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Title: China: Wuhan Coronavirus Update
MRN: s. 22 21/01/2020 01:54:46 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: s.22
Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:

s. 22

Summary

There have been 219 cases of the Wuhan coronavirus reported across China, with four confirmed deaths. Chinese authorities have confirmed human-to-human transmissions and classified the virus as a Category B infectious disease and as quarantinable at the border. Experts believe the virus is a less virulent strain than SARS or MERS. President Xi has called for no effort to be spared. Health authorities have launched China's highest level of prevention and control measures. As the nation embarks on mass migration at week's end to celebrate Chinese New Year, there is a risk the virus will spread further. s.22

Further to reftels, cable provides a whole of China posts update on the spread of the Wuhan coronavirus across China. Wuhan is the capital of Hubei province in central China and has a population of 11 million.

Confirmed cases

2. As of 21 January, the number of cases reported across China stands at 219, up from 41 clinically confirmed cases on 17 January. Of the total, 198 cases are located in Wuhan. The Wuhan Health Commission has confirmed four deaths. 170 patients are still being hospitalised in quarantine in Wuhan, with 9 critical cases, 35 serious cases and 126 minor cases. 25 people have been discharged. In Wuhan, 817 people who had been in close contact with infected individuals have been quarantined to observe possible human-to-human transmission. Of those, 727 have since been released from medical observation.

3. A number of cases have been reported across China. There have been 14 confirmed cases in Guangdong province, five in Beijing and one in Shanghai. There have been two suspected cases in Sichuan province, one in Yunnan province, one in Guianxi province, one in Shanghai and one in Shandong province. s. 22

What is it?

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4. China's National Health Commission has classified the novel (new) coronavirus (2019-nCoV) as a Category B infectious disease and a quarantinable disease at the border. The plague and cholera are the only two diseases classified as Category A infectious diseases in China's system.

5. The new coronavirus is thought to come from animals or possibly seafood. The virus causes pneumonia and those who are ill are reported to suffer flu-like symptoms (coughing and fever) and, in more severe cases, breathing difficulties. Recovery is linked to the strength of an individual's immune system. Those who died had reportedly already been in poor health. The relatively low death rate has led experts to believe the virus is a less virulent strain of coronavirus than SARS or MERS.

Human-to-human transmissions confirmed

6. A high level medical expert team established yesterday by the National Health Commission confirmed human-to-human transmissions had occurred, with two confirmed cases in Guangdong province and 15 medical practitioners in Wuhan whom tested positive to the virus.

China's response

7. Responding to the spike in cases at the weekend, President Xi Jinping was reported on the front page of state media today calling on local authorities to spare no effort to contain the outbreak.

8. On 20 January, the National Health Commission launched its Class A prevention and control measures. It has established a centrally managed joint prevention and control oversight group, which is providing guidance and support to local authorities.

9. The measures include strict implementation of body temperature testing at airports, train stations and docks. Animal markets in the vicinity are to remain closed. Hospitals have been instructed to use all resources at their disposal, including Chinese and Western medicines. Those who have been in close contact with infected individuals are to be monitored closely. Changes in the virus' virulence and transmissibility are to be monitored closely.

10. Local authorities have been instructed to release information publicly in a timely and transparent manner. Relevant authorities have been instructed to remain on duty during the Chinese New Year holiday.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

13. But the health system is under pressure and Wuhan is a major transport hub with an extensive high-speed rail network connecting all parts of China as well as direct flights to

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numerous countries, including Australia. In 2019, the Ministry of Transport reported Wuhan's three major train stations had a combined total of 1.35 billion total passenger movements.

14. As the nation embarks on mass migration to celebrate Chinese New Year at the end of this week, the risk of the virus spreading more widely (domestically and internationally) is a real one. But, so far, transmission rates and the virulence of the strain do not appear to be as severe as was the case with SARS.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

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Title: China: Wuhan Coronavirus Sitrep: 23 January
MRN: s. 22 23/01/2020 01:47:46 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: s. 22
Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:
s. 22

Summary

The number of confirmed cases of coronavirus across mainland China has risen to 585 and fatalities are now at 17. While the majority (444) of cases are still in Wuhan, isolated cases have now been confirmed in 27 of China's 34 regions. As of 10am today, public transport into and within the city of Wuhan has been shut down. ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

Further to reftel, cable provides a whole of China posts update on the spread of the Wuhan novel coronavirus across China and the measures being deployed by the Chinese Government. s. 22

Confirmed cases

2. According to official data published by China's National Health Commission (NHC), the number of cases has risen to 585 across mainland China. Fatalities are now at 17 and have all been in Hubei province (of which Wuhan is the capital). Of those infected, 95 are in a serious condition. The NHC reported an additional 393 suspected cases. Twenty-eight patients have been discharged.

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4. Chinese health authorities have observed 5,897 people who have been in close contact with patients; 969 of those have since been released from medical observation.

5. Cases have now been confirmed across 27 provinces (and municipalities and autonomous regions) of China's total 34 regions, with suspected cases also in two other provinces.

Chinese Government response

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6. At a press conference organised by the State Council Information Office on 22 January, NHC Vice Minister Li Bin said China must be steadfast in containing the outbreak within Wuhan. Li said the virus was likely to mutate. Head of the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Gao Fu, said there was no evidence yet that the virus was a "super-spreader" or that it was highly contagious. Current evidence suggested the virus originated from wild animals sold at the Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan.

7. The NHC announced it would urge Hubei provincial authorities to adopt the most stringent measures for prevention and control. Such measures included intensifying supervision of open-air markets, minimising public activities and adopting strict measures in relation to people exhibiting symptoms (ie fever).

