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New coronavirus cases fall in China, but WHO concerned by global spread



Inside C2

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Factbox: Latest on coronavirus spreading in China and beyond



A man wearing face mask jogs near the National Centre for the Performing Arts, following an outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the country, in Beijing, China February 22, 2020. REUTERS/Stringer NO RESALES. NO ARCHIVES.

(Reuters) - China reported a sharp decrease in new deaths and cases of the coronavirus on Saturday but a doubling of infections in South Korea and 10 new cases in Iran added to unease about its rapid spread and global reach.

** China has reported a total of 75,569 cases of the disease caused by the virus, known as COVID-19, including 2,239 deaths.

** Mainland China had 397 new confirmed cases on Friday, down from 889 a day earlier, but only 31 cases were outside of the virus epicenter of Hubei province, the lowest number since the National Health Commission started compiling nationwide data a month ago.

** The World Health Organization (WHO) is concerned about the number of cases with no clear epidemiological link, although the total number of cases outside China remains relatively small, its director general said on Saturday.

** Outside China, there have been more than 1,200 cases in 26 countries, the WHO said. That includes one confirmed case on the African continent, in Egypt.

** South Korea said on Saturday its number of new cases had doubled to 433, and suggested the tally could rise as more than 1,000 people who attended a church at the center of the outbreak reported flu-like symptoms. Two people have died in the current outbreak.

** Ten new cases have been detected in Iran, one of whom has died, the health ministry said on Saturday. This brings the total number of cases in the country to 28, with five people having died.

** Two people have died in Italy and another 51 have been infected as an outbreak spreads in the country's industrial north, forcing authorities to ban public events and companies to tell workers in affected areas to stay at home.

** China's Gansu province has lowered its emergency response measures, its health commission said on Friday, the first in the country to do so.

** In Hong Kong, citizens have set up a surgical face mask factory to ease supplies and deter price gouging.

** The International Monetary Fund predicted on Saturday the outbreak would lower China's growth this year to 5.6% and shave 0.1 percentage points from global growth.

** Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said on Saturday the yen's recent declines were largely driven by a strong dollar, shrugging off some market views that the virus epidemic is triggering an outflow of funds from Asia.

** Japan's factory activity suffered its steepest contraction in seven years in February, reinforcing the risk of a recession in the world's third-largest economy.

** Japanese automakers on Friday delayed the restart of plants near the outbreak's epicenter in China, raising the risk of fur-

ther supply disruptions.

** Two elderly passengers from aboard a cruise ship moored near Tokyo died, as hundreds more disembarked after two weeks in quarantine.

** Some 30 British passengers arrived back home on Saturday after spending more than two weeks stuck on a quarantined cruise ship in a Japanese port.

** Two Australians evacuated from the cruise ship have tested positive after returning to their home country, whose prime minister plans to extend a ban on arrivals from mainland China into a fourth week.

** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control issued a low-level travel advisory for Japan.

** Tokyo Metropolitan Government said it would either cancel or postpone major indoor events it has sponsored for the next three weeks.

** China's banking sector may face a surge of non-performing loans in 2020 if the virus doesn't peak until April.

** Hubei has established a 50 billion yuan (\$7.1 billion) special financing vehicle to help the local economy.

** Beijing's containment measures look set to delay the rollout of 5G as tenders for six big projects have been postponed since Jan.31.



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New coronavirus cases fall in China, but WHO concerned by global spread

BEIJING (Reuters) - China reported a sharp fall in new deaths and cases of the coronavirus on Saturday, but world health officials warned it was too early to make predictions about the outbreak as new infections continued to rise in other countries.

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The World Health Organization welcomed the reported decline in new Chinese cases, but said it was concerned about the number of new infections elsewhere with no clear link to China such as travel history or contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, as the disease caused by the virus is known.

"Our biggest concern continues to be the potential for COVID-19 to spread in countries with weaker health systems," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

The U.N. agency is calling for \$675 million to support most vulnerable countries, he said, adding 13 countries in Africa are seen as a priority because of their links to China.

In total, China has reported 75,569 cases to the WHO,



People wearing face masks play table tennis at a park, following an outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the country, in Beijing, China February 21, 2020. REUTERS/Stringer

and 2,239 deaths, Tedros said. According to available data, the disease remains mild in 80% of patients, and severe or critical in 20%. The virus has been fatal in 2% of reported cases.

The disease has spread to some 26 countries and territories outside mainland China, killing more than a dozen people, according to a Reuters tally.

