for control policies.

Zhang credits his métier to his mentor, 82-year-old Wen Xinhua, who led Shanghai's SARS defense in 2003. No health workers were infected in Shanghai then and there were no cases of group transmissions, a feat acknowledged by the World Health Organization. Zhang,



Zhang Wenhong, Director of the Infectious Disease Department of Huashan Hospital in Shanghai, speaks at a news conference on January 29

who worked with Wen, edited a book on SARS in China.

Zhang's medical team is also running an information campaign on WeChat. His department's account, Huashan Ganran, has become an opinion leader and must-check content for many people.

It provides updates on the situation almost everyday, along with prevention tips, scientific explanations and information on policies to ease people's anxiety. It also has a song to encourage followers.

Zhang's students, some of whom are also his colleagues, collect the information and he writes articles based on it at night. "People need to be informed of the facts. General consensus, particularly consensus on science, is key to the prevention and control work of infectious diseases," he said.

Among the 10 articles on the novel coronavirus outbreak posted as of January 29, one had

been viewed 10 million times.

On February 2, Zhang also posted a 10,000-character digital book on prevention and control of the epidemic. A week later, more content was added based on the progress in the work.

During the SARS epidemic, this trend of doctors posting articles online to answer the worried public's questions and refute rumors was not so visible. With more professional medical information available on various platforms in a transparent way, people can discern between the truth and rumors more easily and get back to their work with less panic.

On January 18, when most Chinese people were getting nervous triggered by the unknown virus, Zhang delivered a public speech about infectious diseases that has been massively reposted.

This speech was planned half a year ago by Zhang together with Beijing-based CC Talk, a non-profit opinion-sharing platform for professionals.

Zhang reviewed the 1918 virus that killed at least 50 million people and SARS, attributing the panic to the failure of tracing the virus and public health measures.

"When people enjoy the blue sky or the deep ocean, so do viruses. The risk of being infected is always there," Zhang said.

However, the current progress of genetic science has offered a method of knowing a virus which tends to trigger panic.

He compared infectious disease doctors to virus hunters who are dedicated to looking for the solutions to possible virus outbreaks thanks to the mutation of viruses.

As for when viruses could be eradicated at all, Zhang said they can only hear the clock tick without knowing what time it is. ■



Zhang Yingxia and her sons teach residents how to properly use disinfection supplies in Xingshengxiang Community in Xining, Qinghai Province in northwest China, on February 13

COVER STORY

HOLDING DOWN THE FORT

Community workers and volunteers offer help to residents during the epidemic By Ma Miaomiao

Two bags of brochures, disposable gloves, masks and pens were what Zhang Yingxia and two volunteers were equipped with as they began their daily work in Xingshengxiang Community in Xining, Qinghai Province, northwest China, on February 13.

As a worker at the community service center for 12 years, Zhang has worked around the clock since January 24 as China goes all out to contain the novel coronavirus outbreak. The community has more than 3,000 households and 16 workers.

In the race against the virus, communities have become an important battleground. According to the latest statistics from the Ministry of Civil Affairs, nearly 4

million people have been on the frontline of prevention and control in 650,000 urban and rural communities across the country since the outbreak of the epidemic.

Early on the morning of the Spring Festival, or the Chinese New Year, that fell on January 25 this year, Zhang and her colleagues began contacting local residents and giving them health tips by phone and door to door. For residents whom they could not reach, they posted a notice on their doors to ensure that no one was missed.

Since epidemic prevention and control work began, the staff at Xingshengxiang has been working at full capacity. It finally had to recruit volunteers on February 2 to alleviate the shortage of manpower and better serve

local residents.

The two volunteers accompanying Zhang were actually her twin sons, Wu Jianhao and Wu Jianshuang, who are 21 years old. On February 3, the brothers applied to join the volunteers and serve the community.

They followed their mother around, distributing brochures, putting up posters, registering resident information and monitoring the body temperatures of migrant workers returning from other places. They were also responsible for the hygiene and disinfection of some key areas, as well as the purchase and delivery of daily necessities for residents in self-monitored quarantine.

Zhang explained that the two young men have been her assistants during holidays since they were in the sixth grade. At first, they helped clean up the neighborhood, deliver newspapers and run errands for the elderly. Later, as they grew older, they took on various volunteer services during summer and winter vacations.

Xu Hongyan, Director of the community's Residents' Committee, said, "I am a witness to their growth, and now they have become our most reliable reserve workers!"

The brothers were busy with their volunteer work, and even though they were tired, they said they feel more content standing firmly with their mother on the frontline of epidemic prevention rather than waiting for her to come home late at night.

"My whole family unconditionally supports my mother. She and other community workers are fearless in the face of unknown dangers. How could we hold back?" Wu Jianshuang said.

In order to further contain the novel coronavirus epidemic, China extended the Spring Festival holiday and postponed school openings. The two brothers said they would continue volunteering until they are able to return to university.

As night fell, they arrived at a residential area without a management staff. The two helped check the temperature of residents and register their information.

According to Wu Jianhao, to prevail over the outbreak, not only are the efforts of medical personnel needed, but also the participation of every ordinary person in the battle to overcome difficulties.

"I hope what comes is not merely spring, but happiness after the epidemic," Zhang said. ■



COURTESY PHOTO

Raz Gal Or (right) and Brian O'Shea in a video recording the process of collecting medical supplies in Tel Aviv, Israel, on January 25

COVER STORY

A RECORD SIXTEEN DAYS

New book shines light on Israeli entrepreneur's dogged effort to send medical supplies By Li Qing

When Raz Gal Or was waiting at the Beijing Capital International Airport to board a flight to Tel Aviv ahead of the Spring Festival, both the 26-year-old entrepreneur and his friend Brian O'Shea were struck by the number of people wearing masks in the airport. Having been preoccupied with their businesses, they were not aware that an epidemic was spreading in Wuhan, Hubei Province in central China.

Several days later, they collected 229 boxes of medical supplies in Israel in a day,

and donated them to Huanggang, east Hubei, on February 9 to assist the fight against the epidemic.

The whole donation process of 384 hours, is recorded in a book, *China, We Got Your Back*, published in Chinese and English by New Star Press, a Beijing-based publishing house under the China International Publishing Group. The book, which is the first on the subject of fighting against the novel coronavirus, also shows the selfless assistance to Hubei and

cooperation between young Israeli and Chinese entrepreneurs.

Quick assistance

After arriving in Tel Aviv, Gal Or and O'Shea, from Argentina, were concerned about the situation in China. The spike in the number of patients in Wuhan and the reported shortage of medical equipment led them decide to collect surgical masks for Chinese hospitals in need.

"My dad always tells me that the Chinese helped us Jews a lot in history," said Gal Or, believing it was time to repay the kindness.

Referring to himself as a "Foreigner in China 2.0," Gal Or is a famous foreigner Internet star in China.

The first-born of a successful Israeli entrepreneur who has business in China, Gal Or has lived in Beijing for about 12 years. In 2014, he became the first Israeli undergraduate student at Peking University.

He is co-founder of YChina, also known as the Foreigner Research Institute, a business development company specializing in China. Uploading videos that share thoughts of the young generation of foreigners in China, YChina attracted millions of fans after releasing its first video in January 2017.

On January 25, Gal Or and O'Shea went to pharmacies in Tel Aviv to buy face masks but found they only had a couple of thousands in stock, which was far off their goal. They turned to Gal Or's father for help.

Raz Gal Or's father Amir Gal Or is president of the Israeli Chamber of Commerce in China. In 2017, Amir Gal Or won the Friendship Award, which is the highest award that the Chinese Government issues to foreigners for their outstanding contribution during China's development.

"China helped the Israeli people so many times in history, especially in World War II," Amir Gal Or said, "So it's only natural that we should do everything possible. There is no question about that, and it should be done again, again and again."

He invited his son to speak at a meeting of the chamber in Tel Aviv that was attended by several officials from medical institutions.

The young Gal Or's donation proposal received echoes at the meeting.

"Face masks, medical equipment, everything that we can assist, we will do that," said Professor Roni Gamzo, CEO of Tel Aviv Medical Hospital.

Tsilil Klainman from the chamber said, "We remember... how China helped Israelis in times of crises. And we really want to be there now for China."

The Sheba Medical Center, one of the top 10 medical centers in Israel, alone donated 30,000 masks and helped them get more by connecting them with a supplier.

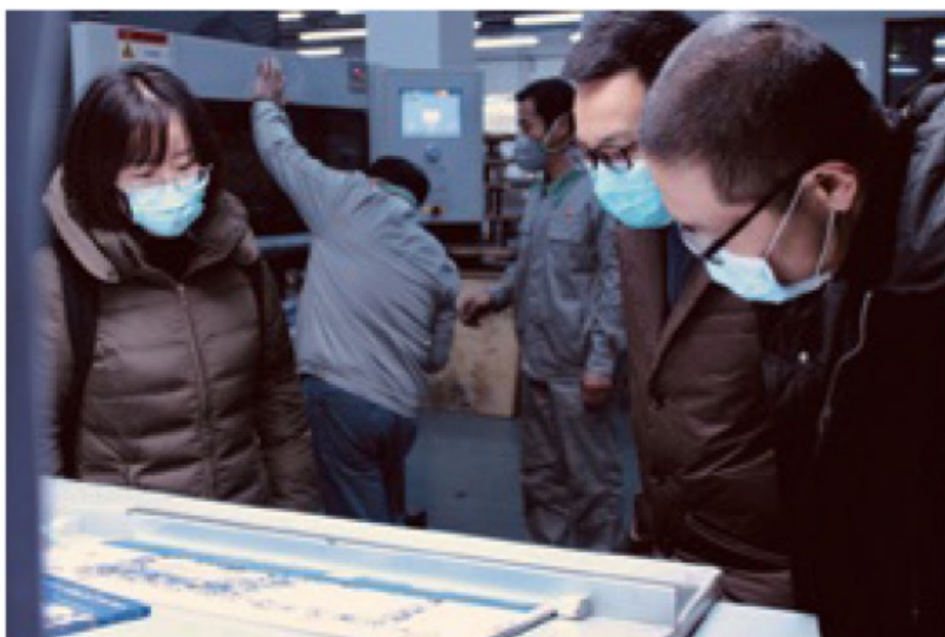
The duo then talked with Kodan Medicam, a medical supplier in Jerusalem serving only major hospitals and the army, which donated 50,000 pairs of medical gloves.

Against the clock

Within 24 hour, the two young men had also collected over 100,000 surgical face masks, 50,000 pairs of medical gloves and 7,000 protective suits.

"In this more and more interconnected and globalized world, everybody should not just be concerned about what is happening in the world around us, but also what is happening in the distance," Raz Gal Or said.

But the sense of achievement was short-lived as new challenges emerged. How to send 229 boxes, weighing more than 1 ton,



New Star Press staff check the proofs at their printing press in Beijing



Covers of the Chinese and English versions of the book *China, We Got Your Back* published by New Star Press, which describes the process of assembling the medical supplies to be sent to China

to China?

