

CHINA

Measures taken to reduce cases from inbound flights

By WANG KEJU
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China's civil aviation authority is stepping up measures to prevent novel coronavirus cases from being imported from other virus-hit nations via international flights, as the outbreak slows within the country but picks up speed across the world.

The Civil Aviation Administration of China will work with the departments of foreign affairs, customs, public security, health and immigration, as well as the Beijing municipal government to strengthen the management of international flights, Zhu Tao, chief of the CAAC's flight standard department, said on Thursday.

Airlines are urged to enhance disinfection and ventilation to ensure safe travel for passengers, he said.

The CAAC requires carriers to take the temperature of each passenger and set up an emergency quarantine zone onboard. Wearing face masks is also a must, Zhu said.

Airlines should minimize cabin service and ramp up protection

efforts for all crew members during high-risk flights. They should immediately take isolation, ventilation and sterilization measures when suspected cases are found on planes and inform the destination airport, he added.

In the face of challenges from imported cases, the Beijing Capital International Airport has designated Zone D of Terminal 3 as a special zone for inbound flights from countries with serious coronavirus situations, according to Zhu.

All passengers disembarking from such flights need to complete a monitoring process, including body temperature screening and information inspection within the area, he said.

Zhu also noted that the CAAC has provided guidelines for epidemic prevention and control to aviation authorities and airlines in South Korea, Japan, Iran and other countries for their reference.

Moreover, discussions with the International Civil Aviation Organization to push forward unified technical standards for epidemic prevention have begun, he added.

Help on the way



Ruijin Hospital staff check medical aid equipment that will be sent to Italy on a truck in Shanghai on Thursday. China's Red Cross Society has mobilized domestic medical resources that are most useful to save the critical cases of the novel coronavirus and will send them to help fight the growing outbreak in Italy.

ZHOU BANGYAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Like heroic brother, nurse steps up in time of need

By CAO DESHENG in Wuhan
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"Nurse Du Fujia" has become a hot topic on social media platform Weibo amid the nation's fight against the novel coronavirus outbreak.

The post about her has received around 550 million page views and more than 100,000 comments.

Du, 27, a nurse from Meitan County People's Hospital in Guizhou province, aroused people's attention partly due to her elder brother Du Fuguo, a hero who lost his hands and eyesight when a bomb exploded during a mine-clearing operation in October 2018. He was honored as a Heroic Demining Soldier by the Central Military Commission in July.

Du is working at the Renmin Hospital of Wuhan University in Wuhan, Hubei province, the epicenter of the outbreak, as a member of the Guizhou medical team helping Wuhan fight the virus.

"Just as minefields were my brother's battlefield, the hospital is mine amid the fight against the novel coronavirus outbreak," she said. "It is a medic's duty to treat patients. I'm here just to answer the call of duty."

As the disease spread from Wuhan to other areas across China at the end of January, Du volunteered to work at the fever clinic of her hospital in Meitan county, which is among the 183 facilities designated to treat



Du Fujia

outbreak.

When the hospital called on its employees to join the province's medical team to help Wuhan, Du volunteered her services.

She said her decision was supported by her elder brother Du Fuguo. "He is worried about my safety, but he said I'm doing the right thing," Du said.

She arrived in Wuhan on Feb 21 with her colleagues and was sent to the intensive care unit of Renmin Hospital of Wuhan University.

Du said that there is a lot for her to learn here as she has only been working for five years as a nurse for the emergency department, but she has the confidence to take care of her patients while protecting herself.

"Though I have a different position from my elder brother, we both believe in loving our country," she said.

A netizen named Super Lingongzi commented that "they are ordinary brother and sister, but they did something extraordinary."

pneumonia patients in Guizhou.

She is among the first batch of medical staff at the hospital involved in combating the growing coronavirus



A bus carrying travelers who arrived on international flights leaves China International Exhibition Center in Shunyi district in Beijing on Thursday. ZOU HONG / CHINA DAILY

Beijing strengthens rules on quarantine

All overseas visitors are required to be isolated for 14 days, submit to virus test

By XIN WEN
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The capital city is tightening up screening and monitoring to prevent infections from imported cases with the implementation of a new quarantine measure on Wednesday requiring all people arriving in the city from overseas to isolate themselves at home or designated places for 14 days.

For concentrated medical observation sites holding foreign visitors, stricter management should be adopted, according to a notice from the Beijing virus prevention leading group.

In addition, reported imported cases have to be traced to their travel routes and close contacts.

Those who arrive in Beijing from overseas have to quarantine themselves either in their homes or in designated hotels and submit to nucleic acid tests for the virus, a senior city government official said on Wednesday.

Some outbound passengers who choose not to stay in the capital but transfer through Capital International Airport or Daxing International Airport in Beijing should undergo health monitoring, said Zhang Qiang, deputy director of the Organization Department of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee on Wednesday.

As of midnight Wednesday, 85 imported cases have been reported in China with six new infections announced on Wednesday, according to the National Health Commission.

Among the imported cases, 20 are from Beijing, and some that were reported outside the capital also passed through customs in Beijing airports before transferring to their final destination.

Preventive measures to combat the surging risks of imported cases have already been taken in Beijing at gateways and surrounding areas near the capital airport.

A special hub to temporarily hold returnees from hard-hit countries was set up in the China International Exhibition Center in Shunyi district.

"Those without obvious symptoms of fever or cough after health examination and inspection at the airport have to be sent to the hub for transfer," said Pang Xinghuo, deputy director of Beijing Center for Disease Control and Prevention on Thursday.

"Special work groups sent by provinces and autonomous regions across the country and all districts in the capital will pick up travelers there and take them to their residences."

