

CHINA

China helps international vaccine drive

Donations and joint manufacturing contribute to virus containment efforts

By WANG XIAOYU
wangxiaoyu@chinadaily.com.cn

China has been living up to its promise of making COVID-19 vaccines an international public good via donations, sales and joint manufacturing, officials and drugmakers have said.

The beneficiaries include countries and regions involved in the Belt and Road Initiative.

During an online discussion attended by foreign ministers and leaders of international organizations on Nov 11, China's ambassador to the United States, Qin Gang, said China has provided more than 1.7 billion doses of vaccines to more than 100 countries. By the end of the year, the country is aiming to provide a total of 2 billion doses, he said.

Qin said China has also supplied over 70 million vaccine doses and donated \$100 million to the global vaccine-sharing platform COVAX.

More than 99 percent of vaccines provided by China for global use have been shipped to developing countries.

He said solidarity and cooperation are the most powerful weapons to defeat COVID-19, and called on all countries to take a scientific attitude and oppose stigmatization and politicization of the novel coronavirus.

With COVID-19 infections on the rise in some countries and manufacturing capacity for vaccines growing, the World Health Organization has set the goal of vaccinating 40 percent of the population of every country by the end of this year.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a briefing early last month that the target is within reach if vaccines can be distributed equitably worldwide.

"Through dose sharing, swaps, technology transfers and other priority actions, it is possible to reduce deaths and minimize suffering, prevent health systems from being overwhelmed, resume social and economic activities, and reduce the risk of dangerous new variants," he said.

China has been a steady and reliable force in giving momentum to the realization of that goal, with many countries involved in the BRI receiving different forms of virus containment aid from China.

By early August, China had delivered 350 million doses of vaccines to co-sponsors of a Belt and Road partnership on COVID-19 vaccine cooperation, the Foreign Ministry said.

China has been actively implementing the partnership and has reached agreements with partners on a total of 775 million doses of vaccines, of which 350 million doses had been delivered by August.

Chinese companies have started joint production with four co-sponsors of the partnership and are discussing joint production with other countries.

Four million doses of COVID-19 vaccines made by Chinese drugmaker Sinopharm arrived in Myanmar on Nov 7, marking the final delivery of 24 million doses purchased by Myanmar authorities.

The Chinese embassy in Myanmar said China had helped Myanmar get in touch with Chinese vaccine developers and facilitated its acquisition of vaccines speedily and at the most favorable price.

The first batch of vaccines donated to Tanzania arrived this month, as well as the second batches of doses donated to Rwanda and Vanuatu.

Albert Tuyishime, a Rwandan health official, said during a hand-over ceremony that the donation was expected to ease the country's vaccine shortage.

"We are happy to receive this second batch, which is again a sign of good collaboration and support from the Chinese government in our fight against this pandemic," Xinhua News Agency quoted Tuyishime as saying.

Cansino Biologics, a Chinese company that has created a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine, said recently that it had set up vaccine packaging plants in Mexico, Pakistan and Malaysia by September.

Xinhua contributed to this story.

Precious porcelain



A special exhibition on white porcelain made at Fujian province's renowned Dehua kilns opens to the public in Hohhot, capital of the Inner Mongolia autonomous region, on Thursday. The museum reopened with the new exhibition after nearly a month of closure due to a COVID-19 outbreak. LIU WENHUA / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Briefly

First direct freight train sets off from Guizhou

The first direct China-Europe freight train service linking southwestern China's Guizhou province and Moscow started service on Thursday. Loaded with goods including guitars, electronics and ceramics, the inaugural train is expected to arrive in Moscow on Dec 3, the Guizhou Provincial Commerce Department said. There will be no transit stops along the new route, with the train set to leave China via the land port of Manzhouli on the China-Russia border. The new route is expected to cut transportation time to 15 days, compared with 53 days by sea.

Ancient tomb found at construction site

An ancient tomb believed to date back to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) has been unearthed at a construction site in Qixian county, Hebei province, the local cultural relics protection department said on Thursday. The octagonal-shaped tomb was well-preserved with delicate brick carvings. Two coffins were juxtaposed at the bottom, each with a skeleton inside. Four well-preserved white glaze plates and a blue and white porcelain bowl were also unearthed.

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A food courier delivers an order amid snowfall in Urumqi, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, on Thursday. The cold air that contributed to the snowfall will see temperatures plunge in vast areas of northern, central and eastern China. LIU XIN / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Cold wave set to hit, but tricky, 'like a fox'

By LI HONGYANG
lihongyang@chinadaily.com.cn

After a break of about two weeks, cold air is expected to cause another slump in temperatures by more than 10 C in nearly 20 provinces from Friday to Tuesday, the National Meteorological Center said.

The center said that this round of cold air is forecast to be weaker than the previous one, which brought drops of up to 16 C and disrupted transportation in northern China from Nov 4 to 9.

However, the latest cold wave is expected to bring temperatures to a fresh low this winter, especially in northern areas and the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, weather.com, a website run by the China Meteorological Administration, said.

"I'd like to compare the previous

cold air to a tiger, which is extremely fierce, and the new one to a fox, which is not that strong but tricky," said Hu Xiao, the website's chief analyst. "The trick is that it will overlap the previous one, which may cause lower temperatures and trigger warnings for a cold wave."

He warned that people, including those in South China, should prepare thick clothes to guard against the cold air.

Hohhot, capital of the Inner Mongolia autonomous region, is forecast to experience the lowest temperature at -15 C. Temperatures along the Yangtze River may drop below zero for the first time since last winter, weather.com said.