According to a new policy announced by the Chinese Government, foreign donations can be shipped directly to the recipient hospitals. So the team also began to go through information available online about hospitals to assess which one needed supplies most. Finally, they chose one in Huanggang, a city in east Hubei Province.

The team then contacted Cainiao Guoguo, the global parcel tracking platform of Alibaba Group, to handle the logistics. But their progress slowed down again. Following the World Health Organization's announcement on January 30 that the epidemic was a public health emergency of international concern, many countries decided to dramatically decrease or cancel flights to China.

Eventually, Cainiao located an Israeli shipping company that was willing to provide free shipping. The boxes were ready, with all the necessary documentation done, and finally

set sail from Tel Aviv on February 1. The ship passed through Moscow and arrived in the city of Guangzhou in south China four days later. The hospital received the supplies on February 9.

"It seemed like the whole world was going against us, but we still managed to get to this point," Raz Gal Or said in relief, "Hang in there guys, we are behind you."

A unique memory

Though what was to be a holiday trip turned out to be something else, the two friends created unique memories. They posted the videos on social media and video-sharing websites, which won tremendous appreciation on the Internet.

New Star Press was looking for heart-warming stories during the period of the epidemic. Ding Ning, a senior planner with the publishing house, was keen on tales of people working together for a common goal, putting race and other differences aside. Raz Gal Or's initiative was proof that each individual can contribute something as long as people get started.

"This faith is very important for people fighting the virus, which will lead us out of all difficulties," Ding told *Beijing Review*.

When she approached YChina with the book proposal, they hesitated at first since the initiative was not meant to generate publicity or sell books. But Ding persuaded them that it was not her intention either. The aim was to give readers a warm feeling during a challenging period

and pay tribute to the deep friendship between Israelis and Chinese.

China, We Got Your Back also shows the sense of responsibility and strength of the post-1990s generation, who are shouldering their responsibility to build a better world and play a bigger role in the future.

New Star Press completed the Chinese and English versions in eight days. A Hebrew edition of the book in collaboration with Israeli publishing houses is on the anvil.

"We plan to donate the profits generated from the book to assist medical students in Hubei," Ding said, "That is our way of assisting the fight against the epidemic." ■

Copyedited by Sudeshna Sarkar
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A drone sprays disinfectants over a village in Luanzhou, Hebei Province in north China, on February 14, as part of local epidemic control efforts

COVER STORY

CHINA RESPONDS

The Chinese Government shows its transparency and effectiveness in the fight against the epidemic By Jon Taylor



The author is chair of the Department of Political Science and Geography and professor of political science at the University of Texas at San Antonio

Imagine the U.S. Government shutting down almost all forms of public transportation, a substantial number of international airline flights, all schools and many businesses during the period

between Thanksgiving through the end of the Christmas season and beyond. That is what is currently going on in Wuhan, the epicenter of the novel coronavirus outbreak, with what has become possibly the largest quarantine in human history.

Faced with a spreading epidemic, China's Central Government responded with greater speed and transparency than during the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic in 2003. Unlike the SARS epidemic, when the nation was criticized for withholding early warning information that delayed effective response efforts, the central authorities have handled the novel coronavirus emergency in a much more systematically effective manner.

Transparent efforts

Some claim that China has been less than forthright and has lacked in transparency. If that were really the case, then the epidemic would have been relegated to mere rumor, and allowed to run unchecked and unreported. That has not been evidenced. Once the sheer scale of the epidemic became apparent, the Chinese Government's response to the outbreak was swift.

Chinese media began publicizing information regarding the then-unexplained viral outbreak as early as December 31, 2019, only a couple of weeks after the first case was reported. Chinese authorities also shared the virus' genetic sequence in early

January to support the diagnosis of potential patients around the world, as well as aid in the creation of vaccines against the virus.

The first evidence of the virus emerged in December 2019 and authorities went public with it in January. Simply stated, there has been institutional learning on the part of the state. Was it perfect learning? Of course not. An evolving emergency typically creates an environment that initially tends to foster imperfect learning. That said, scholarly work in disaster and crisis management tells us that the learning curve rapidly improves with robust information, field experience and the rapid deployment of assets. During the current epidemic, China has demonstrated better learning than it had during SARS.

China has no reason to fabricate coronavirus case numbers when the nation's political and economic survival literally depends on properly eradicating the disease. Governments, irrespective of political system, still have to govern. China is no different. It still has to run a country and attempt to be successful. Therefore, real statistics and insights matter. To dismiss the numbers at face value is intentionally naïve. The idea that China would completely fabricate case numbers when the spread of the disease could threaten the nation's social stability and the government's legitimacy is ludicrous. There may be some methodological shortcomings or critiques, but people must realize that China has an interest in getting this right.

It has made great efforts to refute the assumption that information coming from China cannot be relied upon. Not only are official updates of current figures regularly published, the World Health Organization has stated that the Chinese Government is committed to preventing the epidemic and cooperating with other countries on the issue. Even U.S. President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, neither close friends of China, have praised the country for both its efforts and transparency.

Yes, mistakes were made, as they always are at the onset of a rapidly evolving emergency. This does not excuse those mistakes, particularly ones made early on by local authorities in Wuhan and Hubei Province where it is clear that local officials in Wuhan could have, and should have, reacted much earlier.

Effective action

Millions of Chinese were confined to their homes as part of epidemic prevention efforts. They had to make daily calculations about how and when to go out to find food and other necessities in order to keep themselves and their families out of harm's way. Many heroic individuals have made tremendous sacrifices on behalf of their nation and their fellow citizens. And the Chinese Government has engaged in the herculean task of temporarily shelving portions of the country's economy to prevent the further spread of the virus.

If China had quarantined Wuhan and not quarantined other areas of the nation, the world would have likely reacted to this negatively, condemning China for not being sufficiently serious or attentive. However, we know that this was not the case. China acted decisively. While there may be a debate as to how perfect the strategy has been, China has demonstrated that it is capable of enacting powerful and prompt quarantine measures to prevent the spread of infection.

Rapidly addressing the emergency at the national level, the Central Leading Group on Responding to the Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia Outbreak, chaired by Premier Li Keqiang, was established on January 25 during a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee. Two days later, Li arrived in Wuhan to guide the epidemic control work in Hubei.

Despite the extreme complexities of the epidemic, the outbreak has exposed some deficiencies in China's current early warning mechanisms for major events such as public health emergencies. These concerns relate to issues of the national governance system and governance capability that were raised by President Xi Jinping and emphasized in the Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee in October 2019.

There are more than enough reasons to believe that the series of decisive actions taken by the government during the past few weeks to address the epidemic have helped fight the virus and gradually end the emergency. Just as important, based on what has been lost and gained in this process it will serve to further implement and realize China's goals of modernizing its national governance system and governance capability.

The outbreak of the virus has shaken China and has raised concerns around the world. Nevertheless, it is similar to challenges that China has faced before. China will control and mitigate this virus soon enough thanks to the efforts of both Chinese researchers and those from around the world. The Chinese people have shown remarkable solidarity, courage and dedication. It cannot and must not be seen through the lens of a science fiction movie or politicized cheap shots by certain commentators that result in unnecessary panic, turmoil and distrust. ■



A police officer records a person's car information at a toll station in Hefei, Anhui Province in east China, on February 15
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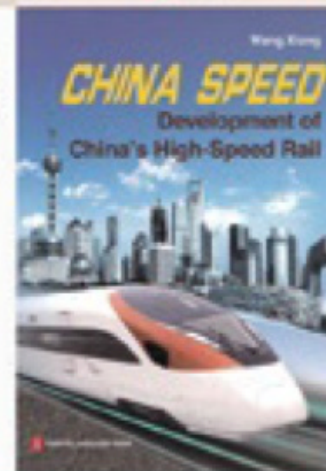
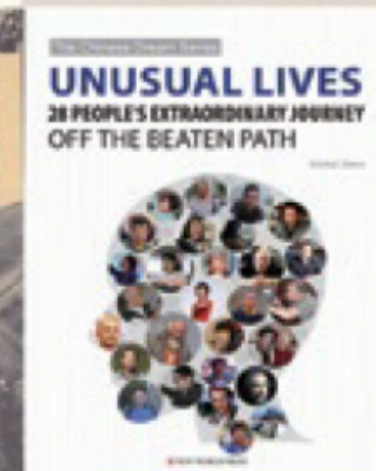
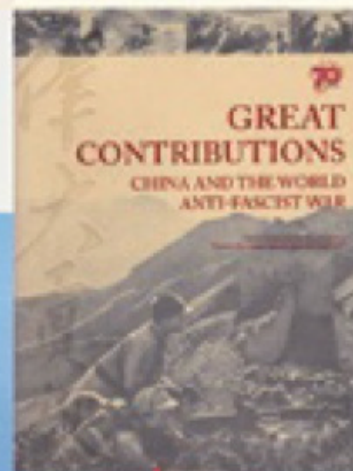
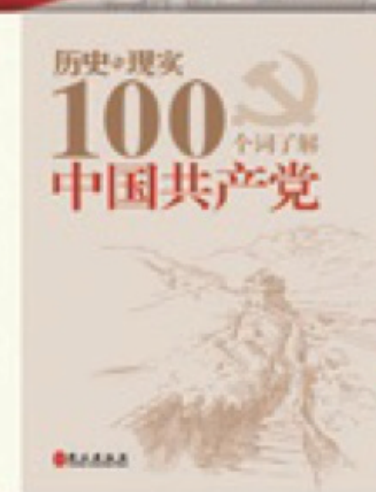
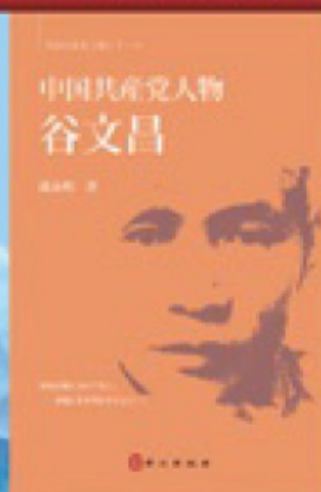
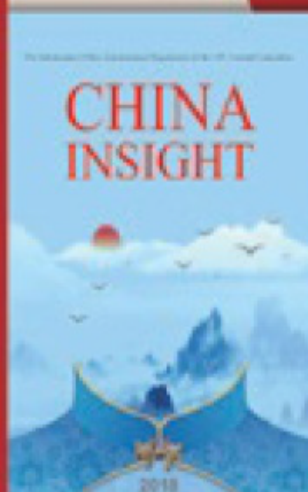
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One World, One Fight

On February 14, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister **Wang Yi** sat down with Reuters Global Managing Editor Alessandra Galloni in Berlin for an exclusive interview. The following is an edited excerpt:

Alessandra Galloni: The coronavirus has clearly been tragic for many of your people. It has spread to other parts of the world. It has resulted in travel restrictions. Is China facing a crisis of confidence?

