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6 February

Dear All

Please find below the update 6 from HOPE.

News from HOPE

Another online seminar organized by HOPE about visa advice and actions needed for boarding school students during forthcoming half term and Easter was held yesterday attracting over 150 audience. The next online seminar is scheduled tomorrow night joined by international office staff from University of York, Loughborough University, and a current Chinese student from University of Exeter.

More seminars are planned next week. Any institution interested in join our online seminar, please contact Alice Zhang, Manager of International Partnership, at a.zhang@hope-studyabroad.com.

News on media

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Kind regards

Daniel

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Latest developments in epidemic control on Feb 6

Updated: Feb 06,2020 11:24 AM Xinhua



BEIJING — China has stepped up efforts to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Here are the latest developments:

- The registration for clinical trials on the antiviral drug Remdesivir has been approved, and the first batch of pneumonia patients infected by the novel coronavirus are expected to start taking the drug on Feb 6.
- The first makeshift hospital converted from an exhibition center in epidemic-hit Wuhan, capital of Central China's Hubei province, began accepting patients on Feb 5.
- Wuhan had set up 132 quarantine sites by Feb 4, providing over 12,500 beds to cope with the surging number of patients confirmed or suspected to be infected with the novel coronavirus.
- Kunming Dounan Flower Market, the largest fresh cut flower trading market in Asia, suspended service from Feb 6 amid epidemic outbreak.
- Chinese health authorities said on Feb 6 it received reports of 3,694 new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection and 73 deaths on Feb 5 from 31 provincial-level regions and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.



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New suspected infections decrease for second day

By Wang Xiaoyu and Zhang Zhihao | China Daily | Updated: 2020-02-06 03:09 [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [+](#)



Lab technicians analyze novel coronavirus test kit samples to identify new cases at a disease prevention and control center in Nanyang, Henan province, on Tuesday. HAO YUAN / XINHUA

The number of new suspected cases in China of the novel coronavirus has dropped for two consecutive days, and fell to under 4,000 on Tuesday, new figures show.

Increased testing that either cleared suspected people of contracting the virus or confirmed diagnoses has resulted in the slower growth rate, health experts said.

However, two newborns, one just 30-hours-old, were confirmed to have the virus on Wednesday in Wuhan, Hubei province — the epicenter of the outbreak — suggesting possible mother-to-fetus infections.

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The National Health Commission reported 3,971 new suspected cases on the Chinese mainland on Tuesday, compared with 5,072 on Monday and 5,173 on Sunday. The total number of suspected cases across the country stood at 23,260 as of the end of Tuesday.

Hubei, which is receiving assistance from other regions, saw the number of new suspected cases also decrease by 1,225 on Tuesday, the commission said.

"Improved testing capability has allowed infected patients to receive better and more timely treatment, and people who are ruled out are able to return to normal lives," Song Shuli, the commission's spokeswoman, said on Wednesday.

"Such an encouraging sign has been observed in Hubei as well as the entire country," Song added.

She was speaking at a news conference held by the Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism of the State Council, an intergovernmental system that consolidates disease prevention efforts from different government bodies.

Li Xingwang, head of Beijing Ditan Hospital's infectious disease center, said the number of confirmed cases has also expanded as people suspected of having the virus can now access test kits more quickly.

"Testing for the virus in Hubei has accelerated rapidly," he said. "The numbers compute — the reduction in suspected cases is accompanied by an increase in confirmed cases as well as those in severe condition."

The number of confirmed cases on the Chinese mainland rose by 3,887 on Tuesday to 24,324, according to the National Health Commission. The mainland death toll went up by 65 to 490 as of late Tuesday night.

Although concerted nationwide efforts have appeared to ease the crisis in Hubei, it is still premature to predict the outbreak's future development, experts have said.

The two confirmed infections of newborns at Wuhan Children's Hospital has caused experts to worry about the possibility of mother-to-fetus infection. Both babies are in stable condition, the hospital said.