'BLUE WHALE' ARRIVES

The latest Chinese figures showed only 31 of the new cases on Friday were outside of the virus epicenter of Hubei province, the lowest number since the National Health Commission started compiling nationwide data a month ago.

People wearing face masks play table tennis at a park, following an outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the country, in Beijing, China February

21, 2020. REUTERS/Stringer But new, albeit isolated findings about the coronavirus could complicate efforts to thwart it, including the Hubei government's announcement on Saturday that an elderly man took 27 days to show symptoms after infection, almost twice the presumed 14-day incubation period.

休斯頓企業界人士舉辦招待酒會 支持州長阿博特領導德克薩斯州

【美南新聞記者泉深報導】2月19日晚上，大休斯頓地區企業家 LAYNE & JONATHAN FRELS, DARIN HALL, MARIE LOUISE & DAVID KINDER, KAREN & RAMON MANNING, MACY & HON. MAYES, MIDDLETON STEPHANIE, STEVEN MITZNER, ANAT & JAY ZEIDMAN, TRICIA & LEE ZEIBEN, ALLEN LEE 醫學博士等在休斯頓市中心 萬豪酒店 (Marriott Marquis Houston) 舉行招待酒會，支持州長格雷格·阿博特領導德克薩斯州，贊揚他從2015年1月上任川長至今，為德克薩斯州做出了傑出貢獻，將原來的經濟增長全美排名第二變成了全美排名第一。休斯頓金融界、企業界、商業界近兩百人出席。

德州是美國本土最大的州，在美國經濟中占重要地位，近年被譽為美經濟復蘇的“領頭羊”。德州經濟總量僅次於加州，在美國排名第二，經濟總量相當於整個加拿大經濟總量。在能源、石化、農業、電子、航天、生物醫藥等產業均較發達。《財富》500強企業中有57家在德州落戶。在過去的60年裏，德州是整個美國人口增長最快的州之一，從1950年至今，人口從780萬人增長到2900萬人。1995年，德州的人口超過了紐約州，僅次於加州的3950萬人，成為美國人口第2大州。

德克薩斯州州長阿博特表示，德州

是全球第十大經濟體，是美國經濟增長最快的州，德克薩斯州經濟增長再次排名全美第一，經濟總量已經超過俄羅斯。英國脫歐後貿易部長和他通了電話，他看到了德克薩斯州“巨大的機會”。德州與英國每年的貿易額達140億美元。德州憑借對項目的新投入大筆資金贏得了最高榮譽，這些項目在全州各不同的增長部門中創造了數千個新的就業機會。德克薩斯州連續第四年成為 Business Facilities Magazine 年度最佳州。

他談到德克薩斯州的全美高中畢業率排名全國第四，德州將繼續努力，爭取創造全國排名第一的位置。德州的高等教育非常發達，有著名的大學如萊斯大學、德州大學奧斯汀分校、德州農工大學、休斯頓大學等。他熱烈祝賀德州大學在新冠病毒疫苗研究方面取得重大突破。祝賀休斯頓大學的新醫學院剛剛成立，這一里程碑式的成就對休斯頓大學、休斯頓和德克薩斯州都是有益的，使休斯頓大學的聲望會繼續提升。他說要招募和保留最優秀的教師來教育下一代德州人，並保證學校財務改革計劃將使教師的薪水達到六位數。

他提到德克薩斯州以創紀錄的速度增加了醫生數量，醫生與病人的比例達到十年來的最高水平。他尤其提到休斯頓的德州醫學中心是世界最大的醫學中心，擁有MD安德森癌症中心這種世界

頂級癌症研究和治療機構。州政府每年的醫療投資達60多億美元，這意味著德州人可以獲得更好的醫療保健。他還簽署了一項法律，允許鄉村醫院使用遠程醫療服務讓大醫院的醫生待命。

他談到德州也有很多無家可歸的人群，現在該州為無家可歸的人士提供露營地點，德州拒絕無家可歸的人露宿。他們為現場的無家可歸者制定了規則，無家可歸者不能危及到居民和遊客的安全。他也提到一位無家可歸的女士，生活極其艱難，經過他的輔助和指導，發奮學習，廣交人脈，現在在一家公司任重要職位，年薪已經高過州長。

他指出公共安全必須是政府的頭等大事，將在德克薩斯州恢復法治。這就是為什麼他呼籲在德克薩斯州建立更多的反幫派中心，嚴厲打擊危險的幫派團夥。他正在推進真正的保釋金改革，以將危險的罪犯拒之門外。他說無論在任何情況下，他都致力於確保司法公正，並會及時通知德州居民最新情況。他也要求德克薩斯州的陪審團履行公民職責。

他最後提到德克薩斯熱愛我們的退伍軍人，我們為他們將德克薩斯州稱為家而感到自豪。德克薩斯州的六個城市入圍了2020年退伍軍人生活最廉價的十大城市之列。



Editor's Choice



Shared bicycles and barricades block the way in Wuhan, the epicentre of the novel coronavirus outbreak, Hubei province, China February 22, 2020. REUTERS/Stringer CHINA OUT.