Body temperature checks will be conducted twice daily for staff at an

isolated area in the hub, and results will be recorded, Pang said.

People with abnormal temperatures or unusual symptoms will be sent to designated medical centers.

The special hub, which is not being used for medical treatment purposes, is mainly for closely monitoring the health conditions of inbound travelers, said Yu Xueyin, a senior district official with the Shunyi government.

Located 8 kilometers west of the capital airport, the hub consists of two exhibition halls totaling 28,000 square meters.

The hub started operation on Tuesday afternoon and was separated into 47 transfer zones based on different regions of the country, added Yu.

Earlier this week, Beijing Capital International Airport also created a special zone in Terminal 3 to inspect and examine airlines and travelers from hard-hit countries.

"For some key airlines, two lines for infrared temperature measurements will be set up to cut off the contagion from outside the country," Gao Ruifeng, deputy director of the Beijing Customs, said on Thursday.

"Our prevention focus on the epidemic has changed from preventing infectious disease going abroad to cutting off imported cases," he said.

Earlier this month, Beijing imposed a 14-day quarantine measure for people from hard-hit countries including South Korea, Italy, Iran and Japan.



Landmark reopening

An 8-year-old child from Bozhou, Anhui province, plays in the Oriental Pearl Tower in Shanghai on Thursday. The landmark opened to the public after being closed as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. Currently, only half the normal tourist volume is allowed, and visitors' temperatures need to be checked.

GAO ERQIANG / CHINA DAILY

Regulators cracking down on price gouging related to epidemic

By WANG XIAOYU
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Market regulators in China have ramped up price monitoring of anti-epidemic equipment, such as raw materials for face masks and thermometers, and have joined with public security forces to crack down on price gouging amid the novel coronavirus epidemic, a senior official with the State Administration for Market Regulation said on Thursday.

Chen Zhijiang, with the administration's price supervision and inspection bureau, said prices of melt-blown fabrics — essential materials for making surgical masks — have risen quickly recently, largely due to surging demand and price manipulation by some businesses.

"In one case that we tracked down, the normal price of the fabric, which is sold for about 20,000 yuan (\$2,860) per metric ton, was inflated to as much as 45,000 per ton," he said at a news conference.

In another case detected in Yuncheng, Shanxi province, a medical equipment company charged 800 yuan for an infrared thermometer that was quoted at 85 yuan at the supplier, he added.

"We have launched investigations into melt-blown fabric manufacturers in eight provincial-level regions and prioritized the handling of complaints related to such products," he said.

He added that market regulators will hand down fines and penalties

in a "prompt and tough" fashion to violators, and severe violations on the level of criminal offense will be transferred to public security authorities.

Local market regulators have recently sent about 250 price-gouging cases involving thermometers to police departments, he said.

"The administration will continue to step up the supervision of anti-epidemic devices, leaving no blind spots or weak links behind," he said. "We will take a zero-tolerance

approach to price inflation to maintain regular market order."

In addition, the administration is conducting investigations into fake or substandard disinfectants and masks, according to Yang Hongcan, head of the administration's law enforcement bureau.

He said in the past month, market regulators across the country have seized about 80.6 million problematic face masks and over 370,000 pieces of other poor equipment including disinfectant liquid.

Shanghai policies aid foreign workers

By SHI JING in Shanghai
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One month after the municipal government of Shanghai introduced contactless processing for foreigners' work permits, it has updated policies to help foreign workers resume their jobs in the city.

The update, released by the Science and Technology Commission of Shanghai Municipality on Tuesday to help with epidemic control and prevention, includes eight measures covering the most frequently asked questions such as applying for foreigners' work permits in China and extensions of their visa or residence permits.

Before the new policies, the application to extend a foreigner's work permit had to be submitted 30 days before the due date.

That limit has been temporarily removed. Employers can help foreign workers apply online before the expiration date.

For high-end talent aged over 65, their employers will be exempted from attaching insurance documents or commitments, according to the updated version.

Further, the approval time for the cancellation of expats' work permits has been shortened from 10 working days to a maximum of three working days, according to the new policies.

Liu Haitao, director of the National Immigration Administration's border inspection, said at a news conference on March 1 that foreigners' residence permits can be extended for two months after expiration during the epidemic period as long as they have not left the country.

This policy will also be applicable in Shanghai.

Fabrice Megarbane, chief executive officer of L'Oréal China, said the new measures show Shanghai's strong innovation agility and determination to improve its business environment. When life and work are easier for foreign workers, they can focus more on their jobs and taking care of themselves.

"We are looking forward to the extension of these facilitative measures after the epidemic is contained," he said.

According to the contactless approval procedures announced in Shanghai in early February, employers can submit online applications for foreign work permits or related extensions.

All the revisions and approval processes can be completed online.

So far, more than 5,400 work permits or extension applications have been processed online, said Lu Min, chief engineer of Shanghai Science and Technology Commission.

Wu Qing, head of the human resources department at Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance (China), said more than 20 foreign workers extended their work permits in February, which is especially convenient to those who have not returned from Japan.

Multinational human resources companies like FESCO Adecco can help foreigners with their work permit applications or extensions. Some clients even went to their office to hand in their paper applications shortly after the Spring Festival.

Such online processing can largely reduce human contact during the epidemic, according to FESCO's chief operating officer Ken Zhou.

"It should also be noted that foreigners' applications for work permits are like a rigid demand," he said.

"Favorable policies benefit both sides: help Shanghai to attract more overseas talent and provide job opportunities to foreign talent."

More than 215,000 foreigners were working in Shanghai last year, the most of any city on the Chinese mainland.