**严守祖国西南边境 筑牢筑强抗疫长城**

记者：李映青 陈美玲

下午六点，白泽已经狼吞虎咽地用完晚饭，匆忙赶去履行自己的职责──在中缅边境，云南省瑞丽市的章凤口岸巡逻。

这条两岁的警犬穿着黑色的夹克，显得仪态威严。

训练员高雷阳说训练有素的警犬具备敏锐的嗅觉、听觉和视觉，灵活性强，在检查工作中有着不可替代的作用。

章凤口岸附近植被繁茂，下水道系统复杂，便于犯罪分子藏身。在四月午夜的一次巡逻中，白泽吠叫起来，警察马上抓捕了一名企图通过下水道非法入境中国的外国人。

云南在8个州市有25个边境县，境外输入新冠肺炎的风险高。

自从新冠疫情爆发以来，云南已经报告过几次疫情。许多输入型病例在瑞丽这样的边境地区传播。

为了加强疫情防控，警察、医务人员和村民们24小时待命，打击非法入境，进行健康指导，推广疫苗接种。

瑞丽南部的姐相乡与缅甸山、河、陆地相连。中缅居民有着很长的贸易和通婚史。他们正团结一致共同对抗病毒。

姐相有瑞丽最大的工业园，两千多名不通汉语的缅籍务工人员在此工作。对此，姐相边境派出所成立了一支由警察、医务工作者和村民组成的特别联合服务队。

当巡逻员发现有人试图非法进出中国时，医务人员对他们进行消毒和隔离。来自缅甸的团队成员则为非法入境者提供翻译服务。

28岁的于海洋是姐相边境派出所的一名警员。他平均每天工作十个小时以上。当有旅客抱怨边境检查排队太长时，于海洋说他会笑着给予问候。

缅甸人孟喊帅12年前和一名中国女性结婚后搬到姐相生活。他主动加入了服务队，概述了为缅甸籍务工人员疫情防控作出的努力。

他说：“我们在中国就像在家一样。我相信每个人都会很安全。”

姐相边境派出所教导员胡文武说任何的努力都是为了守好边境，防止新冠疫情传入中国。

**交通检查**

在中缅边境12公里长的瑞丽江边，瑞丽市公安局的突击队负责打击包括通过皮筏和木筏在内的水路偷渡。除了沿江巡逻，他们也做道路检查。

突击队队长王佑裕说：“去年九月以来，我们队员每天穿着防护服转运偷渡人员、其他违法犯罪嫌疑人和自首人员。我们也负责保障8辆救护车。”

“有时候警员们没时间吃饭，工作到半夜。夏天的时候，他们经常浸泡在汗水里。”

王佑裕说警员们主要吃泡面，睡帐篷，便于他们在江边有可疑事件发生时立刻行动。他们没有干净的饮用水、电和网络。

到目前为止，突击队查获了47艘非法船只，40名偷渡人员，劝返35名企图从缅甸非法入境中国的人。自去年1月以来，突击队员转运了13,000多名曾偷渡出境缅甸，后为逃避病毒自首回国的人员。

突击队副队长张君天说：“我们一刻也不能放松，因为到处都有隐患。”

在爱人刚刚生子的时候，张君天只请了几天假。他说：“她理解、支持我的工作。她总是说，只有每个人都做好自己的工作，瑞丽才能真正安全。”

专家表示，西南地区边境守卫在疫情防控中很关键。这不仅对全国都非常重要，也是追求零感染目标的一条“安全底线”。

前云南省委书记阮成发说，要通过提高基础设施建设，加强检查，优化社区管理，来堵住非法出入境的漏洞。

夜幕降临，瑞丽160公里长的边境线为巡逻工作点亮，3,500多名边境工作人员昼夜轮班。在一些偏远地区，电力供应部门投资了300多万元（468,300美元）提供电力支持。

成千上万的当地人牺牲了假期和家庭团聚的时光。

腾冲市公安局出入境管理大队民警李睿中负责帮助为疫情而担忧的外国人。她会挨个打电话安慰他们，并提供自我防护指导。

在疫情刚刚开始的时候，腾冲营运车辆停运，边境口岸关闭。李睿中和同事们帮助了800多名缅甸籍人员回家。她也加班加点对外来者开展轨迹核查，参与妨害边境安全的犯罪案件的侦办工作。

然而，这也意味着她没有时间陪伴女儿。

李睿中说：“去年她高考，但是每当我精疲力竭地回到家时，她已经睡了。每次她看见我接电话，都会抱怨我没有照顾好家庭。”