Northeast China will be hit by heavy snowfalls again and there may be up to 30 millimeters of snow in Heilongjiang province, the

National Meteorological Center forecast.

From late November to early December, the cold air will hit most central and eastern areas, weather.com said.

Snow and rain will affect agriculture and transportation in the northeast, Hu said.

The center warned that as the coming cold air will affect a wide range of areas and bring lower temperatures and strong winds, farmers should reinforce greenhouses and animal shelters to make them windproof.

Eastern and southern sea areas need to guard against the effects of wind on maritime traffic and operations. Residents in areas reliant on coal-fired heating should light fires for heating in a safe way and prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Sliding down a slope, 11-month-old snowboarder becomes internet sensation

SHIJIAZHUANG — As the new snow season starts, enthusiastic skiers and snowboarders can't wait to hit the trails.

Among them is 11-month-old Wang Yuji, who can barely walk. A video of the girl standing on a snowboard and sliding down a hill in Zhangjiakou, Hebei province, went viral on the internet recently.

Fan Xueyin, Yuji's mother, said it was her daughter's first time to try snowboarding.

She said she and her husband were both born in the 1980s, live and work in Beijing, and love outdoor sports such as cycling, camping and running.

They hope Yuji will learn to share those interests.

"Because China will host the Winter Olympics soon, we are real-

ly encouraged to try ice and snow sports," Fan said. "Recently, we learned to snowboard for the first time, so we also brought our child, with the mentality of trying something new."

"Our family's philosophy has always been that we encourage our child to do whatever sports we do. We don't choose sports that we don't know how to do ourselves. I went snowboarding with her dad, so we got her a little snowboard too."

They initially considered waiting until Yuji was a little older, but Fan said "she really loved it."

Fan said the family has visited Thaiwoo Ski Resort in Zhangjiakou's Chongli district many times.

"Yuji has got along very well with the staff and neighbors," she

said. "Unlike living in the city, it's wonderful for her to be able to play outside three or four hours a day here."

Fan was studying at a college in Beijing in 2008 when the Chinese capital hosted the Summer Olympics, and she said she remembers the splendid atmosphere back then.

"We hope to come back to Chongli again soon to experience the Winter Games," she said.

Zhangjiakou is co-hosting the Games with Beijing.

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Online
See video by scanning the code.

Food plans to improve quality of grain supply

By ZHAO YIMENG
zhaoyimeng@chinadaily.com.cn

China has launched six improvement plans to boost a flagship high-quality grain project, according to the National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration.

The plans, which involve green storage, brand promotion, quality tracking, mechanization, emergency supply and food loss reduction, are expected to ensure sustainable national food security.

The green storage plan proposes building new high-standard granaries and improving warehouses, such as through air tightness and thermal insulation. A system to measure and control grain conditions should be established, while the ability to clean grain is expected to improve, the plan said.

By 2025, the country will realize temperature-controlled storage to

maintain quality and freshness, reduce the use of chemicals, and create a friendly environment for food preservation, it added.

The quality and brand improvement plan said that by 2025, the supply of high-quality food will be more abundant, and the amount of high-quality grain will see an annual increase of 10 percent. The country will cultivate more grain and oil brands with increasing market competitiveness.

The online and offline grain market, which includes emergency supply centers and staple food kitchens, should be improved to progress from "eating enough" to "eating healthily," it said.

The grain-quality tracking plan aims to trace the quality of grain and oil in the entire product chain, ensuring food safety and quality from farmland to dining table. A series of national standards will be

21.5 billion yuan

Funds allocated by the central government to nation's high-quality grain project since 2017

set for the quality of wheat, soybean and rice, it added.

The plan aims to improve quality and safety inspection and monitoring by using big data, the internet of things and other information technologies, further ensuring authenticity and accuracy.

The plan for improving mechanized equipment set higher goals for the use of advanced equipment in grain processing, drying, transporting and testing. Grain companies are encouraged to choose more mechanized equipment with independent intellectual property rights.

Nation's legal aid system offers lessons

By CUI JIA
cuijia@chinadaily.com.cn

China's practices of ensuring that people can have equal access to justice and supervise administrative powers in accordance with the law are valuable lessons for other countries, two Chinese human rights experts said.

Since 2003, China has established a nationwide legal aid system to ensure everyone can get access to justice, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, disability or income level, said Dai Ruijun, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of International Law.

"It is worth noting that victims of abuse, abandonment or domestic violence in China can apply for legal aid, not subject to the requirement of economic hardship," she said during the third session of the United Nations' Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law.

The forum, focusing on equal access to justice for all, was held in Geneva, Switzerland, on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Dai shared the case of a woman in Sichuan province who had been suffering from long-term domestic violence and accidentally killed her husband when she stood up to him after being beaten again in 2019.

The women had free legal aid throughout the proceedings, which helped her get a fair trial. She was initially convicted of intentional injury and sentenced to three years' imprisonment, but a second trial found that her behavior constituted excessive defense and sentenced her to probation, Dai said.

"A new Chinese law on legal aid will take effect in 2022," she added. "It is foreseeable that legal aid will help even more people truly get access to justice."

Meanwhile, China's administrative litigation system has allowed the public to supervise whether the administration's actions are carried out in accordance with law. It has also protected the human rights of the public, Wang Liwan, an associate professor at China University of Political Science and Law's Institute for Human Rights, said at the forum.

"The system has become an important part of China's judicial protection of human rights," Wang said. "It has been continuously conveying fairness and justice to the people. Also, it has been serving as an institutional platform for effective interaction between governments and citizens."

Dai and Wang both said China has been making further efforts to enforce judicial protection of human rights, setting a good example for other countries.