**[Long Dingbin and Coronavirus](https://nation.com.pk/17-Feb-2020/long-dingbin-and-coronavirus" \t "_new)**

Yasir Habib Khan February 17, 2020

Coronavirus that sounded death kneel by killing hundred and infecting thousands in a one fell swoop is set to register a downward trajectory as China is very near to breakthrough that would end an era of horror unleashed by fatal disease in China and globally.

Talking to Chinese Consul General Lahore Long Dingbin accompanied by deputy consul general Peng Zhengwu at Chinese Consulate Lahore he revealed that “we are very near to formulate medical remedy to rein in outbreak and fatality rate devastated by Coronavirus.” It is matter of just a week and everything will be under control indeed,” he added.

Shedding light over the issue, he said that China is now strengthening case treatment to reduce severe and fatal cases. Talking about breakthrough, he said “We set up a national expert group on scientific research to speed up the development of vaccines. We accelerate the approval and clinical use of drugs proven to be effective against the virus. We have treated such vaccine formula on number of affectees who later got recovered gradually. So there is sign of good news ahead shortly. They are safer in China than anywhere else,” he added.

When asked does he see any impact of Coronavirus on Pak-China bilateral Trade, he replied that second phase of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that took off from 1st January, 2020, is expected to open new vistas of trade between two countries. “I do not see Pak-China trade gets bedeviled given the grim situation. Business to Business environment can never be hurt as usually it is executed online or through phone and other mode of communication. As real challenge is to mitigate people to people contact that is very favorable for contagious disease. So it is highly recommended temporarily for minimum people to people meetings to prevent spread of virus,” he said.

On query about over 500 Pakistani students’ evacuation in Wuhan city, Hubei province as indecisiveness about their departure deepens, he said that Pakistani students and citizens living in Wuhan are free to move within their university campuses as all essentials are found within the boundaries of their universities. Provided 14 days incubation time is over and no symptom is detected, they may fly back to their homeland as per their own choice abiding by prescribed health regulations laid down in collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO), global institutions and Chinese health authorities,” he revealed.

As matter of fact, he said there is no travel embargo. “Recently, flights from China to Pakistan brought many Pakistani students back to Pakistan. These Pakistanis had to undergo intense medical observations with quarantine and screening procedures. Having certified unaffected, they departed easily,” he said.

He said categorically that after one week grave situation is all set to improve. “It is highly likelihood that as soon as Coronavirus cases will decline during next days, panic scenario will subside. When the people will see entire life back to normalcy and Wuhan as bustling city, travel panic will phase out automatically,” he added.

“In my personal opinion and as per WHO recommendations, Pakistani students and all other nationalities in Wuhan and other cities should stay at their homes and defer their travel plans for the time being. Situation is going to change in few days dramatically as China is about to defeat the Coronavirus with full might,” he said.

When questioned that with onslaught of Coronavirus, are CPEC projects being suspended fully or partially particularly in Punjab, he ruled out the suspension of CPEC projects terming such news as product of rumours. He claimed that all of them including in the Punjab are running smoothly and under normal construction. Due to Chinese Spring Festival Holidays, he said that discontinuation came for three days from January 24 to January 26. On January 27, all work resumed accordingly. “Both the Sahiwal coal-fired power plant and the Bahawalpur Solar Park have been completed several years ago, and are currently in normal operation. The PKM project (Multan to Sukkur Section) was also completed last year. The Lahore Orange Line project and the Matiari to Lahore HVDC transmission line project are currently under normal construction and have not been affected by the epidemic prevention measures. We noticed that Nikkei Asian Review reported that CPEC project was postponed. This is not true,” he mentioned.

Regarding how Chinese government is helping out Pakistani students in Wuhan, he said since Chinese government attaching high importance to the well-being of foreign nationals in China, especially Wuhan, Hubei, he said that China has taken effective measures to address their concerns and needs in a timely manner.

“First, Hubei has set up a 24 hour hotline (027-87122256) for foreign citizens, students and tour groups in the province to access advice and assistance. In addition, its official website and the WeChat account of Hubei Foreign Office promptly relayed information on the epidemic situation and epidemic prevention knowledge in English, French, German, Russian, Japanese, Korean and Spanish. Many provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities like Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Guangdong, Jiangsu and Xinjiang have sent open letters to foreign citizens working and living there, sharing with them information channels and designated treatment centers and offering services in light of local realities.

Second, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has set up a special column entitled “Fighting 2019-nCoV” on its website, gathering the latest information from the National Health Commission to keep foreign readers updated.

Third, to help equip foreign nationals in China with prevention know-how, the National Immigration Administration translated the Public Prevention of Pneumonia Caused by Novel Coronavirus released by the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention into six foreign languages, namely English, French, Russian, German, Japan and Korean. They are all readily available online,” he explained.

Giving the answer of my question that there is a perception that Pakistan hospitals are not equipped for health care facilities to fight against virus, so under the situation do Chinese and Pakistan government think for any contingency plan, he disclosed that “China is willing to work together with Pakistan to diagnose and prevent this epidemic to the best of its ability. The two governments have maintained close communication on this. At present, China has provided 1,000 test kits to Pakistan,” he added. Now, he said, arrangements have been made in Services hospital Lahore to deal with the Coronavirus cases with required medical facilities.

In terms of flight situation between Pakistan and China, he said that on Feb 3, Pakistan resumed flights between Pakistan and china, and the flights between Lahore and Urumqi will be resumed on Feb 6. China and Pakistan are iron brothers that share a good tradition of mutual assistance. As China fights the outbreak, Pakistan has stood firmly with us, maintaining flights and pooling medical supplies all over the country to help China. We are deeply grateful and touched by such trust and confidence. China will continue to work in close communication and coordination with Pakistan to safeguard the health of Pakistanis in China.

Yasir Habib Khan

The writer is a senior journalist working for China Today and China Radio International. He also contributes to national mainstreams newspapers on economy, international relation and human rights. He is a fellow of ICFJ.

Yaseerkhan@hotmail.com,

@yasirkhann