Wang Yi: The sudden outbreak of the novel coronavirus is a severe challenge to China and the world at large. Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, the Chinese Government and people have withstood the test and won the respect and recognition of the international community with our efforts and sacrifice.

After the outbreak, the Chinese Government immediately set up a nationwide mechanism to mobilize resources. We have taken the most comprehensive, stringent and thorough prevention and control measures possible, many of which are well beyond what is required by the International Health Regulations and the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO).

With Chinese speed, we are working day and night to save the life of every patient. With Chinese strength, we are united as one to contain the further spread of the epidemic. Through these arduous efforts, the epidemic is generally under control. For example, outside Hubei Province, the number of confirmed cases has been declining for 11 consecutive days across China. That is a cumulative drop of over 50 percent. There has been a rapid increase in the recovery rate, with nearly 7,000 people recovered and discharged from hospital. The case fatality rate is about 2.2 percent nationwide and just



Wang Yi

0.49 percent outside Hubei.

These facts and data show that China's decisive response has been both appropriate and effective, and that by and large, the outbreak is controllable and the disease curable. As President Xi has pointed out, we have the confidence, capability and determination to prevail over the virus soon.

As a responsible major country, China has from the start acted in an open and transparent manner in releasing relevant

information to the world and seeking international cooperation to prevent the spread of the epidemic worldwide. To date, the number of confirmed cases outside China is less than 1 percent of the total. We are not only doing our very best to ensure the life, safety and health of the Chinese people, but also making a contribution to and sacrifice for global public health security. The WHO has, on multiple occasions, commended China for its responsible actions, speaking highly of China's decisive response and expressing confidence that China will overcome the epidemic.

Virus respects no borders. It requires a collective response from the international community. To date, leaders of over 160 countries and international organizations have expressed their sympathy and support for China through telegrams or letters. The governments and peoples of several dozen countries are lending a helping hand and we are truly grateful for these acts of kindness.

In our view, the enhanced inspection measures taken by some countries are reasonable, while other countries have overreacted, which has caused unnecessary panic and is not consistent with WHO recommendations.

There is a Chinese saying: "True gold can stand the test of fire." I'm sure that emerging from this test, the Chinese people will become more resilient and united, and the Chinese economy will achieve more solid and sustainable growth. The Chinese people will continue to march confidently toward the goal of establishing a moderately prosperous society in all respects and embark on a new modernization journey.

There's another Chinese saying: "Adversity reveals true friendship." As China battles the disease with the world, its friendship and trust will be strengthened and deepened. Countries will realize that they live in a global village, with their future interconnected like never before.

You talked about transparency, but initially China was not forthcoming about the virus, including when there were some people in China warning about it. Can you explain that decision?

This is a new virus. So naturally it takes time for people to gain more understanding and knowledge about it. The same has happened in other countries. If we look at past epidemics, we see that a responsible government

will eventually make decisions based on serious and repeated tests and study.

After individual cases emerged, the Chinese Government took prompt actions and informed the WHO at the first opportunity. At the same time, we made rigorous assessments. In a short period of time, we identified and decided that this was a new virus. Once that decision was made, a nationwide inter-agency task force was quickly put in place. The measures taken by China have been timely and swift. This is also the conclusion of the WHO director general after his visit to China.

You said some countries have overreacted. Which countries?

I don't want to single out individual countries. They have their own judgments and reasons. Everybody can see that the measures taken by these countries go far beyond the recommendations of the WHO. For example, measures have been taken to comprehensively stop people-to-people exchanges. In addition, not only have people in Wuhan been evacuated, but also people in regions where the epidemic is not severe. We do not interfere with the decisions of other countries. However, when these measures are taken, we must look at whether they are truly beneficial to a joint response to the epidemic.

This is a big challenge to President Xi. How is the government dealing with this?

This is a comprehensive battle and a people's war, with every person pitching in and playing a role. President Xi is personally overseeing and guiding the response to the epidemic. We quickly set up a national framework of epidemic control in this land of 9.6 million square km and 1.4 billion people. This is an unprecedented endeavor, which is probably unimaginable in many countries. But China is pulling it off.

For example, the Spring Festival is one of the most important holidays in China. On the very first day of the holiday [on January 25], President Xi convened the highest level meeting of the governing body, the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, to draw up a comprehensive plan on responding to the epidemic, which initiated the nationwide battle against the epidemic. This had never happened before in Chinese history on the first day of the

Spring Festival. It shows President Xi's grasp of the situation, his outstanding leadership and China's strong mobilization capability.

Moving on to trade, with a breach from the coronavirus, does China have problems meeting its obligations to import more products and services from the U.S. because of the outbreak?

The Chinese people always honor our commitments. We stand ready to work with the U.S. to implement the phase-one trade agreement reached by the two sides, which is good for China, the U.S. and the world at large.

The Chinese market is big enough to withstand the temporary impact of the epidemic. When it's over, subdued consumer demand will revive quickly, the dynamism of China's economy will rebound strongly and the market will continue to grow, as we continue to advance reform and opening up.

But I do see one issue. Given the U.S. highest-level travel advisory against China, it will bring some practical challenges to the implementation of the agreement. We hope the U.S. will think about how it can respect the WHO's professional advice and refrain from imposing unnecessary trade and travel restrictions. As long as the two sides are working together, implementation will be good. China will keep up its end of the bargain. We hope the U.S. will do the same.

Will China negotiate for any change to the phase-one trade deal? And what are your expectations for phase two?

There is no need to adjust the phase-one agreement. It is not only about trade, but also encompasses other aspects such as intellectual property rights protection, exchange rates and financial services.

At the moment, what we hope to do is to concentrate on the implementation of the agreement. We want to see real tangible results, which will help bring China-U.S. trade toward sound and healthy development and help global economic growth. In this way, we will accumulate experience and be able to then proceed to phase-two trade talks.

Yesterday, the U.S. charged Huawei of stealing trade secrets from U.S. companies. What is the Chinese Government's response?

We don't understand why the U.S., a superpower, is employing its state power and mobilizing its allies to attack Huawei, which

is a 100-percent private company. It has developed itself in market competition, relying on its own diligence, hard work and wisdom. Maybe the only reason that the U.S. is doing this is because Huawei is doing too well. So while U.S. companies can excel and succeed, why can't a Chinese company succeed by relying on its own efforts?

I'm afraid the U.S. has dark intentions sometimes. It doesn't want to see other countries develop. It doesn't want to see other countries' businesses grow and succeed. It spreads false rumors to smear these companies. The U.S. claims that Huawei products have the backdoor to undermine U.S. national security. But so far it hasn't produced any credible evidence.

As we can see from Wikileaks and the [Edward] Snowden incident, other telecommunications companies are actually the ones doing these things. Huawei has publicly pledged that it can sign a no-backdoor agreement with any government and organization if they wish so. Huawei wants to clear its name and show its transparency in this legal form. Isn't that enough? Why are there still attempts to attack it? It doesn't make sense and it's immoral.

Fortunately, many countries, including the UK and Germany, have not been misled by these rumors. While they are doing their best to secure their telecommunications infrastructure, they are trying to provide a level playing field for businesses from other countries, including Huawei. I believe this is a practice consistent with market rules. These countries are making the sensible and correct decision as independent sovereign states.

So are China and the U.S. then inevitably headed for a clash of civilizations?

The so-called clash of civilizations is a false argument. We are in the 21st century and human civilization is quite advanced. If anyone is trying to clamor for or even to create a clash of civilizations, he is trying to reverse the wheels of history.

We advocate that all civilizations are equal and no one is superior to the others. All civilizations are grounded in the unique history and culture of that particular country, and each civilization has its own unique values. The world is a diverse and colorful place. What we call for is mutual respect and learning among different civilizations and joint efforts to seek common progress.

Those who agitate for a clash of ►►



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, World Health Organization (WHO) Director General, addresses a press conference in Geneva, Switzerland, on February 17, where he said China has provided detailed data on cases of the novel coronavirus disease, which is very important in enabling the WHO to provide good evidence-based advice to countries

civilizations, subconsciously still believe in the superiority of Western civilizations. They are not prepared to accept the development and revitalization of non-Western civilizations. Western countries have developed already and other countries need faster development. This is our integral right. We believe that only when all countries enjoy development, can our world be prosperous and stable, and we can all live in peace in this global village and this planet we call home.

So how does China convince the U.S. that it and its political system are not a threat, or should not have to be, anyway?

The U.S. system and model are the choices of the American people. We do not intervene in the internal affairs of the U.S. By the same token, socialism with Chinese characteristics is the choice of the Chinese people, and it has already proven hugely successful. The U.S. should respect this choice.

For countries with different systems, as long as they observe the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, particularly the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of states and respect for countries' sovereignty, there won't be any threat to anyone. For China, we stand ready to work with the U.S. on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence to build and grow this long-term and stable relationship of peace and friendship. That is our set policy. However, the U.S. is doing

the opposite. It has been upping its pressure on China and blaming and bashing China. The facts are clear for everyone to see.

For example, the National People's Congress, the top legislature of China, has never introduced any bill on the internal affairs of the U.S. However, the U.S. Congress has reviewed and adopted one bill after another that blatantly interferes in China's internal affairs. China has never sent its military vessels and aircraft around the U.S. to flex its muscle, yet U.S. naval ships and airplanes have been flexing their muscle at China's doorstep. China has never sanctioned any U.S. business. On the contrary, we welcome U.S. businesses to invest in China, providing them with a sound business environment. However, the U.S. has taken every opportunity and means to suppress Chinese companies. It has introduced unilateral sanctions against them by exercising long-arm jurisdiction and tried to limit China's development rights. It is not China threatening the U.S., but the U.S. threatening China. This is what needs to be addressed.

Last question. Could we come back to the very first question in this interview? What are the lessons that China is learning from this coronavirus?

Human society has evolved in the fight against various epidemics. It may occur in

one country today, and in another country tomorrow. Public health security is therefore a common challenge for the world. But to be fair, China has done a good job so far in responding to the epidemic. When it is over, we will of course look back and summarize experiences to see what can be done to improve our public health services, including our capacity.

As we improve ourselves, we will also help with the capacity building of other countries that have weak public health systems. For example, we introduced eight major initiatives in China's cooperation with Africa, one of which focuses specifically on public health. We will continue to promote public health cooperation with African countries, similar to our help during the Ebola outbreak.

Other countries also have a part to play in this regard. When the H1N1 flu started in the U.S. in 2009, it caused serious damage, affecting 214 countries and regions in the world. The U.S. needs to look back and learn from this experience. Overall, public health is a common subject for the entire world. We need to work together to combine our strengths. ■

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Beyond East And West

Countries must transcend differences to see the world as a community for all **By Zhang Lei**



The author is an associate researcher with the Institute of European Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

The 56th Munich Security Conference (MSC) was convened on February 14-16 and attracted hordes of senior international decision makers, such as French President Emmanuel Macron, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Known as the Davos of global security, the MSC has emerged as an important platform for officials and experts to exchange views on international security issues.

