

# Efforts made to battle virus

Tibet's medical workers head for Hubei as the region achieved victory in fighting epidemic

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The only patient infected with the novel coronavirus in Tibet Autonomous Region was discharged from hospital on Feb 12, according to a Xinhua News Agency report.

The patient, 34, is from the city of Suizhou in Hubei, the province hardest hit by the epidemic.

He was hospitalized on Jan 25 and was confirmed to be infected with the novel coronavirus on Jan 29. He was the first and only confirmed case in the region.

On Feb 8, 32 close contacts of the region's only confirmed patient had been released from isolation for medical observation.

The discharge of the only confirmed patient marked a great victory of Tibet's battle against the epidemic, as the autonomous region hasn't reported any new or suspected cases or deaths caused by the virus since the end of January.

While locals were applauding the victory in Tibet, the region has also stepped up its effort to help the hardest-hit province of Hubei.

A medical team of three people from Tibet set off for Hubei on Feb 17 to help with epidemiological investigation on the front line.

The medical team brought 5,000

N95 surgical masks, 100 medical protective suits, 200 pairs of protective glasses and Tibetan medicine to help combat the outbreak.

Wang Shoubi, executive deputy director of the region's health commission, said after receiving the National Health Commission's call to dispatch medical staff to Hubei on Feb 15, the commission immediately gathered its staff to select the right team members.

"Among the members, leader Guo Linhai is an expert at the region's health supervision bureau, and Song Qifei and Pema Trinley are from the region's center for disease control and prevention," Wang said.

"It's an urgent mission and we will stand together with Hubei, and we will live up to the expectations of all the region's people," Guo said. Pema Trinley is from Gonggar county in Lhokha, a city that has been receiving various support from Hubei.

"I work as a member of the health emergency team at our center, and I had the experience of working with field epidemiology and laboratories in the past," Pema said.

The three were not the first medical workers to be on an assistance mission in Hubei province.

The residents and governments



**Above: Workers in Tibet load goods that to be delivered to Hubei province.** PENG HONG / XINHUA  
**Right: A resident in Lhasa donates blood to help the nation's fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic.** ZHANG RUFENG / XINHUA

in Tibet have offered the help to the people in Hubei province.

The government of Nyalam and the county's committee of the Communist Party of China donated 500,000 yuan (\$72,050) in cash and medical supplies to Wuchang district of Wuhan in support of the locals' fight against the epidemic.

Dondrup, Party secretary of the county, said, "The Hubei people have been generous in helping Nyalam, especially in poverty reduction and natural disaster relief."



On Feb 19, 50 metric tons of yak meat and 169,000 boxes of mineral water were delivered to Huangshi and Shiyan cities in Hubei.

The supplies, worth 8.5 million

yuan in total, was donated by the government and businesses in Tibet to the medical workers and other people in the front line fighting the epidemic.

# Tibetans celebrate new year, deliver their best wishes

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Residents in most part of Tibet celebrated the Tibetan New Year, or Sonam Losar, on Feb 24.

This should be an occasion for family reunion and get-together, however, considering the novel coronavirus epidemic is still here in China, authorities in the autonomous regions required the residents to have safe and healthy New Year.

To prevent the spread of the epidemic, authorities in Lhasa, capital city of the autonomous region, asked residents to order their holiday goods online and retailers to deliver to purchases to the gates of residents' community, avoiding crowding in shops.

Despite the epidemic in many parts in China, there were sufficient suppliers at many retailers' outlets.

Wang Juan, chief of an outlet of Shengmeijia, a retail chain in Lhasa, said, "We are supplying more than 40 neighboring communities. We receive orders online and deliver the goods to the communities provided that the order is valued at more than 200 yuan (\$43.5)."

Other retailers in the city, including Baiyi and Damai, have joined the ranks of Shengmeijia, according to the Lhasa bureau of commerce.



**From left: Residents in a community in Lhasa receive goods delivered by local retailer Jingtu.** SUN FEI / XINHUA  
**Children celebrate the Sonam Losar new year at their home.** JIGME DORJE / XINHUA

To ensure sufficient supplies, Lhasa-based retail company Jingtu has purchased more than 800 metric tons of vegetables and 180 tons of cereal from Shandong, Sichuan and Gansu provinces.

"Our inventory is about seven times more than the previous year," said Tashi Sonam, deputy general manager of Jingtu.

"And we have posted QR codes at every community. All the residents have to do is to order online and we will deliver to the gate," he added.

For residents throughout Tibet, the Sonam Losar new year was

more quiet than ever but never short of happiness and good wishes.

In a community in Lhasa's Barkor district, Lobsang was spending the New Year's Day with his wife.

Lobsang said it was usual that his children and grand children would come back to have a big family reunion.

"For epidemic prevention, we canceled the family reunion this year," Lobsang said, adding that he talked with his children on the phone and sent them his best wishes.

"I just hope everyone in my family and everyone in the country to

be safe and healthy at this critical moment of battling the epidemic," Lobsang said.

In Wuhan of Hubei province, the epicenter of the novel coronavirus, a number of Tibetan students had to spend the Sonam Losar new year with the locals, due to the city's lockdown measures since late January.

There are a number of Tibetan schools outside Tibet, as part of the local regions' effort to help improve educational quality for the autonomous region.

In Wuhan, the Tibetan school is home to more than 600 students

from Tibet.

Phurbu Lobsang is a student at the school. He stayed in Wuhan during this winter vacation with other Tibetan students.

The grade 12 student said he wanted to deliver his best wishes to the people in Hubei and his parents in Tibet on the special occasion of Sonam Losar.

"Praying for best luck is a common practice in Tibet during the Sonam Losar," Phurbu Lobsang said.

"I hope the epidemic here can be over as soon as possible," he said.

The student said he talked with his parents on the phone, telling them the school is "one of the safest places in Wuhan".

To date, no infected cases have been reported in the school, according to Xu Feng, an executive of the school.

"We have implemented the strictest preventive measures to ensure the students' health," Xu said, adding that these measures include taking body temperatures on a daily basis and all the gatherings.

Although students are not advised to get together for celebrating the new year, Xu said the school has prepared plenty of special Tibetan food for the new year.

"I hope their experience in this difficult time would help them increase their senses of responsibility and gratitude," Xu said.