8. Following the press conference, the Hubei Provincial Government activated its emergency public health response mechanism. It announced strict quarantine measures to be taken for all suspected and confirmed cases, including anyone suspected of viral exposure. Body temperature testing points would be set up at all airports, railway stations and ports, and all passengers would be subject to testing before boarding. Passengers who were thought to be infected would be moved to designated medical institutions.

9. The Wuhan municipal government escalated its response on 22 January. As of 10am, it had shutdown all public transportation in the city. All domestic and international flights, the city's subway system, local and long-distance buses, trains and ferries have been cancelled and the city's 11 million people have been told not to travel without special reason. Outsiders have also been asked not to enter the city. All local tourism agencies have been instructed to suspend business until 8 February.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

11. The Wuhan Municipal Government issued instructions last night, effective immediately, requiring all people in public places such as hotels, restaurants, cinemas, parks, shopping centres and public transportation to wear masks to prevent the spread of the virus.

12. China Eastern announced on its website on 23 January it had cancelled flights into and from other cities in Hubei province, in addition to Wuhan. China Southern (headquartered in Guangzhou) announced on 22 January it would refund all tickets for passengers travelling to and from Wuhan from 15 January to 29 February. A number of airports and rail systems around the country have introduced compulsory temperature checks.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

while the vast majority of cases (444) have been isolated to Wuhan, there are now also confirmed cases across the majority of China's regions.

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14. There is a lot experts do not know about the virus. The incubation period has not been clarified. Chinese authorities have given a broad range of 2–14 days; if at the upper end of this, it is likely that the number of cases will continue to grow rapidly in coming weeks before the total spread is known.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

16. China's markets remain calm, but concerned, with modest falls as investors make early assessments of the virus' potential economic impacts. The Hong Kong, Shanghai and Shenzhen markets were down 1.6 per cent, 1.1 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively since the start of the week.

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Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus: MFA spokesperson's Q&A: 23 January
MRN: s. 22 23/01/2020 05:58:19 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
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References: s. 22
Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:
s. 22

Summary

In response to questions at the MFA's regular media conference, MFA's spokesperson said China would continue to act with openness, transparency, and a high sense of responsibility for global health security. Local authorities would provide specific information, including in relation to foreigners and journalists. He urged everyone to follow directions from the relevant authorities, especially the Wuhan Municipal Government.

Further to s. 22, today's China MFA media conference was dominated by the coronavirus. Below is an unofficial translation of the relevant sections.

Q: The WHO has decided to postpone a decision on whether or not to declare a global health emergency [in response to the coronavirus], I was wondering what the Foreign Ministry's response to this is? Is China in favour of declaring such an emergency for the Wuhan coronavirus?

A: Last night Beijing time, the WHO held a televised conference. It was the first meeting of the IHR [International Health Regulations] Emergency Committee on the pneumonia caused by the new coronavirus. There is no announcement yet saying this outbreak constitutes a global health emergency. Based on my understanding, relevant sides are in communication and cooperation regarding this issue, and currently the Emergency Committee is planning on holding a second meeting.

China will continue to act with openness, transparency, and a high sense of responsibility for global health security. We will work to continue to inform the WHO, other countries, and Chinese Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan regions of the latest developments and will keep in close contact with them. We believe the WHO Emergency Committee will make a science based and reasonable analysis and assessment based on facts.

Q: Yesterday China Health Authorities and also Wuhan City Authorities said several times that without a special reason it is better not to go to Wuhan. I am wondering if

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media coverage is considered a special reason, and if my colleagues, or other foreign journalists, can go to Wuhan to cover the situation? Will they be allowed to go there, and maybe could they go to a special centre to get special equipment to protect themselves?

A: We understand foreign journalists are very concerned about the epidemic in Wuhan. Yesterday in the morning the State Council Information Office held a press conference and officials from the National Health Commission talked about prevention and control regarding the outbreak and answered questions.

In the past few days I have also talked a lot about the relevant situation. I believe the information we have released will help you get a better understanding of the epidemic and our efforts to contain its spread. Going forward we will continue to act in the principle of openness and transparency and keep you updated and respond to concerns from the people.

To better control the spread of the epidemic on 21 January, the Wuhan Municipal Government openly appealed to people from other parts to stay away from Wuhan in the near future. The Monitoring, Prevention, and Control Command for this epidemic issued notices that the city's busses, subways, ferries and long distance passenger services are halted temporarily and the citizens are advised against leaving the city without special reasons. Airports and railway stations have shut their exit passages for the time being.

We hope journalists from other countries understand the situation, understand the measures taken, and heed the advice from Wuhan Authorities. It's also for your own good. We understand some journalists have already gone to Wuhan and we would advise them to abide by local regulations and cooperate with relevant arrangements, take care, and avoid cross infections. I would also like to remind all friends, journalists, from China and foreign countries here – do take precautions and stay healthy.

Q: On coronavirus, there are many foreigners already in Wuhan and the restrictions are on them also. So, my question is whether the Chinese Government will consider any requests from them to move out to their homeland, to their countries as a special reason. Maybe after proper screening if they are found healthy, without any chance to spread it further?

A: It is a very specific questions, I think I will refer you to the local authorities regarding the specific arrangements including arrangements for foreigners in Wuhan.

As a principled response, I can say that China always handles issues according to domestic laws, international laws, and bilateral consular agreements. We always help foreign consular officials in China in their official jobs. We offer them all the assistance and convenience necessary and we work to guarantee foreign citizens' legitimate rights and interests in China. This is just a principled response. I will still refer you to the local authorities for specific information.