The chosen theme of this year's conference was Westlessness, which has three specific aspects: the West is less Western, the world as a whole is less Western and a joint Western strategy is uncertain. According to a security report released on February 10, a multitude of security challenges seem to have become inseparable from what some describe as the decay of the Western project. A series of hotspot global issues were also taken up.

Setting Westlessness as the tone for the meeting was a self-assessment and reflection by some Western leaders on current world developments. But in reality, this theme is a bit of an exaggeration. Even

though Western countries are faced with multiple challenges both internally and externally, they still enjoy strong comprehensive strength.

Facing challenges

The Western world has been troubled by a myriad of problems in recent years, mostly represented by the widening rift between Europe and the U.S. in trade, security and other areas. After U.S. President Donald Trump assumed office, his protectionist and isolationist policies in the name of Make America Great Again seriously damaged the transatlantic alliance.

For example, the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal posed security concerns for its European allies, which are geographically closer to Iran. The EU, which has always championed free trade, is unhappy about U.S. threats to drop out of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and its obstruction of the dispute settlement mechanism. Meanwhile, the U.S. has criticized its European allies on their military expenditure and repeatedly asked them to contribute more to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In addition, the U.S. strengthened cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries in energy and regional security issues in an attempt to divide Europe.

Challenges from inside are also mounting, as the EU now lacks the strategic consensus to improve integration. On one side, the differences between Germany and France, the two most powerful EU countries, are hard to overcome. They hold disparate

positions on the Western Balkan countries' accession into the EU, as well as the EU's ties with Russia and NATO. On the other side, there is a deepening disparity between Western European and Central and Eastern European countries. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán embraced neo-nationalism while rejecting internationalism as the only way to uphold national sovereignty. After the refugee crisis, Central and Eastern European countries, represented by Poland and Hungary, repeated their populist rhetoric, refusing to accept refugees and calling for the reshaping of the European order. Such divergence has driven a wedge in solidarity and slowed EU reform and integration.

Meanwhile, the surge of far-right ideology and political parties is another phenomena that cannot be neglected.

The EU's political pattern has become more fragmented as it faces multiple chal-



lenges. The gloomy economy spurred and strengthened the existential sentiment, as far-right parties gained momentum in many EU member states and gained more influence in the EU Parliament. Some of them hoped to introduce strict border controls to respond to the immigration crisis. They also spread intolerance and nationalism in Europe, supporting xenophobia and other oppressive ideologies. As they gained more support, mainstream parties were weakened and mainstream values challenged.

Security outlook

Amid heated major country competition, a debate was sparked on how the EU could play a global leadership role. The EU's capability to safeguard its own security, prosperity and independent diplomacy has met multiple challenges as the world situation evolves, such as China-U.S. trade friction and Brexit.

The new EU Commission, led by Ursula von der Leyen, is emphasizing geopolitics and aiming to make the EU capable of participating and influencing the global political landscape. It is focused on expanding the EU's competitiveness in the economic sphere and accelerating its defense integration, something Macron has also repeatedly stressed. In 2019, France and Germany signed a new Treaty of Aachen to enhance mutual trust, aiming to preserve each other's core interests under a common security and diplomacy framework, as well as to protect the EU's shared security.

During the MSC, Macron proposed EU reforms to respond to Westlessness, calling on solidarity from members and Germany's participation in accelerating reforms. He also stressed that Europe must find its own answers to climate change, 5G telecommunications standards, artificial intelligence

and other areas, adding that ties with Russia must be improved in the long run.

However, there are many uncertainties: whether the EU can realize defense integration, the lack of coordination between Germany and France on strategic issues, some Central and Eastern European countries' discontent with Macron's policies, and a lack of political will and mutual trust among members. Future EU security depends on multiple factors, especially U.S. policy orientation, the distribution of responsibility between the EU and NATO, and whether France and Germany can work in the same direction.

China's voice

Westlessness reflects a perception of the world among some in Europe and the U.S. However, countries must transcend the East-West divergence and the North-South divide and see the world as a community for all, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said at the conference. He proposed countries go beyond the ideological gap and accommodate historical and cultural differences in order to see the international community as one global family.

The Chinese Government and its people are in the midst of battling the novel coronavirus. It has received enormous support from the international community and progress is being made through rigorous and thorough measures to prevent and control its spread.

This outbreak reminds the world once again that in this period, local issues can easily become global concerns and vice versa. No country can prosper in isolation or meet all challenges on its own, since everyone's interests are closely interconnected.

In the era of globalization, countries face the same challenges, shoulder common responsibilities and have a shared future. This means an effective framework must be set up for multilateral cooperation to jointly tackle the myriad challenges. It also points to the need for committing to multilateral cooperation, whereby international affairs are openly discussed and decided by all involved. ■



Wolfgang Ischinger, Chairman of the Munich Security Conference (MSC), opens this year's MSC on February 14 and warns that the West appears to be in decline

Copyedited by Rebeca Toledo
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Delegates attend the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on February 9

Silencing the Guns

The African Union's initiative is vital for Africa's development

By Benard Ayieko



The writer is an economist, consultant and regional commentator based in Nairobi, Kenya

Newly elected Chairperson of the African Union (AU), South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, outlined key priority areas that will drive Africa's growth within the framework of Agenda 2063 while addressing the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State

and Government of the AU.

Speaking at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on February 9, Ramaphosa focused on deepening unity in Africa, economic and financial inclusion for women and mainstreaming the interests of women, conflict resolution, and championing the position of Africa as a strong and influential player in the global arena.

What stood out was the unprecedented attention on conflict resolution that resonated with this year's theme Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development. Ramaphosa noted that Africa must take charge of its peace and security agenda by finding solutions to African prob-

lems. He underscored the need to urgently deal with the actions of countries outside the African continent that are fighting proxy wars and fueling existing conflicts in Africa.

Addressing the session on the implementation of the flagship project on silencing the guns, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, AU High Representative for Silencing the Guns, said, "Looking at the achievements made in promoting peace and security on the continent in recent decades, particularly since 2004, with the operationalization of the AU Peace and Security Council, the noble objective of silencing the guns and ending wars on the continent is achievable."

Peace efforts

Peace and stability have been elusive in Africa, yet these are key ingredients for socio-economic development. When there is peaceful coexistence between citizens and nations, the opportunities for social, cultural and economic interaction and integration increase immensely. Sadly, nowhere in the world have conflicts between citizens or nations been as frequent or as violent over the past half a century as in Africa.

However, there has been remarkable progress in dealing with the scourge of violent conflicts since the 50th Solemn Declaration was adopted by the 21st Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government on May 26, 2013, in Addis Ababa. Since 2014, efforts to achieve peace and security in Africa by strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms, a rapid response framework and institutions through bilateral and multilateral engagements in conflict zones have increased. The last two decades have witnessed silenced guns in areas which were initially regarded as hotspots like Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, previously seen as bedrocks of violent conflicts, have similarly made significant strides in efforts to find a lasting solution. Prior to the official opening of the session, Ramaphosa met separately with South

Sudanese President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar, in an effort to kick start mediation efforts aimed at forming a power-sharing government as part of the AU's efforts to silence guns in South Sudan. On ending the conflict in Libya, the AU's involvement has been visible with consistent calls for the need for the broader participation of African nations in finding a lasting solution under the stewardship of the UN.

Speaking at the same venue, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres reiterated the significance of a process that includes women and youth in Africa's peace initiatives. Guterres commended the One Million by 2021 Initiative, spearheaded by the AU, whose objective is to reach out to a million youth in Africa with opportunities, and stressed the UN's unwavering support in silencing guns in Africa. These are part of the AU's peace building initiatives aimed at quelling many potential flare-ups in Africa.

Challenges ahead

Even though remarkable progress has been made, the journey has encountered its fair share of bottlenecks which have neutered, slowed or prevented the silencing of guns. Some of the challenges include the AU's lack of institutional reforms and a clear roadmap that guides the attainment of a peaceful and prosperous continent.

There are also threats from terrorism

and transnational crime, communal conflicts over resources, violent crime, illegal trafficking of guns and cultural practices. Despite the challenges, there is no option to silencing the guns—the violent conflict adversely affects the continent's economic progress and costs billions of dollars.

Sadly, the cost of "noisy" guns in Africa is staggering. A study by the World Bank on the economic cost of conflict estimated that violent conflict adversely affects a country's economic progress through loss of between 2 to 8.4 percent in annual GDP growth. The report further stated that countries that border conflict zones also suffer 1.4 percent decline in annual GDP growth and 1.7 percent rise in inflation. In addition, the prevention of conflicts on the continent is a cost-effective measure that, besides saving millions of lives, is economically beneficial to countries by averting conflicts; a cost saving of \$5 billion to \$70 billion per year is realized. This is money that would be plowed back into the economy to build infrastructure, create jobs and fight poverty.

AU members also took time to delve into ways and means of dealing with the spread of COVID-19—a disease that broke out in Wuhan, China and continues to cause many deaths, fear and human suffering in that country and worldwide.

Weeks ago, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a public health emergency of international concern mostly because of fears that developing countries would be hardest hit by the outbreak. In Africa, countries like Kenya, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Botswana have dealt with possible cases, with suspected patients being quarantined, while tests are done. Fortunately, at the time of writing, all the tests have so far been negative. The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has activated its emergency operations center and engaged its Incident Management System for the outbreak, recommending that all member states enhance their surveillance of the virus.

Member states are also encouraged to receive direct or connecting flights from China, but should intensify screening of incoming passengers for severe respiratory illness and it is felt that this virus will in no way impact growing Sino-African relations. ■



Carlos Humberto Loitey (second left), UN Military Adviser for Peacekeeping Operations, visits the camp of Chinese peacekeepers in Al Fashir, Sudan, on February 7

Comments to yanwei@bjreview.com

Heritage Boosts Income

Development of intangible cultural heritage contributes to poverty alleviation By Yuan Yuan

When Yang Mei was unable to continue working as a construction worker after her back was severely hurt in an accident 10 years ago, she didn't expect a skill she had learnt as a kid to offer her another chance to earn a living.

Yang, now 46, is leading a wax painting collective involving over 300 women in her hometown, Zhongying Village in Bijie, Guizhou Province in southwest China. She is also running her own wax painting company.

"Wax painting is a skill that every woman of the Miao ethnic group can gain," Yang said. "It has been passed down for generations. The wax knives we use are the smallest ones in the world and can make very thin lines on wax."

Reviving skills

With a history of more than 2,000 years, the wax painting of the Miao ethnic group has been described as "a ballet of the fingertips." In 2008, it was designated as a national-level intangible cultural heritage.

