



CHINA DAILY

GLOBAL EDITION 中國日報 MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020



Apartment residents in Turin, Italy, participate on Friday in a flash mob in which people sang from windows and balconies. The event was organized to raise morale during the nation's coronavirus crisis. MASSIMO PINCA / REUTERS

Italians 'relieved' to get supplies from China

By JONATHAN POWELL in London
jonathan@mail.chinadailyuk.com

People in Italy, where some medical supplies are running low due to the coronavirus outbreak, have expressed their appreciation for China's help after a planeload of needed supplies arrived.

Italy is now the hardest-hit nation after China, with more than 1,400 deaths from COVID-19 and over 21,000 confirmed cases since the outbreak began there on Feb 21, according to the Associated Press.

China delivered the planeload of medical supplies, including masks and respirators, to Italy to help it deal with its growing crisis.

"In this moment of great stress, of great difficulty, we are relieved to have this arrival of supplies. It is true that it will help only temporarily, but it is still important," said the head of the Italian Red Cross, Francesco Rocca.

"We have a desperate need for these masks right now. We need respirators (that will be donated to the government). This is for sure a really important donation for our country," Rocca added.

A team of nine Chinese medical workers arrived in Rome late on Thursday, along with about 30 met-

ric tons of equipment, on a flight organized by the Red Cross Society of China.

Lu Ming, a member of the team who also works with the National Health Commission's international cooperation department, said: "To bring down the mortality rate is a priority in disease control, especially given that we're coping with an emerging virus. So we have dispatched the most competent experts in treating severe and critical cases to Italy."

"We're willing to share hard-won diagnosis and treatment guidelines with Italians, and we also hope that our Italian colleagues will be able to enforce proper quarantine of infected cases and general epidemic control measures," Lu was quoting by China Radio International as saying. "We have also carried plasma and blood products from recovered Chinese patients," Lu added. Using such infusions of blood plasma in infected patients is believed to be an effective therapeutic approach.

Italy's outbreak risks overwhelming the nation's hospitals, and some key supplies are running low, Reuters reported.

"I appreciate a lot this lovely gesture from China," Eva Dal Pozzo, a senior business consultant in Italy, told Xinhua News Agency. She

described the shipment as vital, since the nation's factories do not have sufficient production capacity.

Reuters reported that none of Italy's partners in the European Union responded to Rome's requests for help with medical supplies as they looked to protect their own supplies of masks and other equipment.

The aid from China included nine pallets loaded with tens of thousands of masks, respiratory materials, electrocardiographs and other medical supplies.

Cinzia Pasquale, a senior consultant on European Union affairs living in Lombardy, was quoted by Xinhua as saying, "Seeing how China has managed the outbreak in Wuhan, I am personally very confident of the contribution that the Chinese medical staff will make to the heroic Italian doctors who have been overwhelmed by this health emergency."

Meanwhile, Italy has closed all shops except food stores and pharmacies in Europe's toughest lockdown yet as virus deaths and cases continued to rise.

Italy imposed a nationwide lockdown on March 9, a day after quarantine measures were imposed on a large northern area of the nation. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte

said the impact of the tightened restrictions would still take another couple of weeks to show.

"We are facing an emergency, a national emergency," he said in a televised address to announce the new restrictions. "We have to limit the spread of the virus and prevent our hospitals from being overwhelmed."

All religious, cultural and sporting events were suspended, and cruise ships are not allowed to dock at Italian ports. The restrictions are expected to remain in place until April 3.

Massimo Bray, a former Italian culture minister, said on social media that China's provision of medical material and expertise was a "great support" at a difficult time.

Italians have also taken to social media to express their gratitude for the arrival of the Chinese medical aid and expertise.

Meanwhile, World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Italy was making "genuine sacrifices" in the global fight against the virus.

The WHO said in a statement, "Allowing uncontrolled spread should not be a choice of any government, as it will harm not only the citizens of that country but affect other countries as well."

Central bank works to stabilize market sentiment

By CHEN JIA
chenjia@chinadaily.com.cn

China will adopt additional financial stability measures on Monday to prevent market volatility and encourage lending to non-financial businesses, to help return the epidemic-hit economy to normalcy.

The release of 550 billion yuan (\$78.5 billion) in new funds into the financial sector will be effective

before China reports January and February economic indicators, including industrial production and fixed-asset investment. That liquidity injection will stabilize market sentiment and ease tightened financial conditions after global equities markets nose-dived last week, said analysts.

Banks that meet particular criteria can keep less cash in reserve after the authorities announced on Friday a reduction of the reserve requirement ratio by 0.5 to 1 percentage point. Some eligible joint stock banks, in which the government and private sector jointly hold shares, will be allowed to lower the RRR by an additional 1 percentage point.

