

China refutes 24 ‘lies’ by US over coronavirus

REUTERS, Beijing

China has issued a lengthy rebuttal of what it said were 24 “preposterous allegations” by some leading US politicians over its handling of the new coronavirus outbreak.

The Chinese foreign ministry has dedicated most of its press briefings over the past week to rejecting accusations by US politicians, especially Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, that China had withheld information about the new coronavirus and that it had originated in a laboratory in the city of Wuhan.

A 30-page, 11,000-word article posted on the ministry website on Saturday night repeated and expanded on the refutations made during the press briefings, and began by invoking Abraham Lincoln, the 19th century US president.

“As Lincoln said, you can fool some of the people all the time and fool all the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time,” it said in the prologue.

The article also cited media reports that said Americans had been infected with the virus before the first case was confirmed in Wuhan. There is no evidence to suggest that is the case. However, the article said that all evidence shows the virus is not man-made.

The article also provided a timeline of how China had provided information to the international community in a “timely”, “open and transparent” manner to rebuke US suggestions that it had been slow to sound the alarm.

Yesterday, China’s National Health Commission reported 14 new confirmed coronavirus cases on May 9, the highest number since April 28, including the first for more than a month in the city of Wuhan where the outbreak was first detected late last year. The new Wuhan case, the first reported in the epicentre of China’s outbreak since April 3, was previously asymptomatic, according to the health commission.



A policeman inspects a passenger plane damaged by shelling at Tripoli’s Mitiga airport in Tripoli, Libya, yesterday. the airport shelling early on Saturday, part of an intensified barrage of artillery fire on the capital in recent days, hit fuel tanks and damaged passenger planes, officials said in a statement.

PHOTO: REUTERS

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

LATEST UPDATES

CASES SURPASS 4 MILLION

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 279,185 people do far, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT yesterday. At least 4,035,470 cases of coronavirus have been registered in 195 countries and territories. The US has the highest number of total deaths with 78,794. Britain has the second highest toll followed by Italy with 30,395 deaths, Spain with 26,621 fatalities and France with 26,310 deaths.

RUSSIA’S CASES TOP 200,000

The number of people confirmed to have the coronavirus in Russia has exceeded 200,000, official data showed yesterday. The total number of cases increased to 209,688 after another 11,012 tests came back positive in the last 24 hours, it showed, with the total number of people dying since the outbreak began remaining relatively low at 1,915.

LANKA TO PARTIALLY REOPEN

Sri Lanka will partially reopen from Monday, ending a 52-day lockdown as the community spread of the coronavirus had been brought under control, the health minister said.

Pavithra Wanniarachchi said state and private companies would be allowed to open, as authorities seek to revive the island’s tourism-dependent economy that has been battered by lockdown since March 20. Public transport will remain closed for two more weeks, however.

US OFFICIALS IN SELF-ISOLATION

Three key US officials guiding the coronavirus response were in self-quarantine on Saturday after coming into contact with someone who had tested positive for COVID-19. Anthony Fauci, a high-profile member of the White House coronavirus response team, is considered to be at relatively low risk based on the degree of his exposure. Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Robert Redfield and US Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Stephen Hahn were also in self-quarantine.

RARE SYNDROME KILLS 3 NY KIDS

Three children in New York have died from a rare inflammatory syndrome believed to be linked to the novel coronavirus, a development that may augur a pandemic risk for the very young. Governor Andrew Cuomo told a daily briefing that he was increasingly worried about a syndrome that shares symptoms with toxic shock and Kawasaki disease, which he said included inflammation of the blood vessels and potentially fatal damage to the heart. He said three children - including a five-year old disclosed on Friday - have died from such symptoms while also testing positive for COVID-19 or related antibodies, suggesting a link that was still not fully understood.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

NEWSINbrief

Syria clashes kill 22

AFP, Beirut

Clashes in northwest Syria killed 22 regime fighters and jihadists yesterday in the highest such death toll since the start of a two-month-old ceasefire there, a monitor said. The latest clash began when rebels attacked the positions of pro-regime fighters in Idlib, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Venezuela nabs 3 more in ‘invasion’ probe

AFP, Caracas

Three alleged mercenaries were arrested Saturday in connection with the attempted invasion of Venezuela, President Nicolas Maduro said, bringing the total captured to 34. The failed invasion saw men landing in early May at Macuto, less than an hour from Caracas. Two former US soldiers, Luke Denman, 34, and Airan Berry, 41, have been imprisoned and charged with “terrorism, conspiracy, illicit trafficking of weapons of war and (criminal) association.” They could face between 25 to 30 years in prison. The others implicated in the case are Venezuelans.