Q. The Wuhan authorities issued a notice that bus services have been stopped since 10am today. I wonder if foreigners are also restricted from leaving the city?

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A. Just now, the journalist from India asked the same question. It is exactly the same question. I refer you to the local authorities. I can only offer a principled response, which is that China always protects foreigners' legitimate rights and interests in China according to law.

Q. The latest news just came in, a Japanese man in his 60s was diagnosed with the new coronavirus pneumonia. Can you confirm that and give us more information? Is this the first confirmed case of this pneumonia in a foreigner in China?

A. I have no knowledge of the case you mention. I don't know what your source is? (Interjection: It is from Japanese media. Some say it hasn't been confirmed yet but he is already showing symptoms so it is a suspected case). I am not aware of the case. Can I get more information from you? I can also refer you directly to the authorities in charge. You asked if there are any confirmed cases in foreigners in China. I think for such specific questions I would refer you to the competent authorities because they have more information.

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Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus sitrep 3: 24 January
MRN: s. 22 24/01/2020 02:45:50 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Geneva UN, Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References:
Response: Routine, Requires Action

Comments:
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Summary

There have now been 830 confirmed cases of coronavirus in China, with 25 deaths. The majority of reported cases (549) remain in Wuhan, but China's National Health Commission has reported cases in 29 out of 34 regions. ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

ss. 33(a)(iii); 33(b)

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Cable provides a whole-of-China status update on the Wuhan novel coronavirus (nCoV) and measures adopted by the Chinese authorities.

Officially confirmed cases: 830 infections in 29 provinces; 25 fatalities

2. According to China's National Health Commission (NHC) as of midnight 23 January, there have been 830 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection in 29 out of China's 34 regions. This includes 177 severe cases and 8 more fatalities, bringing the total to 25. The first death outside of Wuhan was reported in Hebei province. Thirty-four patients have been cured and discharged.

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4. A total of 9,507 people have been placed under medical observation. Of these, 1,087 have been released.

5. Chinese media (Caixin) as of the morning of 24 January is reporting 869 infections and a death toll of 26.

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ss. 33(a)(iii); 33(b)

Government measures: further transport bans in Hubei; major events cancelled

9. The Ministry of Finance has allocated 1 billion RMB (USD 145 million) to assist in Hubei's efforts against nCoV.

10. According to Chinese media, outbound travel bans have been imposed on six more cities in Hubei in addition to Wuhan: Ezhou, Huanggang, Xiantao, Zhijiang, Chibi and Qianjiang. We are seeking to confirm these reports.

11. In the afternoon of Thursday 23 January, the Chinese Ministry of Transport (MoT) issued measures to prevent all road and water commercial passenger transport to and from Wuhan and control road and waterway movements (media reports indicate some roads leaving the city are closed). Aviation restrictions are being implemented by the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), with airlines cancelling Wuhan flights.

12. MoT and CAAC have ruled that passengers who cancel travel plans booked before 24 January should not be charged additional fees. China Railway has announced that all passengers who have bought train tickets inside China, no matter the destination, can seek refunds for their tickets on a voluntary basis without being charged commission fees.

13. Elsewhere in China, authorities have begun to restrict or close large public events and venues. Several major Chinese cities have cancelled Chinese New Year celebration events and closed major public attractions to reduce the risk of nCoV contagion. The Chinese Basketball Association has announced it may suspend its 2019–20 season, which began in November 2019. s. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

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14. Henan Provincial Government has asked people coming from Wuhan to: (1) report their address to a local supervisory committee and self-quarantine for 14 days; (2) visit a medical facility if cough and fever symptoms occur; (3) protect family members by not hosting guests and ventilating homes. Other provinces are likely to be implementing similar measures.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

15. The majority of cases (549) remain confined to Wuhan, but numbers are growing across the country, in particular in Guangdong (53) and Zhejiang (43). As noted above, the NHC has stated that 29 out of China's 34 regions have confirmed cases. Caixin and Global Times reported on 24 January that only Tibet Autonomous Region and Qinghai Province have not had any cases.

16. Despite the restrictions now being imposed, the expected incubation nCoV period of 2–14 days and intensive travel that has already occurred in the lead up to Chinese New Year suggest that the number of cases will grow rapidly over coming weeks.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

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Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus sitrep 4: 25 January
MRN: s. 22 25/01/2020 02:05:07 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Geneva UN, Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References:
Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:

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Summary

The number of confirmed novel coronavirus patients has increased by nearly 60 per cent over the past 24 hours to 1,326 cases. There have been 41 fatalities. 16 cities across Hubei province have either been fully or partially locked down. A total of 18 provinces and municipalities have now also activated their highest public health emergency response, including Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing cities and Guangdong province.

Cable provides a whole of China status update on the Wuhan novel Coronavirus (nCoV) and measures adopted by the Chinese authorities.

Officially confirmed cases: 1,326 infections in 29 provinces; 41 fatalities

2. According to China's National Health Commission (NHC), as at 10:00am on 25 January there have been 1,326 confirmed cases of nCoV infection across 29 of China's 34 regions. There have been 41 fatalities and 237 patients remain in a critical condition. The second death outside of Hubei province was reported in Heilongjiang province last night (now 39 fatalities in Hubei province, one in Hebei province and one in Heilongjiang province). The first case in Qinghai province was confirmed overnight. There are 1,965 suspected cases across 20 provinces.

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4. On the mainland, 15,197 people who have been identified by authorities as being in close contact with infected individuals are under medical observation. Of those, 13,967 remain quarantined. To date, 38 individuals have been discharged.