People wearing face masks walk near the National Centre for the Performing Arts, following an outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the country, in Beijing



A boarded-up entrance to a residential compound is seen in Wuhan, the epicentre of the novel coronavirus outbreak, Hubei province, China February 22, 2020. REUTERS/Stringer CHINA OUT.



Men wearing face masks sit by the road, following an outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the country, in Beijing's central business district



A woman wearing a face mask leaves the hospital of Codogno amid a coronavirus outbreak in northern Italy, in Codogno, Italy, February 22, 2020. REUTERS/Flavio Lo Scalzo



Codogno's train station, which was closed by authorities blocking public transport due to a coronavirus outbreak, is seen empty in Codogno, Italy, February 22, 2020. REUTERS/Flavio Lo Scalzo

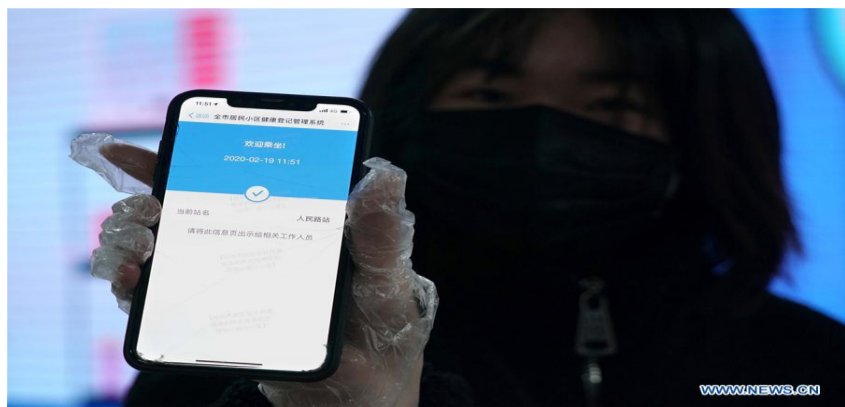


Passengers who have been under quarantine on a coronavirus-stricken cruise ship off the coast of Japan, leave RAF Boscombe Down in Amesbury



Passengers who have been under quarantine on a coronavirus-stricken cruise ship off the coast of Japan, arrive at RAF Boscombe Down in Amesbury

Chinese Tech Firms Join The Battle Against Coronavirus Epidemic



Zhengzhou City has launched a QR code system connected with health condition registration system. A resident shows the information displayed on his cell phone after scanning a QR code at an entrance to a subway station in Zhengzhou, central China's Henan Province.

Overview

Chinese tech firms have brought their newest medical products and services to aid the fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic and many internet firms have seen strong business growth during the period.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

SHENYANG, Feb. 20 (Xinhua) -- The novel coronavirus epidemic may have temporarily affected economic activities across China. However, many tech companies and internet firms are playing their parts in the fight against the epidemic and contributing to the growth of the country's economy.

a type of remote CT equipment in just seven days.



Photo above shows the remote CT equipment developed by Neusoft Medical Systems Co., Ltd. in Shenyang, northeast China's Liaoning Province.

"The equipment can quickly diagnose using AI computing and reduce contact between medical workers and patients," said Liu Jiren, chairman of Neusoft. Robots are also joining the fight to reduce cross-infection risks and improve efficiency.



Engineers adjust a medical delivery robot developed by robot manufacturer SIASUN Robot & Automation Co., Ltd. in Shenyang, northeast China's Liaoning Province, Feb. 3, 2020.

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

FRESH FOOD E-COMMERCE

E-commerce platforms, particularly online fresh food retailers, reported marked business growth as people are asked to stay at home to avoid potential infection when shopping at crowded brick-and-mortar stores.

To cope with business growth and labor shortages, tech giant Alibaba's Freshhema, a fresh food retailer that offers delivery service, came up with the idea

of "sharing employees" with restaurants and ride-sharing firms hard hit by the coronavirus outbreak.