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Wang Chen, president of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, told Xinhua News Agency on Tuesday that the spread of the novel coronavirus is still severe and unclear, and "should never be underestimated".

"We don't have evidence to predict when the epidemic will reach its peak or turning point. The most urgent task at hand is to halt the disease's spread and to swiftly identify and gather mild cases into designated quarantine facilities to prevent wider transmission," Wang said.

Wuhan, Hubei's provincial capital, is under intense pressure to handle a ballooning number of patients. The city has been working around the clock to set up 11 temporary hospitals by refitting warehouses, convention centers, gymnasiums and schools.

These temporary institutions can together provide more than 10,000 hospital beds for patients with mild symptoms, Xinhua said.

Wang Ying, a supervisor of a temporary hospital set up in a gymnasium, told Beijing News that they have divided the facility into grids and passages and require the beds to be situated 1.1 meters apart in an attempt to reduce the risk of cross-infection. "But the risk is very low, as all patients admitted into these hospitals are mild infection cases," Wang said.

The National Health Commission has released an updated version of diagnosis and treatment guidelines on Wednesday, highlighting more rigorous screening and quarantine measures to control spread of the contagion.

Contact the writers at wangxiaoyu@chinadaily.com.cn



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Zhong Nanshan amends prediction for coronavirus peak

By Zhang Zhihao | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2020-02-02 22:33 [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [+](#)



Chinese renowned respiratory scientist Zhong Nanshan receives an interview with Xinhua in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong province, Jan 28, 2020.

[Photo/Xinhua]

The novel coronavirus outbreak may reach its peak in the next 10 to 14 days, Zhong Nanshan, a leading expert tackling the virus, said on Sunday, amending his previous prediction on Jan 28 that the epidemic would peak in seven or 10 days.

Zhong, also an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, said current research has shown the virus originated from bats, but whether there are more intermediate carriers between bats and humans requires further investigation.

Although there is no effective cure yet, there are at least seven drugs targeting the virus' genetic material going through various stages of clinical trials, he told Xinhua News Agency. A vaccine is also in the works, though it requires more time to reach clinical application.

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"We have learned from the successful therapy of SARS and established a set of effective treatment plans," he said. "And with the help of various life-support measures we have ensured the recovery success rate of patients."

Based on available information, the medium age of the infected patient is around 59, and 56 percent of all patients are male, he said. The average incubation period of the virus is around five days, with fever being the most common symptom of the virus.

There have been a few reported cases of infected patients that showed no obvious symptoms, but they are in the minority and the bulk of preventive efforts should focus on the majority of patients, he said.

Zhong stressed the most effective preventive measures are still early detection and quarantine. "The epidemic is still at its growing phase, but we believe it won't lead to a massive nationwide pandemic, only regional ones if they occur."

Prolonging the Spring Festival holidays, controlling traffic, temperature checks and education as well as other government measures have effectively cut off the source of infection and greatly reduced the spread of the virus, he said.

"We believe the epidemic will peak in the next 10 to 14 days, but we still need to enhance preventive measures and not lower our guard," he said, adding there are many challenges in the current effort.

The first is that the outbreak occurs in concentrated areas, stretching local medical resources thin. This situation may improve in the near future, as Wuhan is building two dedicated hospitals and medical personnel and equipment are pouring in from around the country.

The second issue is how to differentiate between patients with the common flu and those infected with coronavirus, which can be a tricky task since both illnesses share symptoms. Local hospitals should improve their diagnostic capabilities to relieve some of the workload from hospitals designated to treat the virus, he said.

The third issue is how to optimize management and resource allocation to better protect hospitals and medical staff working on the frontline from infections.

Zhong said scientists still know relatively little about the novel coronavirus, and he urged them to speed up their research to help tackle the epidemic.

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"The SARS epidemic 17 years ago lasted nearly six months, since then we have made considerable progress in preventing and controlling major infectious diseases, so we have the confidence to effectively curb today's outbreak."

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