Government measures

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5. On 24 January, China's State Council held its third meeting on the coronavirus, chaired by Vice Premier Sun Chunlan. Sun stated that the spread of the virus had yet to be contained, and urged all relevant authorities across all levels of government to strengthen their sense of responsibility and urgency and to adopt stricter and more targeted measures.

6. Following the meeting, the State Council issued a notice stating it would be collecting information on government departments that have failed in their responses to the outbreak, including delays, concealment and under-reporting of the epidemic. Concealment and under-reporting would be dealt with seriously according to the law.

7. Responding to a shortage of beds in hospitals in Wuhan, the local leadership has reportedly undertaken to build from scratch a new hospital with 1,000 beds on the outskirts of Wuhan city by 3 February.

8. An additional 15 provinces and municipalities have today activated their highest public health emergency response, bringing the total number to 18 regions. The municipalities of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing, as well as the provinces of Guangdong, Hunan, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Hubei, Anhui, Fujian, Guangxi and Hainan are among those that have activated a level one response. The level one designation means the State Council will take over responsibility for medical responses, information dissemination, international exchange, emergency supplies, facility management, logistics and overseas inspections. It also indicates that local governments should follow measures determined by the central government.

9. Within Hubei province, the number of cities under full or partial lockdown is now reported to be 16 (Wuhan, Ezhou, Xiantao, Zhijiang, Qianjiang, Huanggang, Chibi, Jingmen, Xianning, Huangshi, Dangyang, Enshi, Xiaogan plus three other cities unknown at time of reporting).

10. China's Ministry of Finance has allocated one billion RMB (A\$210 million) to support Hubei.

11. Chinese state media has reported the Central Military Command has ordered medical personnel of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to assist civilian doctors and nurses. Complementing 40 PLA physicians already in Wuhan, an additional 450 PLA physicians arrived in Wuhan by chartered flight this morning.

s. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

12. The status of road closures across Hubei province is evolving rapidly. At this stage we are not aware of closures outside Hubei province, but note that the 13 cities within Hubei are spread across the province, with many bordering neighbouring provinces of Anhui, Henan, Hunan, Jiangxi and the municipality of Chongqing.

13. A large number of tourist sites, Chinese New Year festivities, public gathering and sport and entertainment centres have been closed across the country. At a time when tourism and consumer spending is usually at its highest, the economic impact (though not yet quantifiable) will be considerable. The public is taking the situation seriously, with a

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significant decrease in public activity including road traffic across many of China's largest cities.

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Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus sitrep 5: 26 January
MRN: s. 22 26/01/2020 02:13:15 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
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From: Beijing
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Files:
References: s. 22
Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:
s. 22

Summary

The number of confirmed infections identified by China's central health agency has risen to 1,975. Fifty-six people have died; forty-nine patients have been discharged. Thirty provinces
s. 22 are now at the highest emergency level. On 25 January, President Xi Jinping chaired a meeting of the Communist Party Politburo Standing Committee that established a group of leading officials to supervise the response to coronavirus. Xi ordered all Party and government officials to make prevention and control their top priority. A transport lockdown has been announced in Shantou in Guangdong Province, the first outside of Hubei Province.

Cable provides a whole of China status update on the Wuhan novel Coronavirus (nCoV) and measures adopted by the Chinese authorities.

Officially confirmed cases: 1,975 infections in 30 provinces; 56 fatalities

2. According to the 26 January update published by China's National Health Commission (NHC), as at midnight 25 January there had been 1,975 confirmed nCoV cases on 30 of China's 34 regions. Fifty-six deaths had occurred and 324 patients were in a serious condition. There were 2,684 suspected cases. The first case in Qinghai province had been confirmed.

3. The NHC said 21,556 people were currently undergoing medical observations out of 23,431 who had been identified as being in close contact with infected individuals.

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5. Reflecting incoming data from local health authorities, Chinese media are reporting higher numbers of infections since the release of the NHC update. s. 22

Government measures: President Xi makes prevention and control China's priority

6. On 25 January, President Xi Jinping chaired a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Chinese Communist Party's Politburo. According to China's official news agency, Xinhua, the meeting decided to establish a 'leading group' (a committee of senior Party officials) to supervise the response to nCoV. Xi ordered Party committees and Chinese governments at all levels make prevention and control the top priority of their work.

7. The Xinhua report said Party officials would be sent to Hubei Province to direct work. Officials in Hubei were instructed to take more rigorous measures to prevent the further spread of the virus and put all patients in centralised quarantine for treatment. s. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)
all-out efforts to treat infected patients, faster deployment of more medical personnel, the coordination of civilian and military medical resources. The meeting also underscored the importance of timely, accurate and transparent information.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 33(b)

Military medical personnel have been sent to Wuhan to assist in control and prevention.

9. Currently, 30 provinces and special administrative cities have activated their highest public health emergency response ('level one'). This means the State Council will take over responsibility for medical responses, information dissemination, international exchange, emergency supplies, facility management, logistics and overseas inspections. It also indicates that local governments should follow measures determined by the central government. s. 22

10. In addition to the lockdown in Hubei, the city of Shantou in eastern Guangdong has now announced transport restrictions. From the afternoon of 26 January, all public transport, buses, taxis (including ride hailing services) and ferries operating within Shantou will be suspended indefinitely. From midnight all cars and boats will be blocked from entering Shantou, except for emergency personnel. All roads connecting Shantou with its outlying towns will be closed, but highways that transit through Shantou will remain open. Trains will remain operational but all passengers arriving in Shantou will be screened, checked by authorities and possibly turned around. ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

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ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

13. The China Tourism Association reportedly announced on 25 January that it would halt all outbound tourist groups as of Monday 27 January. Domestic flight and hotel bookings through travel agencies had been on hold from 24 January, while similar services for overseas destinations would be suspended from 27 January. This does not apply to individual passengers.