Yang said that there are various designs in a wax painting and without using tools such as compasses or rulers, experienced local women can produce exquisite patterns. However, with more people moving to big cities in recent decades and local women barely able to make a living from it, few young people want to spend time learning the skill.

Things started to change in 2017 when the China Women's Development Foundation launched an initiative combining the traditional craft with modern designs and e-commerce promotion. Seeing the development potential of this skill, Yang set up her own company.

In 2020, the number of wax painting collectives is expected to surpass 200, which will engage a total of 30,000 women. "Each

woman in our collective can earn about 3,000 yuan (\$429) per month now," Yang said.

Yang Guofei, 58, is one of the women in the collective. Her two sons both work elsewhere and she stays at home with her grandchildren. "In the past, corn planting was our only source of income," Yang Guofei said. "I never thought we could also earn money from wax painting. It now can bring in more money than corn."

The collectives also cooperate with live-streaming platforms to demonstrate the art of wax painting and promote their products. Monthly orders valued over 100,000 yuan (\$14,347) have come in through such platforms.

Wax painting is not the only skill that has seen a revival as both an intangible cultural heritage and a way out of poverty.

In July 2018, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) and the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development designated the first 10 key zones to receive support under an initiative combining intangible cultural heritage promotion and poverty alleviation. The zones feature various forms of intangible cultural heritage.

Since then, more than 500 counties have rolled out similar projects, setting up over 2,000 intangible cultural heritage workshops.

In a circular released earlier this year, China announced that it will continue to support the establishment of these workshops nationwide for poverty alleviation, requiring local authorities to take measures to properly manage the workshops, including providing training on traditional crafts, developing quality products and increasing sales channels.

Official statistics showed that in the past year such workshops have added 463,800 new jobs and lifted 200,000 households out



of poverty. From 2018 to 2019, the MCT allocated 120 million yuan (\$17 million) to support research and training in the exhibition and promotion of national intangible cultural heritage in poor areas across the country.

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Women make felt embroidery in a company in Sonid Right Banner, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in north China, on September 21, 2018



Craftspeople weave coarse cloth in a factory in Hengshui, Hebei Province in north China, on December 25, 2018

Nationwide boom

Intangible cultural heritage has been promoted in combination with poverty alleviation in many places in China with the support of governments at different levels.

Xin Tuya, a 47-year-old from Sonid Right Banner, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, has been working with a felt embroidery company for two years as an embroider. She learned the skill in a free training course provided by the company.

"I was the first to apply for the training in 2018," Xin said. "At that time, I spent two hours a day commuting to the training." In July 2014, felt embroidery was listed as a national-level intangible cultural heritage.

Xin's family used to live on herding. After learning that a company was hiring embroiders, she didn't hesitate to apply since it could bring extra money for the family.

She can now earn more than 2,000 yuan (\$286) a month as a professional embroider.

More than half of the registered embroiders in the company are from poor families, and income from embroidery has helped many of them shake off poverty.

In Tibet Autonomous Region, southwest China, locals have also been bringing vitality to and prospering from several traditional cultural heritages.

With subsidies and materials from the local government, a workshop for making Tibetan drums was set up in Nyemo County in the capital Lhasa last year. Gyalen, the 68-year-old inheritor of this skill, employed five villagers from poor families to learn the skill to increase their income.

As an inheritor, Gyalen can receive a stipend of 10,000 yuan (\$1,429) a year from the government.

In Nyemo, there are now 10 representative intangible cultural heritages and 88 cooperative workshops, creating jobs for 1,765 people, according to a report published by the MCT.

In October 2019, at the seventh biennial International Festival of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province in southwest China, the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to poverty alleviation was one of the major topics of discussion.

Craftspeople from many places demonstrated their special handicrafts and exchanged ideas on how to explore the business potential of their products.

Song Shuixian, a national-level inheritor of a unique type of embroidery of the Shui ethnic group, demonstrated her handicrafts at the event. "We are happy to see more young people joining," Song said. "While inheriting this skill, they have introduced many modern elements in an endeavor to turn it into a fashion."

"To combine poverty alleviation with the development of intangible cultural heritages can bring many positive effects," said Liu Kuili, a researcher from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. "This way of helping poor people can boost their confidence in making a living and create a healthy way of passing down intangible cultural heritages." ■

Copyedited by Madhusudan Chaubey
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Bouncing Back

In an interview with *Beijing Review*, **Stephen Roach**, a senior fellow at Yale University and former Chairman of Morgan Stanley Asia, shared his observations on the Chinese economy under the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) epidemic. An edited excerpt follows:



Beijing Review: In recent interviews with Chinese media outlets, you expressed optimism on the prospects of the Chinese economy and predicted a sharp rebound once the virus is under control. Where do you think the resilience of the Chinese economy comes from?

Stephen Roach: While the Chinese economy has slowed to a virtual standstill in early 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19, this devastating disease should not impair the underlying strength of the Chinese economy. In my opinion, that strength reflects four key economic transitions: from investment- and export-led growth to consumer-driven growth; from manufacturing to services; from surplus saving to saving absorption and using that drawdown of domestic saving to fund China's social safety net and boost discretionary household consumption; and from imported to indigenous innovation.

As long as the government continues to focus its reform strategy on these key transitions, once the virus runs its course, which remains my strong expectation for the second half of 2020, these transitions, in conjunction with recent stimulus actions by the People's Bank of China (PBC), will play a decisive role in providing a strong post-virus impetus to the Chinese economy.

You were in China during the 2003 severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak. What are the differences in the Chinese economy today? Is it more resilient or more vulnerable?

Compared to conditions prevailing in 2003, the Chinese economy today is far bigger, better balanced and more globally important. In renminbi terms, the Chinese GDP is about seven times its size 17 years ago. Its share of the world GDP, as measured by the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) purchasing power parity metric, currently

stands at 19.7 percent, fully 2.3 times the 8.7-percent share in 2003. At the same time, it is less dependent on manufacturing, as the secondary share of the Chinese GDP fell from 45.6 percent in 2003 to 40.7 percent in 2018, while a surging service sector boosted the tertiary share of the economy by 10 percentage points from 42 percent in 2003 to 52 percent in 2018.

With the broader world economy mired in an unusually anemic post-crisis recovery since the global financial crisis of 2008, China's ongoing growth has accounted for fully 37 percent of the cumulative gains in global output since 2008. Notwithstanding the serious short-term disruptions associated with COVID-19, today's rebalanced Chinese economy is far more resilient than it was back in the SARS days. At the

same time, with the world far more dependent on China today than it was back then, short-term disruptions in the Chinese economy are bound to have a more serious impact on global growth. When China sneezes, today's world is far more at risk of catching a bad cold than it was in 2003.

What kind of measures do you think the government could take to facilitate an economic rebound?

At this point in time, the highest priority for government policy must be virus containment, addressing modern China's most serious public health emergency. The economy comes second, and fortunately for China, it is strong enough to endure even this serious shock.

There is, of course, very little that traditional countercyclical policy measures—monetary and fiscal, alike—can do to offset the severe economic pressures associated with quarantines and travel restrictions. The actions taken thus far by the PBC are important to stabilize financial markets in the event of another sharp drop such as that which occurred on February 3. Barring that possibility, stimulus should add fuel to any post-virus rebound in the economy.

With the pre-virus Chinese economy having slowed to a 27-year low of 6-percent growth in late 2019, China's policymakers are wise to err on the side of stimulus. At the same time, it would be imprudent to back away from the critical deleveraging campaign that has been such a high priority for the Chinese leadership over the past three and a half years. Once the virus is contained, the natural forces of recovery should



Workers make protective clothing at a factory in Urumqi, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwest China, on February 14



Staff members work on a production line that makes ultrasound machines at the GE Healthcare plant in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province in east China, on February 15

take hold, comparable to those that occurred in the aftermath of SARS in 2003. By staying focused on public health imperatives and bringing COVID-19 under control as soon as possible, the Chinese economy should be well positioned for a solid rebound in the second half of 2020.

What impact do you think this outbreak will have on the global economy? How would a Chinese rebound help the world economy?

With China accounting for about 20 percent of the global GDP, a 2-percentage-point shortfall in annualized Chinese GDP growth—a distinct possibility in the first half of 2020—could knock approximately 0.5 percentage point off annualized world GDP growth during the first and second quarters of 2020. That could be problematic for a global economy that has already slowed into the danger zone; indeed, world GDP grew by just 2.9 percent in 2019, according to the IMF's January 20 update, only 0.4 percentage point above the widely accepted 2.5-percent global recession threshold.

With European industrial output beginning to weaken late last year and with the Japanese economy contracting much more sharply than expected in the final period of 2019 due largely to the second installment of a consumption

tax hike, the global economy was not exactly on firm footing before the sharp disruption to the Chinese economy. All this means that COVID-19, together with its collateral impacts on neighboring countries through supply chain and finished goods trade linkages, could heighten financial market fears of global recession during the first half of 2020.

What is your perspective on the long-term prospects of the Chinese economy? Do you think this public health emergency will lead to the “middle-income trap” for the country?

China faces many challenges in its daunting aspirations to push ahead on its twin centenary development goals. The integrity of its public health system is necessary but not sufficient for China to stay the course. It underscores the safety net constraint that has long encouraged fear-driven precautionary saving by Chinese households, thereby inhibiting more vigorous growth in discretionary personal consumption.

The “middle-income trap” is less about disease control and public health and more about the critical shift from imported to indigenous innovation. This, of course, has become a major area of dispute in the trade conflict with the United States, which strikes at the heart of

many of China's most important pillars of technological prowess: intellectual property rights, technology transfer, cyber security and access by China's leading technology companies such as Huawei and ZTE to critical U.S.-made components such as semiconductor chips.

The conflict with the United States has been an obvious and important wakeup call for China's aims to build a self-sustaining culture of indigenous innovation. There are many encouraging signs of extraordinary progress in achieving this objective over the past several years, especially in key applications industries such as e-commerce, fintech, life sciences and, of course, artificial intelligence. The outbreak of COVID-19 is a grim reminder that technological prowess is not an end in and of itself. If China seizes the opportunity to convert newfound prowess in indigenous innovation into a higher-quality growth experience, complete with a state-of-the-art public health system, it will be much better positioned to avoid the long-feared setbacks of the so-called “middle-income trap.” ■

Copyedited by Rebeca Toledo
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Sharing for Support

Companies pool human resources to meet labor shortages and layoffs By Li Xiaoyang

Yang Nan, who was a KTV operation manager in Hangzhou, east China, has recently gained a new identity. With the company closing temporarily since the novel coronavirus outbreak, he has become a temporary worker at a local Hema Fresh, Alibaba's New Retail grocery chain, in what has become a new trend: worker sharing among companies to offset both the layoffs and labor shortages caused by disruptions in the market.

"Before working in Hema, I was at home for almost 20 days from January 25 doing nothing," Yang told *Hangzhou Daily*. "Temping helps cover my living costs and has greatly relieved my anxiety." With the help of the experienced staff at the store, Yang has become increasingly at home in his new job.