Iran says ready for prisoner swap with US

AFP, Tehran

Iran yesterday said it had expressed readiness for a full prisoner exchange with the United States “with no preconditions” but that Washington was yet to respond. Tehran in December freed Xiyue Wang, a US academic, in an exchange for scientist Massoud Soleimani and said it was open to further swaps.

India, China troops in fistfight in Sikkim

NDTV ONLINE

At least 15 to 20 Indian soldiers were involved in hand-to-hand fighting at a high altitude picket in north Sikkim at an altitude of more than 16,000 feet yesterday. There are reports that there may also have been stone pelting between the forces.

India and China have differing views on the alignment of the Line of Actual Control in the region. The entire incident has been captured on video by the Indian Army’s soldiers.

In a statement, the army said, “Aggressive behaviour by the two sides resulted in minor injuries to troops. The two sides disengaged after dialogue and interaction at local level.”

“Temporary and short duration faceoffs between border guarding troops do occur as boundaries are not resolved. Incident of face off as referred to in the article did take place. Troops resolve such issues mutually as per established protocols,” the statement read.

A 73-day stand-off with China also took place in 2017 over Doklam plateau, an area claimed by China and India’s ally Bhutan. In 2018, at an informal summit at Wuhan between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese president Xi Jinping threw up new guidelines for the military of both nations as part of moving beyond Doklam and “maintaining peace and tranquility” on border areas.

Easing curbs hit Germany

Virus spread accelerates; UK readies for lockdown easing

REUTERS, Berlin

New coronavirus infections are accelerating again in Germany just days after its leaders loosened social restrictions, raising concerns that the pandemic could once again slip out of control.

The development came as British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was set to set out a five-tier warning system for the coronavirus in England when he outlines the government’s roadmap for gradually easing lockdown measures that have shut down much of the economy for nearly seven weeks.

In Germany, the Robert Koch Institute for disease control said in a daily bulletin the number of people each sick person now infects - known as the reproduction rate, or R - had risen to 1.1. When it goes above 1, it means the number of infections is growing.

Chancellor Angela Merkel, bowing to pressure from leaders of Germany’s 16 federal states to restart social life and revive the economy, announced on Wednesday measures that included more shop openings and a gradual return to school.

At the same time, she launched an “emergency brake” to allow for the reimposition of restrictions if

infections pick up again.

Karl Lauterbach, a Social Democrat lawmaker and professor of epidemiology, warned that the new coronavirus could start spreading again quickly after seeing large crowds out and about on Saturday in his home city of Cologne.

“It has to be expected that the R rate will go over 1 and we will return to exponential growth,” Lauterbach said in a tweet. “The loosening measures were far too poorly prepared.”

The Robert Koch Institute said on Sunday the confirmed number of new coronavirus cases had increased by a daily 667 to 169,218, while the daily death toll had risen by 26 to 7,395.

In London, Johnson will use a televised address at 1800 GMT to announce limited changes, including encouraging more of those who cannot work from home to return to their offices and factories, and allowing people to exercise more than once a day, according to a government minister and British media.

The government’s flagship “stay at home” slogan will be replaced with “stay alert”, a decision that drew criticism from opposition parties for being too ambiguous.

ROAD THROUGH DISPUTED TERRITORY

India rejects Nepal’s claim

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India yesterday rejected Nepal’s claim that a road recently opened for facilitating pilgrims’ travel to Kailash-Manasarovar in Tibet passes through Nepalese territory and asserted that the area lies completely within Indian borders.

The high-altitude road from Darchula to Lipulekh in Uttarakhand state of India near the China border, which cuts distance to Mansarovar by ten km, was inaugurated by Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday last.

On Saturday, Nepal’s Foreign Ministry came out with a statement that “the government of Nepal has learnt with regret about the inauguration yesterday by India of a link road connecting to Lipulekh (Nepal) passing through it.”

“The unilateral act runs against the understanding reached between the two countries,” the statement added.

“The government of Nepal remains committed to seek diplomatic solution to the boundary issues on the basis of historical treaty, documents, facts and maps in keeping with the spirit of close and friendly ties



between the two countries.”

Responding to Nepal’s contention, Anurag Srivastava, spokesperson for the Indian External Affairs Ministry, said on Saturday that “the recently-inaugurated road section in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand (in India) lies completely within the territory of India.

“The road follows the pre-existing route used by the pilgrims of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. Under the present project, the same road has been made pliable for the ease and convenience of pilgrims,” he said.

The news of the inauguration of the road prompted protests by students in Kathmandu, including one in front of the Indian Embassy in New Delhi.