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ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

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Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus sitrep 6: 27 January
MRN: s. 22 27/01/2020 01:29:56 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Geneva UN, Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
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References: s. 22
Response: Routine, Information Only

Summary

There are now 2,744 officially confirmed cases of the Wuhan novel coronavirus. There have been 80 fatalities to date. China's Health Minister said the virus showed signs of increasing transmissibility and mutation. Premier Li Keqiang chaired a work leading group meeting on the central response to the outbreak. The group decided to extend the national holiday by two days, delay the return of schools and universities and encourage remote work. The State Council banned the transport and trade of wild animals. Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Xi'an and Shandong have suspended intra-provincial bus routes. s. 22

Cable provides a whole of China status update on the Wuhan novel coronavirus (nCoV) and measures adopted by the Chinese authorities.

Officially confirmed cases: 2,744 infections in 30 provinces; 80 fatalities

2. According to the 27 January update published by China's National Health Commission (NHC), as at midnight there had been 769 new confirmed nCoV cases and 24 deaths had occurred in the past 24 hours. All fatalities were in Hubei province. The total number of confirmed cases stood at 2,744 across 30 of China's 34 regions. Eighty deaths have occurred and 461 patients were in a serious condition. There were 5,794 suspected cases. The NHC said 30,453 people were currently undergoing medical observation out of 32,799 who had been identified as being in close contact with infected individuals.

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Government measures: State Council steps up response

5. On 26 January, Premier Li Keqiang chaired a work leading group meeting on the central response to the nCoV outbreak. The central government sent a steering group to Hubei to strengthen prevention and control. The central government would: coordinate deployment of

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national resources; prioritise protection of urgently needed medical and nursing personnel; increase supply of protective clothing, masks and other materials to Hubei; ensure the supply of necessities for residents; and, implement a quarantinable channel for transporting supplies. Health officials were instructed to reconcile domestic and international standards.

6. The Hubei provincial government and Wuhan city government were instructed to: speed up construction of hospitals and transformation of hotels into quarantine areas; improve rotation and protection of medical personnel; more stringently manage the flow of people at city and provincial borders.

7. The group decided the Chinese New Year holiday period would be extended, school opening hours adjusted and arrangements to work remotely from home supported. Cities were told to guard against people stock-piling supplies.

8. On 27 January, the State Council confirmed it would extend the Chinese New Year national holiday by two days to 2 February to help control the spread of the virus. Work would recommence normally from 3 February. Tertiary institutions, primary and secondary schools, kindergartens would postpone the start of the school term, with specific dates to be notified separately by the Ministry of Education.

9. On 26 January, the State Council banned the transport and trade of wild animals until nCoV had been eliminated across the country (following evidence the disease was transmitted to humans at a market in Wuhan that traded in game meat). The measures prevent markets, supermarkets, restaurants and e-commerce platforms from trading in any form. Inspections would be stepped up and violations would be dealt with "severely", in accordance with the law.

10. At a press conference on 26 January, China's Minister for Health, Ma Xiaowei, said nCoV has shown signs of increasing transmissibility, but there was much experts still did not know about the virus. The risk of the virus mutating and/or spreading remained unclear. It was possible the nature of the virus could change over coming days and weeks and so could the danger it posed to people of different ages.

11. On 27 January, the cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Xi'an and the province of Shandong announced suspension of all inter-provincial bus services to and from the cities. The Beijing and Guangzhou municipal governments both announced yesterday they would not impose lock downs. Yunnan province has suspended all intra-provincial bus routes longer than 800 kilometres.

12. There have been no additional cities put under lock-down, but a number of provinces have stepped up roadblocks and screening. From 25 January, Jiangxi province has implemented traffic controls and health checks. Anyone with a fever is to be quarantined for 14 days. s. 33(a)(iii)

We note Hubei authorities have established a 37.3 celcius temperature threshold, lower than the international standard of 37.7 celcius.

13. We note the transport restrictions announced for the city of Shantou in eastern Guangdong yesterday were cancelled later that afternoon (reftel).

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14. From 26 January, the Guangdong provincial government imposed a mandatory requirement for face masks to be worn in all public areas.

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ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

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ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

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s. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

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s.22

Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus sitrep 7: 28 January
MRN: s. 22 28/01/2020 01:33:17 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Geneva UN, Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: s. 22
Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:

s. 22

Amendments:

s. 22

--- Amended by s. 22 at 29/01/2020 10:04:33 AM ZE8 ---

Summary

There are now 4,515 officially confirmed cases of the Wuhan novel coronavirus. There have been 106 fatalities to date. President Xi has instructed all cadres to implement central decisions. Premier Li arrived in Wuhan on 27 January to supervise operations. The National Health Commission has asked local authorities to impose a 14-day home quarantine period on people who have come from Wuhan. Local authorities continue to impose control measures in an effort to contain the virus.

Cable provides a whole of China status update on the Wuhan novel coronavirus (nCoV).

ss. 33(a)(iii); 33(b)

Officially confirmed cases: 4,515 in 30 provinces; 106 deaths

3. According to the 28 January update by China's National Health Commission (NHC), as of 04:00 on 27 January, 30 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) reported 1,771 newly confirmed cases, 515 severe cases, and 26 new deaths (24 in Hubei Province, one in Beijing, and one in Hainan). Nine new cases had been cured and discharged, and 2,077 suspected new cases had been reported.

4. As at midnight 27 January, the NHC reported that 4,515 cases had been confirmed (up from the 2,744 reported on 27 January), 976 of which were severe. There had been a total of 106 deaths (up from 80) and 60 patients had been discharged. There were 6,973 suspected

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cases. Currently, 47,833 people had been identified as having been in close contact with infected individuals and 44,132 people were under medical observation.