At the Hema outlets in Hangzhou, employees like Yang are growing. In another local Hema store, 16 temporary workers have helped increase the number of completed orders by 500 per day.

China's e-commerce platforms are seeing booming sales as more people choose to stay at home and shop online due to the epidemic. Workers' delayed return from virus-affected regions and growing orders were leading to labor shortage in the outlets. Contrastly, since some offline businesses had to stop operation, they let go of many employees.

To address this mismatch in the labor force, Hema has taken the initiative to offer part-time jobs to laidoff employees from other companies since February 3. As of February 14, around 2,700 employees from over 40 companies in industries such as catering and car rental across the country had joined Hema's temporary job-sharing plan after some quick training. Hu Qiugen, General Manager of Operation at Hema Fresh, told

Beijing Review.

According to Pan Helin, a senior researcher at the public policy think tank Pangoal Institution, sharing employees has addressed the urgent issues of laidoff workers, temporarily out-of-business companies and understaffed e-commerce platforms by mobilizing social human resources and helping restore social production.

"Although the epidemic has made traditional enterprises suffer, it has created opportunities for them to explore cooperation with new economy firms to share labor force costs and better cope with uncertainties," Pan told *Beijing Review*.

Filling gaps

During epidemic control, China's e-commerce retail platforms have seen surging sales of foodstuff. According to Hema, the number of its daily active users grew by 127.5 percent during the Spring Festival holiday this year starting from January 24, with online orders increasing by 220 percent. Data from e-commerce giant JD.com also showed its fresh product sales from January 24 to February 9 had gone up by 215 percent year on year to 15,000 tons.

Hu said Hema has more than 200 stores nationwide, each staffed with about 100 people. Since the epidemic, its 18 stores in Wuhan, the hardest-hit city in Hubei Province, central China, have been delivering food and daily necessities to local residents. "Though many employees worked through the Spring Festival holiday, the orders have increased by 50 percent in recent days, still making the stores short-handed," he said.

So by hiring people out of jobs, Hema has found a way for win-win growth. According to Hu, the company has been so adaptive to the model because it hires short-term employees during peak sale seasons as

a routine practice. The employees borrowed from temporarily closed catering enterprises have learned on the job quickly as they are old hands in the industry. An increasing number of retail enterprises have also introduced job-sharing plans during the epidemic control, such as the retail branches of JD.com and Walmart. JD Logistics has borrowed 700 employees from more than 10 partner companies.

While job-sharing has helped fill the labor gap for online retailers, jobs requiring experience still lack people. In a statement on February 12, Hema said surging orders have made the demand for couriers especially urgent even though 80 percent of its delivery force had returned to work after the holiday.

"Employees borrowed from companies that have closed mainly work as goods sorters in warehouses and packagers in stores. Delivery jobs, however, require familiarity with the neighborhood," Hu said.

The participation of employees from car rental companies has partially addressed the problem. Car rental and car-hailing companies such as Shanghai-based Dazhong Chuxing, the online branch of Shanghai Dazhong Taxi Co., have sent experienced drivers to assist Hema's delivery services in several cities. This has improved the delivery efficiency since cars can carry more than the motorcycles commonly used by deliverymen.

Job sharing has also expanded to the manufacturing sector. IT firm Lenovo introduced temporary jobs to assemble computers and mobile phones in some cities on February 8. According to the company, over 500 people have applied for the jobs.

Trying to survival

Many offline businesses that have felt great pressure during this period have gained a new lease on life by teaming up with online retailers. With most of its 400 restaurants across China shut down, Xibei, a top restaurant chain, is collaborating with Hema and Missfresh, a fresh food delivery app, to find jobs for its idle staff.

Yunhaiyao, another restaurant chain, is also working with Hema to survive the hard time. More than 400 of its employees have joined Hema stores in cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Hangzhou.

Entertainment outlets have also remained closed with no revenue but still have to pay overhead including rent, salaries and taxes, creating great pressure, said Yang Ying, Deputy General Manager of Windsor KTV. To save costs, Windsor KTV has sent 12 percent of its staff to work at Hema.

Catering companies are now developing



A staff member at Yunhaiyao, a Yunnan cuisine restaurant chain, works in a Hema Fresh store in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province in northwest China, on February 6

takeaway services for self-reliant recovery. With the support of banks, Xibei is expanding to delivery services. On February 6, Jia Guolong, founder of Xibei, informed the staff that 200 of Xibei's outlets had started to provide takeout services to turn the corner.

According to Chen Na, a brand value director at Yunhaiyao, its branches have established 100 service centers in nearby communities to provide foodstuff and food that can be easily cooked to expand its business. "Yunhaiyao will improve its delivery services by improving food safety after the logistics chain is restored," she told *Economic Daily*.

Boosting a Trend

Hema estimates that once more companies resume work, it is likely to face a staff shortage once again. According to a statement, 30,000 new jobs including procurement, marketing and delivery will be available this year as its outlets continue to grow.

To facilitate flexible recruitment, Alibaba

has introduced a temporary online employment platform where catering companies can apply for their idle staff to become deliverymen or get other work in Alibaba's retail stores. The Internet giant said 10,000 temporary delivery jobs will be created.

JD-backed delivery platform Dada Group will also offer 15,000 positions, of which two thirds are for couriers countrywide and the rest for retail partners of JD Daojia, an on-demand retail platform under the group, in over 30 cities.

The labor gap during this special period has made flexible employment a rising star. According to a white paper on flexible employment in China released by the Renrui HR Group in 2019, the employment model developed rapidly last year. Among the over 5,000 domestic enterprises investigated, 44.6 percent employed flexible workers and nearly 70 percent were planning to adopt the model. Salespeople are the most common position in flexible employment.

For many industries, costs during slack

seasons and labor shortages in peak seasons remain problematic, which can make flexible employment a promising future trend, Yang told *Guangming Daily*.

"Flexible employment will bring a major change in China's human resources supply. Through digital economic platforms, domestic enterprises can develop partnerships more efficiently and promote mutually beneficial flows of the labor force," Pan said, suggesting that third-party service platforms providing enterprise and employee information can be developed to simplify recruitment.

"The promotion of job sharing also calls for regulations that clarify the obligations and rights of employers and employees to protect both sides' interests and reduce legal risks," he added. ■

Copyedited by Sudeshna Sarkar
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Housing Market Adopts New Methods Amid Epidemic



Commercial residential buildings for sale in Shanghai on August 16, 2019

Beyond zoos, museums and games, virtual reality (VR) technologies are wooing a more unexpected sector in China: the real estate industry, which is using it to keep itself afloat during the novel coronavirus outbreak.

VR salesrooms and livestreams are gaining popularity among property developers and agents to pitch their projects to potential house buyers.

The proportion of online VR house visitors surged 57.7 percent month on month in January, according to online marketplace 58.com and housing information platform Anjuke.com. Data from another online housing platform Beike showed that over 1.24 million VR visits were made between February 1-9, skyrocketing almost 60 times year on year.

On February 17, official data showed that home prices in 70 major Chinese cities remained generally stable in January, with 47 reporting month-on-month gains, down from 50 registered in December 2019.

Yet the bite of the epidemic is likely to be reflected in February's housing investment and sales data as prevention and control measures escalated.

Many cities have suspended offline house sales activities, as well as the construction of apartments, weighing on the capital-intensive sector's operation.

Despite increasing downward economic pressure, the authorities have kept a tight lid on housing market speculation.

The country will stick to the principle of "housing is for living in, not for speculation," along with the implementation of a long-term management mechanism for the market, said Finance Minister Liu Kun in a written article published in a recent edition of *Qiushi Journal*, a flagship magazine of the Communist Party of China Central Committee.

While avoiding large-scale stimulus, some local governments have stepped in to help the sector during this tough time.

Cities such as Xiamen and Fuzhou in

the southeastern province of Fujian have unveiled a string of incentives including credit support, financing cost cuts and repayment expiration extensions to ease the property market strain.

Some developers also took to price-cutting to lure customers. On February 16, China Evergrande Group, the third largest developer in the country, said it would offer a 25-percent discount on all property sales from February 18 to 29.

Zhang Bo, a researcher with 58.com, said he is upbeat about the market's long-term growth. "The outbreak may exert short-term downward pressure on the property market's turnover, though once the outbreak ends, in general, the housing market will recover and sales will see

a rebound."

"The current property industry plays a different role in the Chinese economy and operates in a different economic climate than in 2003 when severe acute respiratory syndrome broke out, with various new characteristics and development trends," Sheng Songcheng, a senior researcher and former central bank official, said in a research note.

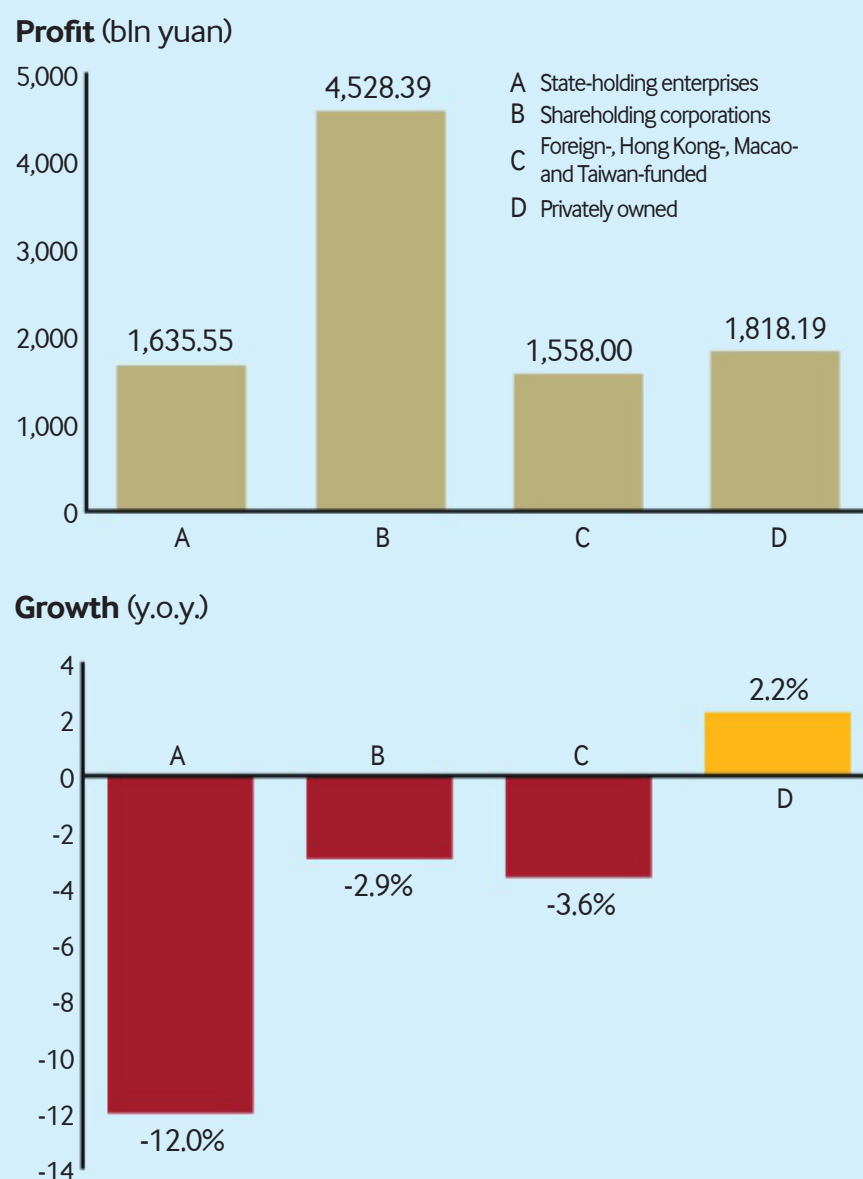
Sheng suggested local governments fine-tune their real estate market policies with reasonable and targeted support for the sector, while "overall market stimulus for short-term growth is not an advisable choice." ■