That was the latest measure by the People's Bank of China, the central bank, to direct more funds into smaller companies struggling to access bank lending and to

See *Stabilize*, page 3

Pandemic has highlighted global interconnectedness

With the visit of President Xi Jinping to Wuhan and his declaration that the spread of the novel coronavirus has basically been curbed in Hubei, there is a sentiment of relief combined with an imperative of vigilance that dominates.

However, at this moment, beyond the release of considerable anxiety, the taste of victory can be sensed across China. It is a victory for the medical staff, those whom the media are now calling the soldiers in white; a victory for the workers who built temporary hospitals at record speed working around the clock; a victory for the volunteers who answered a call to serve their compatriots; a victory for the People's Liberation Army; and, more generally, a victory for an entire nation.

Of course, the loss of lives is tragic, and economic activity has been badly hurt. But the people have showed their ability to move as one to defeat an unpredictable and mutating virus.

They have demonstrated that when confronted with a serious peril, 1.4 billion people can stand

WORLD WATCH

By David Gosset

as one Great Wall to stop the sur-reptitious attacks of an enemy.

It is in fact the same spirit of cohesiveness that links the legendary Xi'an Terracotta Warriors with the brave people of Wuhan.

Weeks ago, some commentators reenacted the play of the coming collapse of China. But the country affirmed indeed that this crisis, no matter its intensity, would not fundamentally affect the Chinese renaissance.

If one wishes to formulate an accurate assessment of China, one should never lose sight of the extraordinary resilience of the Chinese people, a resilience that has grown with the passage of over two millennia of shared collective memory.

But let us put aside the millennia and recall more modestly the past two decades. It was with

See *Connected*, page 3

Xi's messages show solidarity in fighting virus

President offers sympathy and support to EU, South Korea, Italy and Iran, emphasizes unity

By CAO DESHENG in Wuhan
caodesheng@chinadaily.com.cn

Inside

Editorial, page 11

President Xi Jinping's messages of sympathy sent to the European Union, South Korea, Iran and Italy over the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak have demonstrated China's firm support for the hard-hit region and countries in fighting the pandemic, experts said.

The messages, which were made public over the weekend, also show that China, as a major and responsible international player, stands ready to strengthen international cooperation with the rest of the world to eradicate the contagion, they said.

Xi told the foreign leaders that China upholds the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind and maintains that countries should join forces to safeguard global public health.

In his message to South Korean President Moon Jae-in, Xi expressed thanks for the aid sent to China from the neighboring country.

The virus knows no borders and, in turn, China knows just how much pain South Korea feels, Xi said, adding that China will continue to support its neighbor's efforts to contain the virus, and is willing to cooperate with South Korea to help it overcome its difficulties as soon as possible.

In his message to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Xi said he appreciated the support and assistance from the Iranian government and people during China's fight against the epidemic, adding that China is lending Iran a helping hand.

China stands ready to step up cooperation with Iran to contain the epidemic, Xi said. He also said he is confident the country will prevail over the outbreak.

In the message to Italian President Sergio Mattarella, Xi said China firmly supports Italy's efforts against the disease.

Xi said that only through solidarity and cooperation can mankind face all kinds of global risks and challenges.

In his messages to European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Xi recalled that not long ago the EU and its members conveyed their sympa-

thy and support in various forms to Beijing over China's epidemic prevention and control efforts.

He stressed that unity is strength and that China stands ready to provide assistance to help the EU overcome the outbreak at an early date.

China is ready to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the EU within bilateral and international frameworks to jointly safeguard global and regional public health security and protect the lives and health of people around the world, Xi said.

His messages came as China's fight against the outbreak has achieved positive results, with only 20 new confirmed cases recorded on Saturday — 16 of which came from abroad. Outside China, the number of infected patients had risen to more than 152,000 by Sunday, according to the World Health Organization.

To help contain the virus, China has shared treatment plans and experiences with other countries and international organizations. It has sent medical teams to Italy, Iran and Iraq and established a joint response and cooperation mechanism on the contagion with South Korea.

Although it is still at a critical moment in the fight against the epidemic, China has offered medical supplies to some severely affected countries and has also announced a donation of \$20 million to the WHO to combat the virus.

China is practicing the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind in combating the pandemic, since the disease is the enemy of all people around the world, said Ruan Zongze, executive vice-president of the China Institute of International Studies.

On the other hand, China keeps in mind the assistance and support from other countries and international organizations in its battle against the contagion, Ruan said.

In a globalized world, China's knowledge and experience in diagnosing and treating the disease, as well as in coping with the epidemic, will help the rest of the world stem the spread of the virus, he said.

Ready for a fresh start



Students are ready to enter school and begin classes at Wudang High School in Guiyang, Guizhou province, on Sunday. The students' new semester begins on Monday. TAO LIANG / XINHUA

INSIDE
Short-term pain and long-term gains
Global Views, page 13