Wei Yin (R) and her colleague, both of whom working as shared staff, discuss at a Hema store in Beijing, capital of China, Feb. 14, 2020. Some local catering enterprises, which have suspended their business temporarily, reached the deal of "staff-sharing" with Hema.

Fresh food online platforms are also helping fruit and vegetable growers in the remote countryside whose sales were stalled by the epidemic.

"Our strawberries now sell well on these platforms and we no longer have to worry about the sales," said Ma Yandong, head of the local strawberry-growing association in the city of Donggang in the northeastern province of Liaoning.

CLOUD

Cloud-related services, from cloud education to remote medical consultation and cloud working, also saw rapid growth amid the epidemic.

School openings after the Chinese Lunar New Year holiday were postponed due to the epidemic, but online class services are helping minimize the impact. On the first day of the spring semester on Feb. 10, a large number of primary and middle school students across the country took online lessons at home.

cross-infections and ease pressure on hospitals. (Courtesy xinhuanet.com)



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BEIJING, Feb. 20 (Xinhua) -- China's daily number of newly cured and discharged novel coronavirus patients has surpassed that of new confirmed infections for a second consecutive day, according to the National Health Commission Thursday.

Wednesday saw 1,779 people walk out of hospital after recovery, much higher than the number of the same day's new confirmed infections, which was 394, showed figures from the commission.

A total of 16,155 patients infected with the novel coronavirus had been discharged from hospital after recovery by the end of Wednesday, according to the commission.



Wednesday's number of new infections reported from China's 31 provincial-level regions and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps was 394, sharply down from 1,749 on Tuesday.



The daily number of new cases has fallen for three consecutive days since Monday when it dropped to 1,886, for the first time under 2,000 since Jan. 31.

Hubei, the epicenter province of the outbreak, reported 349 new cases on Wednesday, sharply down from 1,693 of

Update: China's Newly Recovered Coronavirus Patients Continue To Outnumber New Infections



The recovered patients with severe novel coronavirus pneumonia (NCP) pose for photos with medical staff at the west campus of Wuhan Union Hospital in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, Feb. 19, 2020. (Xinhua/Cai Yang)

OVERVIEW

China's newly cured coronavirus patients continued to outnumber new infections for a second consecutive day. Hubei, the epicenter province of the outbreak, reported 349 new cases on Wednesday, sharply down from 1,693 of a day earlier.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

a day earlier.

China's daily number of new infections outside Hubei has dropped for 16 consecutive days. A total of 45 new confirmed cases were reported outside Hubei Wednesday, down from 890 on Feb. 3, according to the commission.

Related Chinese authorities stress protecting, caring for medical workers



Medical workers check patients' information at Jiangxia temporary hospital that mainly adopt Traditional Chinese medicines (TCM) to treat the

patients in Wuhan, capital city of central China's Hubei Province, Feb. 14, 2020. (Xinhua/Cheng Min)

BEIJING, Feb. 20 (Xinhua) -- Chinese authorities Thursday stressed better protecting and caring for medical workers and prompt use of effective drugs to cure patients infected with the novel coronavirus.

Measures that can improve the working conditions of medical workers and ensure their physical and psychological health should be well implemented, according to a high-level meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee.

The meeting of the leading group of the CPC Central Committee on the prevention and control of the novel coronavirus outbreak, which is headed by Li, also demanded efforts to ensure the supply

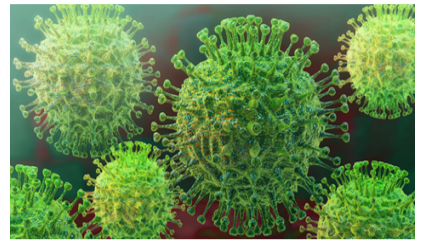
of protective gear for frontline medical workers and better benefits such as allowances for them.



The meeting stressed putting effective drugs into wider clinical use to improve treatments and rolling out measures to encourage recovered patients to donate their plasma.

The coordination between epidemic control and economic and social development should be strengthened, with more targeted and precise prevention measures taken to facilitate the resumption of busi-

ness operation, according to the meeting. The meeting also asked the joint prevention and control mechanism of the State Council to better work with Hubei Province and the city of Wuhan, which are at the center of the outbreak, to ensure the supply of life necessities for the residents.



Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and deputy head of the leading group, attended the meeting. (Courtesy http://www.xinhuanet.com/english)



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