This is an edited version of an article published by Xinhua News Agency
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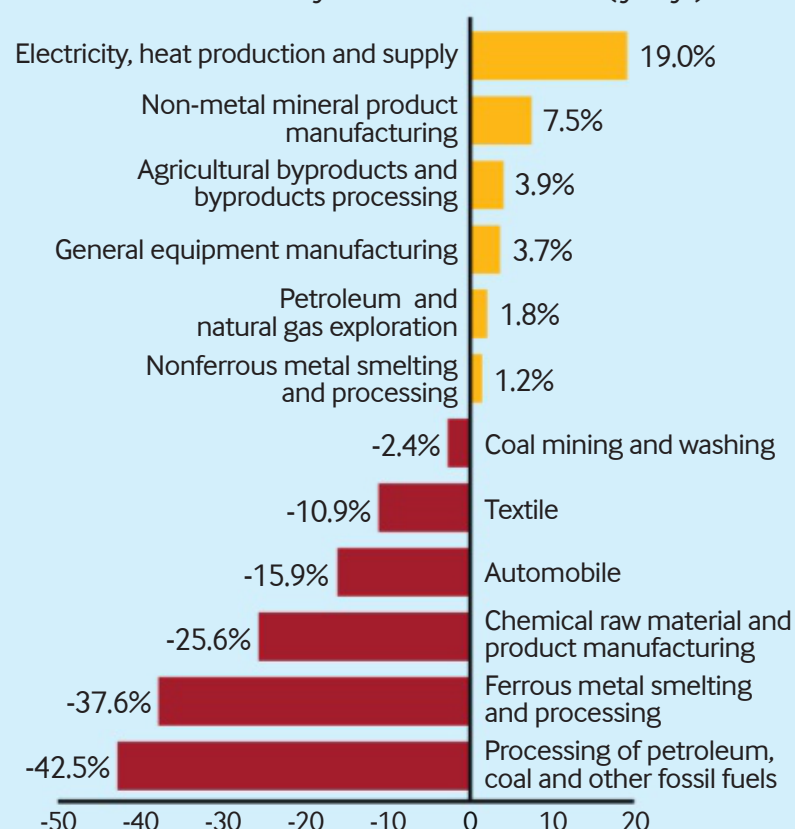
**Industrial Enterprises' Profit and Growth
By Business Type**
January-December 2019



Industrial Enterprises' Profit by Sector
January-December 2019 (bln yuan)



Profit Changes for Major Industrial Sectors
January-December 2019 (y.o.y.)



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)

By 2024, some

80 percent of China's banks will have purchased and integrated financial technology solutions from the cloud market, International Data Corporation, a global market intelligence firm, predicted. China's financial industry has actively embraced a new generation of information technologies such as cloud computing, big data, artificial intelligence, mobile Internet and the Internet of Things.

Driven by the Belt and Road Initiative, Asia became the most popular overseas mergers and acquisitions (M&A) destination for Chinese enterprises last year, a report by the global consulting firm Ernst & Young said. Chinese firms made M&A deals worth

\$22.3 billion in Asia last year, up 19.1 percent year on year, accounting for nearly 30 percent of the total.

China will fast track the mechanization development of the husbandry sector, with the aim of achieving a

50-percent overall mechanization rate by 2025. The mechanization rate in the large-scale breeding of live pigs, broiler chickens and layer chickens will reach 70 percent, while that of beef cattle and sheep should exceed 50 percent, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.



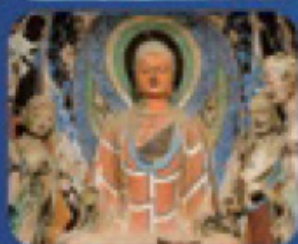
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CHINA MOSAIC

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Thrown Off The Track

Epidemic disrupts sports events but residents get pumped up about exercise

By Zhao Wei & Sudeshna Sarkar

One of the quirky yet inspiring images to come out of China during the novel coronavirus epidemic is that of Hu Chuanchun, a media person in Hangzhou in east China, who shared his indoor running drill on Weibo, the popular Chinese social media platform. The 45-year-old, self-confined to his apartment since the outbreak, said he clocked a personal record of 8.14 km in 47 minutes, all of it achieved on a yoga mat in his living room.

"I started running in 2015, but now I can no longer run outside. So I decided to run on my yoga mat every day," Hu told *Beijing Review*. "The maximum I have covered equals a half marathon (21 km). I run on the mat so that it doesn't disturb my neighbors downstairs. Besides, it provides a cushion for my feet as well."

Ironically, while Hu and some more ingenious Chinese runners have caught the eye of the world with videos of how they have turned their home into a running track, thousands more were shut out from the arc light after the Tokyo Marathon Foundation this month decided to scale down the Tokyo Marathon, scheduled to be held on March 1. Due to fears that the event, one of the six major marathons in the world, could lead to more virus infections in Japan and derail the 2020 Summer Olympics Tokyo will host from July 24 to August 9, the organizers have scrapped the mass participation race. The event had registered 38,000 runners, including around 1,800 from China. Instead, the organizers will now go ahead with a minuscule elite race with about 200 participants.

The Japanese Government, which was



Hu Chuanchun, a media professional in Hangzhou in east China, runs at home on February 18

among the first foreign governments to send medical supplies to China after the epidemic escalated, has now announced an entry ban for non-Japanese who traveled to Hubei Province in central China, where the infections and death toll have been the highest, and Zhejiang Province in east China within 14 days before arriving in Japan. The ban also

covers Chinese whose passports were issued in the two provinces. In addition, there are extensive flight reductions.

"To all the general entry runners who felt joy at being selected, we apologize, but these restrictions are unavoidable," Kyodo News Agency cited Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike as saying.

In a bid to sweeten the bitter pill for runners who were going from China, the foundation has offered to waive their fees if they defer their participation to next year. However, since the Tokyo Marathon is also a pre-Olympic event with the winners qualifying for the Olympic marathon, the decision has created a lot of angst among the shut-out runners from all over the world who have spent a fortune on airplane tickets, accommodations and other logistics.

In Ukraine, it left Angelina Babayeva, an IT recruitment adviser, aghast. "We are absolutely shocked," she said on her Facebook account. "We are absolutely ready to go to Tokyo; everything is already paid [for]. How can we [be reimbursed] those huge amounts of money for air tickets and Japan Railway passes for our family?"

But some are stoical. Li Chunhui, a professional marathoner from Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in north China and winner of several marathons in China, had planned to attend the event but canceled his trip after the developments. "I think we should protect ourselves when there is an epidemic. Marathons are held every year; we should not jeopardize our own lives and the country for a race. Giving up the event is the best option so far," Li told *Beijing Review*.

Japan-based sports journalist Brett Lerner, who covers the running scene there, said in his blog Japan Running News that the Tokyo Marathon decision was made against the backdrop of other major public events being canceled, including Emperor Naruhito's 60th birthday celebrations planned for February 23. "Efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus now may impact whether Tokyo is in a position to host the Olympic Games in five months and should be interpreted at least partially in that context," Lerner cautioned.

Unprecedented havoc

The epidemic has hit several sports events, including sports business conferences. The 2020 Hong Kong Marathon, scheduled for

February 8 and 9, was one of the earliest casualties. In a statement on January 25, its organizers said they made the decision to support the government's epidemic prevention efforts. "Public health is our top priority," the announcement said.

Many cities in China hold their own marathons, creating a brand. The epidemic has now cast a shadow especially on those cities that had scheduled their events between February and April. The Chongqing International Marathon in March, the Shaanxi Marathon in April and other similar events face uncertainty. The Great Wall of China Marathon with its 19th edition was the latest to announce a change in plan, postponing it to 2021. Wuhan, the epicenter of the epidemic, was to hold the Wuhan Marathon on April 12. However, now it is going to take time for things to get back to normal.

A Kenyan contractor, who has been bringing African runners to take part in marathons in China, which offer attractive prize money, is counting his losses. "I had arranged some runners from Kenya to take part in the Hong Kong Marathon and we had to cancel all the arrangements, including air tickets," said the man in his 30s, declining to be named. "But you can't help it... From now to May, it is best to avoid public places."

In Africa, marathoners are praying for China, he said. While now eyeing marathons in China in May, the contractor said he will be exploring similar events in other countries—Mexico, the U.S. and India.

"Outside of wartime cancellations, there is no precedent for this level of disruption," Richard Baka, co-convenor of the Olympic Research Network at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia, told media and entertainment company OZY.

The spate of cancellations and postponements bear him out. The Asian Cross-Country Championships will no longer be held in Hong Kong on March 29. Instead new dates in November or December are being pondered. The golf industry's PGA Tour Series-China opted to shift its global qualifying tourney to Indonesia from Hainan Province in south China. The Asian Olympic wrestling qualifier, planned to be held in Xi'an in northwest China in March, is going to be postponed as well. Olympic boxing qualifying rounds have shifted to Jordan from Wuhan.

And the organizers of the Seoul Marathon, planned for March 22-23, have announced measures exclusively for China residents. They include not allowing anyone holding a passport issued in Hubei or any foreigner who visited Hubei in the past 14 days to board any flight to the Republic of Korea



Patients infected with the novel coronavirus dance with doctors at a makeshift hospital in Wuhan on February 10

(ROK). All visas issued by the ROK Consulate General in Wuhan have been invalidated.

Counting the cost

Sports business events have also been affected. On February 13, SportAccord announced that its World Sport & Business Summit 2020 would not be held in Beijing in April, as announced earlier. Instead, they would be exploring other venues.