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Government measures

6. On 27 January, President Xi Jinping called on party organisations at all levels, officials, and party members to implement the decisions and policies issued by the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee^{ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)} that Party committees at various levels needed to scientifically assess the development of the epidemic, make precise decisions, and act under unified leadership.

7. Premier Li Keqiang, who heads the Party leading group tasked to address nCoV, arrived in Wuhan on 27 January. According to the official Xinhua news service, he visited Jinyintan Hospital, which has the largest number of infected patients, and visited the construction site of the Huoshenshan Hospital, an emergency specialty hospital under construction in response to the outbreak (now reportedly completed). Li said the country would send another 2,500 medical workers, especially nurses, to support the city.

8. The NHC is now holding daily media conferences. At the 27 January event, the NHC spokesperson said prevention and control efforts were now at a critical period and called for measures to be implemented on households and individuals, including in rural areas to which large numbers of people had returned for the holidays. The NHC said authorities should be locating people who had travelled from Wuhan and conduct home medical observations for 14 days. The NHC said the holiday period (previously extended to 2 February, with Chinese schools closed for an unspecified period beyond the scheduled return date of 17 February) could be extended further (post is seeking confirmation from international schools).

9. The 28 January media conference focused on medical support to virus-affected areas. The NHC said a total of 4,130 medical staff had arrived in Hubei in 30 teams. Another 13 medical teams would be arriving soon. By the end of today, 6,000 medical staff were expected to providing medical support in Hubei. In response to a question, the NHC spokesperson emphasised that the numbers of infections being reported was accurate.

^{ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)} the Ministry of Education has asked all schools in China to delay the start of the spring semester. When schools resume all students will be required to wear masks and undergo temperature checks; schools will be asked to examine the health data of students for the two weeks prior. Centrally administered universities have been told to postpone the start of the new semester, and that the exact date for the spring semester should be in line with other locally administered universities.

11. The Director General of the World Health Organisation is reportedly meeting officials and health experts in Beijing, having arrived on 27 January.

12. Wuhan Mayor Zhou Xianwang has reportedly acknowledged that the city failed to disclose information on the epidemic in a timely way and offered his resignation. Immigration services for Chinese citizens in Wuhan city have reportedly been suspended as

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of 27 January. A media release from Exit and Entry Administration of Wuhan Public Security Bureau said that the suspension would be in effect until 30 January.

ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)

Temperature checks have been imposed at checkpoints and transport restrictions continue to be imposed by local authorities, including the cancellation of some long-distance trains starting today. ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d)
Some authorities are mandating the wearing of masks in public spaces.

14. The Shanghai government has postponed the resumption of work for enterprises (with exception of essential services and supplies, such as public utilities, medical services, and supermarkets) and schools until February 10. People have been strongly recommended to wear masks. s. 33(b)

Stricter control measures are being implemented in Hangzhou, Nanjing and Zhejiang (which has also postponed the resumption of work).

ss. 37(a)(iii); 47E(d)

The Vice Governor of Guangdong held a press conference yesterday and declared that the province will not/not shut down its transportation network, saying it must stay open to ensure the sufficient supply of food and medical supplies.

16. Additional measures have been imposed in Sichuan, Chongqing, Yunnan and Guizhou. These include the requirement for employees and consumers in public places in Chengdu to wear masks and for all metro passengers in Kunming to wear masks and be subject to screening.

17. Heilongjiang and Jilin have implemented intra-province travel restrictions for buses, while Liaoning has applied restrictions to travel in and out of cities where nCoV cases have been discovered. It appears people are still able to leave Heilongjiang by charter bus, though are first subject to full checks (ID details and temperature checks), with severe penalties for those who try and avoid it. In Liaoning, Shenyang's main airport has cancelled all flights in and out of Hubei.

18. Tibet has reportedly asked all inbound travellers to quarantine for 14 days at designated places before entering into the region. No cases have been reported in Tibet to date.

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Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus sitrep 8: 29 January
MRN: s. 22 29/01/2020 01:14:05 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Geneva UN, Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: s. 22
Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:
s. 22

Summary

There are now 5,974 confirmed cases of the Wuhan novel coronavirus. There have been 132 fatalities to date. About 40 per cent of cases have now moved beyond Hubei province.

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Cable provides a whole of China posts status update on the Wuhan novel coronavirus (nCov).

Officially confirmed cases: 5,974 infections in 31 provinces; 132 fatalities

2. According to the 27 January update by China's National Health Commission (NHC), as at 04:00 on 29 January, 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) reported 1,459 newly confirmed cases, 263 new severe cases and 26 new deaths (25 in Hubei and one in Henan). A further 3,248 cases were suspected, including the first in Tibet.

3. As at midnight last night, the NHC had received reports of a total of 5,974 confirmed cases in 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities), 1, 239 severe cases and 132 deaths. There were 9,239 suspected cases and 103 patients had recovered and discharged. A total of 65,537 close contacts had been tracked. In the past 24 hours, 1,604 medical observations had been lifted and a total of 59,990 people remained under medical observation.

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5. According to State media, 3,554 of the total 5,974 confirmed cases were reported from Hubei. This means roughly 40 per cent of the total confirmed cases are now located outside of Hubei. Of those, 91 cases were in Beijing, 66 in Shanghai, 63 in Guangzhou, 63 in Shenzhen and 147 in Chongqing.

