



CHINA DAILY

GLOBAL EDITION 中國日報 FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2020

China expected to maintain strong growth

Economy will ride out coronavirus pressure, experts say as business activities resume

By ZHOU LANXU
zhoulanxu@chinadaily.com.cn

The Chinese economy is expected to ride out the pressure brought by the novel coronavirus outbreak and maintain strong economic growth by global standards this year, economists said on Thursday.

They commented after economic activities began to regain vitality despite the ongoing epidemic, with normal production gradually resuming and market expectations brightening.

China's A-share market rebounded for the third trading session in a row on Thursday, with the key Shanghai Composite Index rising 1.72 percent to close at 2,866.51. The market tumbled on Monday as investors factored in concerns over the spreading epidemic.

Li Daxiao, chief economist at Shenzhen-based Yingda Securities, said the stock market has stabilized on the financial authorities' supportive measures and is set to continue the recovery.

"The improved market confidence will constitute a boon for the real economy to sail through any difficulties caused by the epidemic," Li said, adding that the

economy will gradually return to the normal track as businesses gradually reopen nationwide.

On Thursday, the General Office of the Ministry of Commerce released a notice that pledged to support nationwide commercial enterprises, such as wholesale markets, supermarkets and convenience stores, to resume business as soon as possible and fully meet residents' needs for necessities.

"Putting control measures against the epidemic into place is crucial to reopening commercial businesses," the notice said, directing commerce authorities at different levels to guide enterprises' work in epidemic control and prevention.

This followed stepped-up efforts of provinces and cities to organize work resumption after the Lunar New Year holiday was extended due to the epidemic.

East China's Shandong province announced on Tuesday that full production will be resumed by the end of February, while North China's Shanxi province encouraged State-owned enterprises to first resume operations and make flexible and remote work arrangements

See **Growth**, page 3

Patients treated on front line



Patients infected with the novel coronavirus (above) begin arriving for treatment at the 1,600-bed hospital set up at the Wuhan International Conference and Exhibition Center in Wuhan, Hubei province, on Wednesday, while medical workers (left) help patients check in at the temporary hospital.

YUAN ZHENG / FOR CHINA DAILY; XIONG QI / XINHUA

See story page 3

WORLD WATCH

By Bernardo Mariano Jr and Sheng Wu

Prominent role for AI emerges in virus fight

China is implementing its response to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus. It was fast in identifying the virus and has been open in sharing information.

After the severe acute respiratory syndrome epidemic of 2003, China developed strong public health capacities and resources to manage respiratory disease outbreaks.

As a global contender in artificial intelligence, China has a new task outside of the conventional healthcare system to help combat the coronavirus: to bring the disease under control and mitigate the burden of the epidemic.

The role and potential of AI in combating the novel coronavirus emerges as prominent.

While Google, using internet searching data for H1N1, or swine flu, surveillance in 2009, marked the advent of the new era of big data, BlueDot, a Canadian health monitoring platform, used an AI-driven algorithm to send out an early warning message on Dec 31, about one week ahead of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

China has strong capacity to harness AI in the fight against the epidemic throughout its healthcare system, including health management and AI-assisted diagnosis, treatment and recovery, as well as AI medicine and AI-assisted hospital management.

China's good practices — for example, anti-epidemic robots, fast body temperature testing solutions and big data analytics for decision-making — set good examples for other countries.

Groundbreaking innovation has been achieved from two perspectives: methodology and application. And continuous efforts will make a difference in fighting the coronavirus.

From the perspective of methodology, algorithm optimization and computing power have accelerated viral gene sequencing, as well as vaccine and medicine development.

Continuous emphasis on optimizing algorithms will provide

See **AI**, page 3

Hotel embraces stranded Hubei visitors

ABOVE & BEYOND

Editor's note: This series tells the stories of selfless individuals, from medical workers to volunteers, who are bravely fighting the virus outbreak with extraordinary dedication.

By YANG JUN in Guiyang and ZHANG XIAOMIN in Dalian

Hotelier Liu Yongjun has been very busy these days, with nearly 100 tourists from Central China's Hubei province quarantined at his hotel in Guiyang, the capital of Southwest China's Guizhou province.

"We're willing to stand with Hubei people in this hard time," said Liu, general manager of Junyue International Hotel in Guiyang's Guanshanhu district. "We gave our staff special training to keep safe while providing warm service."

Since the lockdown on Jan 23 of Wuhan, the city in Hubei that is the epicenter of the novel coronavirus outbreak, many people from Hubei have been stranded in other provinces including Guizhou, which activated a Level 1 public health alert on Jan 24.

Guizhou has designated a number of hotels to provide centralized

accommodations for tourists from Hubei in a bid to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

By Jan 29, there were 112 designated hotels in Guizhou, including 12 in Guiyang. So far the temperatures of all 188 tourists from Hubei in Guiyang have been normal.

Junyue was the first hotel to be designated. Since Jan 27, it has accommodated 95 tourists from Hubei, mostly from Wuhan.

Every day, medical personnel monitor their temperatures and disinfect their rooms. Staff members are on duty 24 hours a day and can help the guests to buy necessities and solve other problems.