Iraqi protesters take cover as they clash with security forces during an anti-government demonstration on Al-Jumhuriyah bridge in the capital Baghdad, yesterday. Modest anti-government rallies resumed in some Iraqi cities yesterday, clashing with security forces and ending months of relative calm just days after Prime Minister Mustafa Kadhemi’s government came to power.

PHOTO: AFP

 <div> <div>“সবাই মিলে গড়ব দেশ, দুর্নীতি মুক্ত বাংলাদেশ”</div> <div>দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন</div> <div>প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা</div> </div>		
<div>মাইক্রোবাস আউটসোর্সিং সংক্রান্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি</div>		
<div>সং-দ্রুতক/প্রশাঃ ও সিসি/৯১/২০০৮(অংশ-১০)/১২৪০২</div> <div>তারিখঃ ০৭/০৫/২০২০খ্রিঃ</div>		
১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ/এজেন্সি	১। দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন।
২।	সম্প্রদায়িক সত্তার নাম, কোড ও জেলা	২। দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, ঢাকা, ৬৭০১।
৩।	যে কাজের জন্য দরপত্র	৩। ১। জুলাই ২০২০ থেকে ৩০ জুন ২০২১ পর্যন্ত দরপত্র সিভিটিলে শর্তাবলি অনুযায়ী দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকার কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীদের অফিসে যাতায়াতের জন্য টিএ এবং কর্মকর্তা-কর্মচারীদের অফিসে অলা-নেয়ারাল কমিশনের কাজে ব্যবহারের জন্য টিএ সহ মোট ০৯ (নয়) টি ২০১৫ মডেলের অর্ধচক্র ০৫ (পাঁচ) বছর বায়বাহ্য হইবে এমন সিএবিজি চলিত ১২ আদান বিশিষ্ট Climate Controlled মাইক্রোবাস কক্ষ।
৪।	দরপত্রের সূত্র ও তারিখ	৪। দ্রুতক/প্রশাঃ ও সিসি/৯১/২০০৮(অংশ-১০)/১২৪০২, তারিখঃ ০৭/০৫/২০২০খ্রিঃ।
৫।	সম্প্রদায়িক পদ্ধতি	৫। খোলা দরপত্র (OTM)
৬।	বাজেট ও অফারের উদ্দেশ্য	৬। দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশনের রাজস্ব বাজেট।
৭।	দরপত্র প্রস্তুতকারকের তারিখ	৭। ১১-০৫-২০২০খ্রিঃ।
৮।	দরপত্রের সিভিটিলে বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	৮। ০১-০৬-২০২০খ্রিঃ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।
৯।	দরপত্র আবেদনের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	৯। ০২-০৬-২০২০খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০।	দরপত্র প্রকাশের স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	১০। দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়ে পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব) এর অফিস কক্ষে আবেদনী ০২-০৬-২০২০খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১১।	দরপত্রের সিভিটিলে বিক্রয়ের স্থান/পদ্ধতি	১১। দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ১, চেম্বারলাইন, ঢাকা-১০০০।
১২।	দরপত্রের আবেদনের স্থান/পদ্ধতি	১২। দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ১, চেম্বারলাইন, ঢাকা-১০০০।
১৩।	প্রতিবেদন দরপত্রের সিভিটিলে প্রকাশ	১৩। প্রতিবেদন দরপত্রের প্রকাশের স্থান ২,০০০/- (দুই হাজার) টাকা (অফিসের মাধ্যমে)।
১৪।	দরপত্রের বিক্রয় প্রক্রিয়া	১৪। দরপত্রের সাথে প্রকাশ প্রক্রিয়া হিসেবে প্রতিটি মাইক্রোবাসের জন্য ২০,০০০/- (বিশ হাজার) টাকা প্রকাশ প্রক্রিয়া-অর্থের যে কোন বণিকৃত ব্যাংক (সিভিটিলে ব্যাংক) হতে সহকারী পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব), দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা এর অনুকূলে দাখিল করতে হবে। অন্যথায় দরপত্রের সত্যতা বাকি থাকবে।
১৫।	দরপত্রের বৈধতার মেয়াদ	১৫। দলিলাবদ্ধ দরপত্রের কার্যকরিতা (Validity) দরপত্রের প্রকাশের তারিখ হতে ১২০ (একশত বিশ) দিন পর্যন্ত বৈধ থাকবে।
১৬।	দরপত্রের প্রকাশের ও প্রক্রিয়াকরণের পদ্ধতি	১৬। মাইক্রোবাসের প্রকাশ প্রক্রিয়া/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান। দরপত্রের সাথে প্রকাশ প্রক্রিয়া/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান, সিভিটিলে সিভিটিলে, টাঙ্গাইল,