However, it is too early to be able to assess the extent of the loss for the sports sector. Chinese sports industry experts think April will be a critical month. "In the short term, the epidemic had quite a bit of impact on the sports industry. Stadium operations, sports manufacturing, sports tourism and physical education and training all have been affected," Wang Zhaohong, Vice President of the College of Physical Education and Sports of Beijing Normal University, said in a webinar organized by Sports.people.com. "Almost all sports events scheduled before April nationwide will be postponed, and a large number of sports business venues will be closed."

Wang also said some major sports product manufacturing enterprises are facing difficulties in resuming production, while many physical stores have been closed. The offline business in sports education and training has mostly stopped.

However, international analysts also

predict a surge in consumption when the situation normalizes. And prestigious international sports events lined up in China months away would have a perk-up effect on the economy, trade and tourism. They include the multi-sport Asian Beach Games to kick off in Sanya in Hainan on November 26 and in 2022, the blockbuster Winter Olympics to be jointly hosted by Beijing and Zhangjiakou in neighboring Hebei Province.

Yang Yue, Director of the Esports Research Department of the China Institute of Sport Science, said at the webinar that though there is still uncertainty about the inflection point of the epidemic, the impact on the sports industry so far has been limited.

"The epidemic has hit competition and outdoor fitness events the most, but these two industries do not account for a large proportion of the total sports industry in China, and they will not affect the overall goal of 1.5 trillion yuan (\$214 billion) national sports consumption," he added. "Due to the epidemic, some online sports fitness training programs have surged against the trend, showing a good development momentum." ■

Copyedited by Madhusudan Chaubey
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The Art of Strategy

A military book written 2,500 years ago remains relevant in the fight against the novel coronavirus By Zhang Youfeng

When I began teaching at the Armed Forces Engineering Institute of the People's Liberation Army of China in 2001, one of my subjects was *The Art of War*, a military treatise written by Sun Tzu (545-470 B.C.), a famous militarist and strategist in Chinese history.

Since 2003, foreign officers from Asian and African countries began coming to the institute every year to study Chinese military enterprise and culture, and I taught them *The Art of War*, a favorite course with foreign military officers. In 2016, a team under a senior professor began to offer this course at Peking University. It is very popular with the students there as well, including foreign students.

This little preamble is to show how this treatise, regarded as a military classic, has remained popular—and relevant—despite being written 2,500 years ago, with an unusual universal significance. In addition to its inherent military value, it is useful for politics, diplomacy, economy, medicine, education, sports and many other fields, teaching how to overcome obstacles and attain success.

For the coronavirus outbreak, we can apply Sun Tzu's instructions right now to address it rationally without panicking.

According to the 11th chapter of *The Art of War*, there are nine different types of situations for fighting the enemy. Perhaps the situation currently would be what he called "desperate ground." Under such circumstances, his advice is to fight, and fight without delay. Desperate situations require extraordinary measures.

"Bestow rewards without regard to rules, issue orders without regard to previous arrangements and you will be able to handle a whole army as though you had to do with but a single man," the book says. It also says, "Skillful leaders of old knew how to drive a wedge between the enemy's front and rear."

You could interpret the second part as the quarantine periods enforced in

different parts of the world, a measure to prevent further spread of the infection, driving that wedge and weakening the enemy virus. The lockdown of Wuhan, the epicenter of the novel coronavirus outbreak in central China, since late January and subsequent regulations are all examples of unconventional measures taken at critical moments.

While talking of a desperate situation, Sun Tzu has words of inspiration: When an army faces death, there is nothing it may not achieve. "Officers and men alike will put forth their uttermost strength," he says. "Soldiers, when in desperate straits, lose the sense of fear... If there is no help for it, they will fight hard. The principle on which to manage an army is to set up one standard of courage which all must reach."

People in China have worked as one to show this to be true. Medical workers, who are at the frontline of the war, and their allies, from security guards to delivery personnel to transport workers, have shown incredible bravery as they keep up a dogged fight. At a critical point, the whole country has united to fight the epidemic because it ultimately concerns everyone's life.

The standard of courage has already been set; what is important is the assurance from the old strategist, who faced many tough corners, that such valiant efforts lead to success.

The art of healing

Once the epidemic has been brought under control, *The Art of War* can still serve as a valuable reference for restoring economic development. The treatise not only tells how to predict victory or defeat before war and carefully prepare for it, but also talks about the aftermath.

In Chapter 12, titled The Attack by Fire, Sun Tzu says, "Unhappy is the fate of one who tries to win his battles and succeed in his attacks without cultivating the spirit of enterprise; for the result is waste of time and general stagnation. Hence the saying:

The enlightened ruler lays his plans well ahead; the good general cultivates his resources."

It tells us that the victory obtained at the cost of blood and life has to be cherished and consolidated or else even if the war is won, it will eventually lead to failure. After the war is won, it is even more necessary to keep a clear head and restore stability.

Reduction of taxes, restoration and expansion of production and taking quick steps to heal the trauma will soothe the people. Only by ensuring a prosperous market, strengthening comprehensive national strength and improving the comprehensive ability to resist disasters can recovery be facilitated.

After the epidemic ends, people will be faced with the issue of how to restore normal life and production as well as promote the overall development of the economy. Therefore, it is necessary to "repair," as he says.

First of all, the people in the epidemic area should be soothed through various welfare measures to ensure normal life. Companies that have made positive contributions to fighting the epidemic should be given tax reductions or exemptions for a certain period of time. They should also be given preferential financial conditions so that they can quickly resume production and development.

Medical warriors who have given their lives and blood should be recognized with more than material rewards. It is necessary to create a social culture of respecting medical professionals and making the profession one of the most revered. At the same time, it is necessary to pass legislation to establish and improve a legal system, standardize market operations and crack down on illegal trafficking of wild animal flesh or organs to ensure food safety and prevent the emergence of a new fatal virus.

The Chinese Government has already been implementing these measures. On



the mainland, it announced new regulations to punish those who disrupt epidemic control work, scalpers who try to hike prices of commodities and people selling fake products.

In Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the authorities have said travelers who break quarantine laws will face jail and fines. Some key posts have been reshuffled in Wuhan, Hubei Province and Hong Kong. An immediate ban on wildlife trade was announced in January and more measures are anticipated in this regard.

The government is also looking after the people. Medical workers and other personnel working in epidemic prevention and control will be compensated if they get infected while on duty, and their medical treatment costs, if not covered by insurance, will be subsidized, Xinhua News Agency reported.

Government agencies are offering

low-cost, special re-lending funds to help businesses in difficulty, including companies providing daily necessities and medical equipment, to tide them over the difficult period.

The art of winning support

Sun Tzu also said following the Tao—the way to lead a moral life—and maintaining the law are key factors for victory and defeat in war. This means whenever you win the hearts of the people and follow the law, social development and prosperity will be ensured. Therefore, after the epidemic, by continuing to serve the people, winning their hearts and governing the country according to the law will ensure that the fruits of victory are preserved and expanded.

My last class at Peking University on *The Art of War* was on December 19, 2019. After the Spring Festival break, because of the epidemic, I have been teaching my students

and military enthusiasts online through discussions on WeChat.

Working online and remotely has been a nationwide trend in China to prevent the spread of the virus and it shows the resilience and ingenuity of the human spirit. Sun Tzu didn't know about this potent form of modern tool to fight for victory in a crisis but had he known, he would surely have approved. Indeed, he would have certainly added a 14th chapter to *The Art of War* on how to use technology effectively.

I look forward to sharing his wisdom with the community face to face once again when normalcy is restored because it will continue to be relevant for humanity. ■

The author, a former instructor at the Armed Forces Engineering Institute of the People's Liberation Army of China, works at the Academy of Contemporary China. Copiedited by Sudeshna Sarkar. Comments to dingying@bjreview.com

Journey to the West

By Natasha Lock

For as long as I can remember, my dad had talked of the jewel in China's western territory, Tibet Autonomous Region.

As a student of international relations and Chinese, I have been living in China for the past three years. Tibet was a region I was desperate to see but its remoteness and my inability to find the right time to go delayed my journey. After a few e-mails back and forth with my dad, who is based in the UK, we decided to take a pause in our lives for a few weeks in July 2019 to embark on an incredible adventure. We opted for the most comprehensive tour of Tibet, given our time availability. We went to Lhasa-Gyantse-Xigaze-the Qomolangma base camp and back to Lhasa.

We started our journey on a Saturday morning at the Guangzhou train station in south China. It was a good thing we had secured a couple of soft sleeper berths as we were about to embark on a 57-hour journey through south, central and finally west China. What a journey it was! We started the first leg of the journey admiring the mysterious mountains of south China. The next day it changed quite suddenly to the dry, arid landscape of central-west China as we passed through Shaanxi and Gansu provinces. That evening we arrived at Xining, Qinghai Province, where we hopped onto the Xining-Lhasa train.

We were greeted on the train with Tibetan yogurt. The train signs were also written in Tibetan, our first glimpse into the beautiful script matching its environment and people. The following afternoon we had arrived in Lhasa. The trip certainly took a while; however, we were rewarded with the most beautiful views and made friends along the way, all at a lower cost than flying.

Lhasa, one of the highest-altitude cities in the world, is a gem hidden on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. We started our tour of Lhasa watching pilgrims circle the Potala Palace doing their morning prayers, comprehensively exploring the palace and watching local Tibetans dance in a park.

We had an incredible lunch at one of the best restaurants in Lhasa, which had a beautiful view overlooking the Jokhang Temple.



Tea time and debates in the afternoon at the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Xigaze, Tibet Autonomous Region in southwest China, in July 2019

It's a stunning golden temple in the middle of old Lhasa, which we visited next before wandering in the old quarters and Barkhor Street in the evening. You can see many pilgrims prostrating in front of the Jokhang Temple and it is the ideal place to try local cuisine and buy trinkets.

The following day, we went to the Drepung Monastery in the hills surrounding Lhasa and in the afternoon headed to the Sera Monastery. This was a real highlight of the trip, the 3-p.m. monks' debate. All the monks gather in one of the courtyards to debate Tibetan works and Buddhist philosophy. It is a fascinating insight into monastic life and a memorable experience.

We started our journey to the Qomolangma base camp by road from Lhasa. Along the way we stopped to admire the beautiful Yamdrok Lake, a huge freshwater lake that is one of the three largest sacred lakes in Tibet. Yaks in blankets and bells at the lake made for a picturesque snapshot of quintessential countryside Tibet.

About a week later, the highlight came the afternoon we arrived at the Qomolangma base camp. We were staying in a guesthouse just next to the base camp and after dropping off our rucksacks, headed straight outside to see the magnificent Mt Qomolangma. There it was! The tip of the mountain peeking through the clouds, astonishing us with its unbelievable height. The clouds parted and we watched the sunset over the peak.

Afterward, we went to an evening tea ceremony at the Rongbuk Monastery, the highest monastery in the world. We were invited inside by the monks and nuns to their evening chanting ceremony, which was an incredibly special and memorable experience. ■

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Planting The Seeds



Winning the battle against poverty in 2020