They pay just 180 yuan (\$26) for a room and 40 yuan for daily meals — compared with the usual prices of 480 yuan and 100 yuan, respectively — and the government provides 50 yuan per person per day.

"Here we isolate the virus but not love," said Lu Yongzheng, a member of the standing committee of the Guizhou Provincial Party Committee and head of the province's publicity department, while visiting the isolated guests at Junyue hotel on Jan 30.

"The people of Guizhou will stand together with the people of Hubei to tide over difficulties, and we will

jointly win the fight against the epidemic," said Lu.

Some local residents and enterprises have donated fruit, snacks and other supplies to the designated hotels. They leave messages for the Hubei tourists that include "Stay strong, Wuhan!" and other encouraging words.

In turn, the Hubei tourists frequently express the sentiment that "a friend in need is a friend indeed."

One guest, Geng Hanhua, told her friends in a 500-member WeChat group for travel enthusiasts: "Don't worry about us. We're well looked after here in the hotel in Guiyang."

Geng, 63, and seven other members left Wuhan on Jan 21 to celebrate the Spring Festival holiday in Guizhou. On Jan 24, they were stopped at the train station and persuaded to be quarantined.

"There were concerns about the outbreak, but we didn't expect it to be so serious," Geng said.

Tian Peihua, 57, said: "While we're here, my family members were worried that local people might be prejudiced against us. But I never felt that. They are warm-hearted."

Before the outbreak, Tian had hoped to appreciate the spectacular scenery of the Huangguoshu Waterfalls and Xijiang Qianhu Miao Village, a community of the Miao ethnic group.

She said it was "a pity" she was unable to take in the sights, but added, "I hope we win the battle against the virus as soon as possible, and I will surely come back again to enjoy all the beautiful scenery and delicious food."

She added, "We also welcome the people who have given us help to visit us in Hubei."

Dong Xianwu and Media center of Guanshanhu district in Guiyang contributed to this story.

Contact the writers at yangjun@chinadaily.com.cn

Analysts say tariff moves on US goods reciprocal

By CHEN JIA and JING SHUIYU

China said on Thursday that tariffs on imports of certain US products will be halved, starting on Feb 14 — a move made amid the novel coronavirus outbreak and following the United States' recent decisions on tariff reductions.

Analysts said the tariff reductions enacted by the world's two largest economies are reciprocal and contribute to the continuity of their sound trade and economic relations after the signing of their phase-one trade and economic deal in mid-January.

US products subject to the tariff reduction are among the \$75 billion worth of products on which China decided to impose tariffs in late August. Those tariffs took effect on Sept 1.

The Customs Tariff Commission of the State Council said on Thursday that for some US goods with 10 percent tariffs that had been in place since Sept 1, the rate was decreased to 5 percent, and for those with 5 percent tariffs, the rate was adjusted to 2.5 percent.

The tariff reductions correspond with the decision announced by the US to cut tariffs on \$120 billion worth of Chinese goods in half beginning on Feb 14.

The commission said subsequent adjustments depend on changes in the Sino-US economic and trade situation, and China hopes to work with the US to eliminate all extra tariffs.

Lu Ting, chief economist in China with Nomura Securities, said it

is "a reciprocal and reasonable move from China in response to the US reduction".

Based on Chinese customs data, Lu estimated that \$24 billion worth of US products will face a lower additional tariff of 2.5 percent from 5 percent, while about \$5 billion worth of US products will face a lower additional tariff of 5 percent, down from 10 percent.

On Tuesday, Larry Kudlow, White House economic adviser, said China's import target promised in the phase-one trade deal will take longer to reach, since China will first have to recover from the economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak.

Wei Jianguo, a former vice-minister of commerce, said that due to the epidemic, China is likely to ask the US to accept delays in promised purchases of US goods under the phase-one deal.

Xu Qiyuan, head of the Research Department of China Finance 40 Forum and a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of World Economics and Politics, told China Daily the tariff rate cuts this time will influence imports of agricultural, energy, chemical and plastic products from the US.

"The adjustments, which are reciprocal, reflected China's sincerity and wish to jointly promote the final elimination of all tariffs imposed by both sides," said Xu.

The coronavirus outbreak will constrain China's imports from the US due to economic contraction, including energy, industrial machinery and electrical equipment, in the short term. The US has restricted flights and travel to and from China, which will also reduce China's imports from the US, Xu added.

The two sides could implement the trade agreement on medical supplies and other related imports as a priority, to promote technical cooperation and personnel exchanges, Xu said.

Contact the writers at chenjia@chinadaily.com.cn



Guests Tian Peihua (left) and Geng Hanhua (center) speak with a local reporter at Junyue International Hotel in Guiyang, Guizhou province, on Jan 30. DENG GANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

INSIDE
Unlocking the potential of the next decade
Global Views, page 13

www.chinadailyglobal.com
A member of ANN
© 2020 China Daily Global All Rights Reserved Vol.2—No. 271

Newsstand prices:
US \$1 Canada C\$1
UK £1 EU € Kenya 50
Kenya Shilling Asia Pacific:
Thailand 120 THB
Philippines 120 PHP Myanmar 2000 Kyat Japan 210 Yen Dubai 10 Dirham Pakistan 300 Rupee