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Government measures

6. On 28 January, President Xi met World Health Organisation (WHO) Secretary General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Xi reportedly stated China had full confidence and capability to win the battle of prevention and control. Tedros reportedly said the WHO was confident in China's epidemic prevention and control ability and praised Xi's political commitment and personal leadership.
7. On 27 January, the Ministry of Commerce (MofCom) urged local authorities to setup leading groups as soon as possible to clarify tasks and responsibilities. Provinces were instructed to strengthen cooperation and coordination to build an efficient supply network of daily necessities across the country. It also called for efforts to enhance market monitoring to accurately grasp market supply and demand. The supply of key products, such as grain, oil, meat, eggs and vegetables, as well as emergency supplies, needed to be ensured.
8. The Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges have extended their Chinese New Year closure period by three days, re-opening on 3 February, in accordance with the State Council's 27 January notice to extend the holiday period (BJ567631L).
9. On 28 January, China's National Immigration Administration advised Chinese citizens to postpone all non-essential overseas travel. This was in addition to the 27 January notice from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism instructing all tourism operators to suspend group tours and tour packages (domestic and international) until further notice.
10. On 28 January, the Guangdong provincial government and Chongqing municipal government instructed all non-essential enterprises not to return to work until 10 February and 9 February, respectively. Exceptions include public service provider, supermarkets and delivery services. Manufacturers of medical supplies, protective equipment and pharmaceuticals had resumed work. Provincial authorities are focused on ensuring stable food supplies.

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14. Many cities across China have closed a number of roads and various forms of public transport and implemented temperature checkpoints. The Beijing Railway Bureau suspended selected trains to Shanghai, Tianjin, Kunming and Inner Mongolia until 2 March. Cities across Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Anhui provinces have closed a number of inter-provincial highways and/or highway exits.

15. On 28 January, the Sichuan provincial government announced members of the Sichuan Emergency Response Headquarters, to be overseen by the Sichuan Governor (and former health professional) Yin Li. The Standing Committee of the Sichuan People's Congress decided to postpone convening the third meeting of the Thirteenth People's Congress - an indication that usually fixed timelines leading up to the National People's Congress (scheduled for early March) may start to slip.

16. Liaoning officials announced overnight CNY4.4b (AUD938m) be set aside for emergency relief efforts.

17. The daily NHC press conference is scheduled for 3pm today and will be picked up in our next sitrep.

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Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus sitrep 9: 30 January
MRN: s. 22 30/01/2020 01:52:49 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Geneva UN, Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: s. 22

Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:

s. 22

Summary

There have now been 7,711 confirmed cases of the Wuhan novel coronavirus reported, and 170 fatalities. Around 59 per cent of cases and most of the deaths have been in Hubei Province. President Xi has instructed the Chinese military to play a major role in combatting the virus. The leading group supervising China's response noted that prevention and control measures were being comprehensively implemented and strengthened, but that cases were still expected to increase rapidly in some regions. Several airlines have suspended or reduced their China flights.

Cable provides a whole of China posts status update on the Wuhan novel coronavirus (nCov).

Officially confirmed cases: 7,711 infections in 31 provinces; 170 fatalities

2. According to the 30 January update by China's National Health Commission (NHC), as at 04:00 on January 29, 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) had reported: 1,737 new confirmed cases (including the first confirmed case in Tibet); 131 severe cases; and 38 new deaths (37 in Hubei and one in Sichuan). Twenty-one new cases were cured and discharged and 4,148 suspected cases were added.

3. As of 24:00 on January 29, the NHC had received reports of: 7,711 confirmed cases; 31 severe cases; 12,167 suspected cases; 170 deaths; 170 recoveries; 88,693 close contacts; and 81,947 people under medical observation. s. 22

4. According to figures in state media, most (around 59 per cent) of cases remain confined to Hubei Province, which has reported 4,586 out of 7,711 confirmed infections (and 162 out of 170 fatalities).

Government measures

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5. President Xi Jinping has ordered the Chinese military to play a major role in combatting nCoV, including at the temporary military hospital established in Wuhan and other military hospitals. He called on military research institutes to accelerate efforts to develop a treatment for the virus.

6. On 29 January, Premier Li Keqiang chaired a meeting of the Communist Party leading group supervising the prevention and control of nCoV. The meeting noted that measures were being comprehensively implemented and strengthened, but the epidemic was still spreading and cases were expected to increase rapidly in some regions. The leading group called for further targeted measures to curb the spread of the epidemic, including an inter-provincial joint prevention and control mechanism. The development of vaccines should be accelerated.

7. The meeting also called for local administrations to instruct businesses to resume the production of medical resources including protective clothing, masks, and medicines, and ensure smooth delivery. Domestic and foreign donations should be received and allocated collectively. The supply of daily necessities and vegetables in key areas should be secured and measures taken to stabilise prices of daily necessities. Delays in business operation and school opening should be applied in places facing a relatively serious situation.

8. Party and government leaders across the country have stepped-up public information efforts ss. 33(a)(iii); 47E(d) Politburo Member and Vice Premier Sun Chunlan led the Central Guiding Group at Wuhan to instruct work on securing medical resources supply in Hubei province.

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10. The Ministry of Commerce (MofCom) has announced that Chinese companies abroad have secured more than two million sets of medical equipment, including 1.6 million masks, more than 220,000 protection suits, and 7,500 protective glasses. s.22

11. The Ministry of Finance has now allocated RMB 4.4 billion (AUD 940 million) to nCoV efforts, according to an announcement on its website. RMB 500 million (AUD 106 million) will be allocated to Wuhan city. The Ministry of Ecology and Environment has issued emergency disposal management and technical guidelines for nCoV medical waste, which requires the separate management of infectious medical waste and other medical waste.

12. At the NHC press conference at 15:00 on 29 January, the NHC spokesperson said training was underway in local neighbourhoods to set up response teams, which would take targeted measures to support people with quarantine, identify suspected cases, and provide counselling via hot lines or social media. Local neighbourhoods were being encouraged to take necessary measures to control the movement of residents so as to contain the spread of the virus.

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13. The NHC said the elderly and middle-aged remained the most susceptible to the virus. Infants and children infected had so far manifested less serious symptoms. As masks were in short supply for use by medical staff, the public was advised to use masks only as necessary, e.g. in public areas or when using public transport.

14. Tibet has raised its public health emergency response to the highest level on Wednesday. All 31 provinces in China are now at the highest setting for public health emergencies. Local authorities across China are requiring people who have undertaken inter-provincial travel to undertake self-quarantine for up to 14 days.

15. Public transportation restrictions and health inspections of passengers in private vehicles continue to be applied across China; more inter-provincial bus, ferry and rail lines have been suspended. s. 22

17. China's immigration authority has issued an entry and exit FAQ for foreigners, a translation of which is attached.

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Title: China: Wuhan coronavirus sitrep 10: 31 January
MRN: s. 22 31/01/2020 12:48:50 PM ZE8
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Geneva UN, Indo-Pacific Posts
From: Beijing
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: s. 22
Response: Routine, Information Only

Comments:

s. 22

Summary

There have now been 9,692 confirmed cases of the Wuhan novel coronavirus, and 213 fatalities. Yesterday the WHO declared the outbreak constituted a public health emergency of international concern. The WHO Director-General said the decision was prompted by what was happening outside of China (now reportedly 87 confirmed cases across 18 countries), rather than what was happening in China. s. 22

Cable provides a whole of mainland China posts status update on the Wuhan novel coronavirus (nCoV).

Officially confirmed cases: 9,692 infections in 31 regions; 213 deaths

2. According to the 31 January update by China's National Health Commission (NHC), as at 04:00 on 31 January, 31 provinces (municipalities and autonomous regions) had reported 1,982 new confirmed cases, including 157 severe cases, and 43 new deaths (42 in Hubei and one in Heilongjiang). Forty-seven patients had recovered. There were 4,812 newly suspected cases.

3. As of 24:00 on 30 January, the NHC had received reports of: 9,692 confirmed cases; 1,527 severe cases; 213 deaths; 171 recoveries; 15,238 suspected cases and 113,579 close contacts. Of the close contacts, 102,427 remain under medical observation and 4,201 have been discharged. s. 22

4. According to provincial data issued on 31 January, there have been 121 confirmed cases reported in Beijing, 128 in Shanghai, 106 in Guangzhou and 69 in Chengdu. Most of the confirmed cases (60 per cent) and vast majority of the deaths (95 per cent) remain confined to Hubei province, which reported 5,806 of the 9,692 confirmed cases and 204 of the total 213 fatalities.

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World Health Organisation declared Public Health Emergency of International Concern

6. On 30 January, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the nCoV outbreak constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). The Emergency Committee convened by the WHO Director-General believed it was still possible to interrupt the virus spread, provided countries put in place strong measures to detect the disease early, isolate and treat cases, trace contacts and promote social distancing measures commensurate with the risk. The WHO Director-General said the main reason for the declaration was not what was happening in China, but what was happening in other countries.

7. The Committee's advice acknowledged the strong measures China had taken to investigate and contain the outbreak, as well as the transparency with which China continued to undertake these measures.

Central government measures

8. Following the WHO's declaration, the Chinese MFA spokesperson said the Chinese Government had adopted the most comprehensive and rigorous prevention and control measures with a high degree of responsibility for public health, adding many of these measures went well beyond the requirements of the WHO's International Health Regulations.

9. The State Council issued a notice on 30 January urging provincial governments to promptly organise the production of medical protective equipment and drugs, to be distributed under the management of the State Council Leading Group.

10. On 30 January, Premier Li Keqiang chaired a health symposium at China's Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in Beijing, where he urged health experts to expedite steps to research and develop a vaccination and effective pharmaceuticals. Li cautioned again against hiding or under-reporting the number of infections, calling on provinces to make information publicly available.

11. In a notice issued on 30 January, the Ministry of Transport said transport should be guaranteed in rural areas affected by the virus. Any illegal efforts to block traffic in these areas needed to be reported immediately to the local Party committee and/or government.

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13. The Chinese Communist Party's anti-corruption watchdog, the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, issued a notice on 30 January stating it would severely punish officials who failed to act in containing the virus.

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Provincial measures

15. On 30 January, the Hubei Public Security Department issued an official notice stating carriers of nCoV who refused to be quarantined or demonstrated un-hygienic practices in public spaces (e.g. spitting) would be investigated for criminal punishment.

16. The Shanghai government announced banks and insurance providers were essential services and would reopen at the end of the holiday period (3 February), with limited hours and staffing. Other private financial service providers would remain closed until 10 February. Employees who visited epidemic impacted areas were to observe quarantine procedure (14 days isolation).

17. Guizhou province issued a notice that non-essential enterprises were not to resume work before 10 February.

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19. On 30 January, the Chongqing Leading Group for Epidemic Prevention and Control issued a notice advising municipal residents who had spent time in Hubei during the Spring Festival not to return to Chongqing for the time being.

20. Manufacturers of medical supplies have resumed work. With millions of medical masks now being produced daily, supply is expected to recover quickly. In the meantime, reports of counterfeit products continue. For example, on 29 January, the North Zhejiang Prosecutors Office reported that claims of 7 million counterfeit masks had entered the market had been investigated and sentences had been issued.

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