好消息是女儿顺利考上了大学。

这个月早些时候的国庆假期，字新云没有回家，他在十月二日拜访了云南雷允村一名姓陈的村民，帮他晒稻谷。字新云和同事们每天定期在这片区域巡逻，告知当地居民疫情防控措施。

字新云在瑞丽出入境边检站雷允分站工作。他说雷允是一个边境村，法律意识薄弱，青少年违法犯罪时有发生。“我们的工作不仅是守好边境大门，也要帮助当地人。”他说。

字新云已经三个月没有见到家人了。有一天，他在下午七点回到办公室，给妻子打了一个视频电话，视频里他看到蛋糕上插着蜡烛，正在为他孩子的两岁生日庆祝。

“他们都有点习惯我不在家了。”字新云说。他说许多警员都在假日期间值守。

**一生的职责**

对某些人来说，守边是一生的使命。

61岁的岩聪是云南普洱市西盟佤族自治县勐卡边境派出所的护边员。他不肯退休，说他的生命“和界桩紧密相连”。

岩聪从5岁开始跟着爷爷和父亲在缅甸边境巡逻。那时候，界桩和界桩之间没有铺好的路，只有树林、峭壁和密集多刺的灌木丛。

他曾被偷渡者打得遍体鳞伤，但是他没有被吓倒。“我得守护我们的领土。”他说。岩聪的父亲曾告诉他，守边是“应该被一代代传承下去的好事”。

他喜欢一遍遍带着年轻警员在这7.9公里长的边境线上行走。岩聪还是省级非物质文化遗产传承人，他会演奏三十多种佤族流行乐器。在巡逻的休息间隙，他经常给大家唱歌、奏乐。

努力工作的不止是人类。在西双版纳傣族自治州勐海县曼厂村，一只狗和两只鹅也参与到了疫情防控中。每次他们遇到陌生人都会叫唤。

勐海县国境线长约146公里，其打洛口岸距缅甸仅86公里，距泰国仅240公里，为我国去往这两个国家提供了一条陆路通道。

新冠肺炎在世界蔓延之后，通过这个口岸进入中国的人急剧增加，给疫情防控带来了很大挑战。

村民岩文叫说正如狗对味道敏感，鹅对声音敏感。夜间他们可以制造很多噪音来发出警报。

“鹅是无所畏惧的，它们有很强的领地保护意识，也有攻击性。它们可以阻止非法入境者，甚至可以吓退蛇。”他说。

打洛出入境边防检查站民警李海振说几个月前站里买了一只狗。“即使在睡觉的时候，它也保持警觉，它的耳朵可以捕捉到任何声响。除此之外，它也是一个很好的陪伴者，给我们带来了很多乐趣。”

云南财经大学旅游文化产业研究院院长明庆忠说，边境地区是维护国家安全与稳定的关键。除了军事安全，守边也包括了打击非法出入境、走私、极端民族主义和恐怖主义。

对于通过航空渠道的入境人员，发现和控制输入型新冠病例相对容易，但我们也应该更加重视通过陆路口岸输入的情况，他说。

漫长的边境线和复杂的自然地形带来了很大的挑战。频繁的人员交流和尖端设备的缺乏也增加了压力。

对此，仅仅依靠警察是不够的。利用无线传感、无人机、人工智能、生物信息识别、实时定位等技术建立一个智能安全管理系统，以及加大边境管理国际合作，应该是很好的解决方案，他说。

**英文原文如下：**

**BORDER PATROL OFFICERS RISE TO COVID CHALLENGE**

**Family time sacrificed as hard work keeps cases at bay**

By LI YINGQING in Kunming and CHEN MEILING

Bai Ze wolfed down his dinner at 6 pm before being rushed off to perform his duty－patrolling the China-Myanmar border at the Zhangfeng land port in Ruili, Yunnan province.

 The 2-year-old police dog was clad in a black jacket, giving him a commanding presence.

 Gao Leiyang, the animal's handler, said well-trained police dogs have acute senses of smell, hearing and vision and are highly flexible and irreplaceable for inspection work.

 Border areas around the port are covered in lush vegetation and also have complex sewage systems, making it easy for criminals to hide. While pa­trolling at midnight in April, Bai Ze barked and police officers captured a foreigner attempting to enter China illegally through a sewer.

 Yunnan is home to 25 border counties in eight prefectures or cities, and there is a high risk of COVID-19 cases being imported to China.

 Several outbreaks of the virus have been reported in the province since the pandemic broke out. Many imported cases have been spread in border communities such as Ruili.

 To strengthen prevention and control efforts, police, health workers and villagers are on call 24 hours a day to clamp down on illegal migration and to promote health guidance and vaccination.

 Jiexiang village in southern Ruili shares rivers, mountains and fields with Myanmar, and residents from China and Myanmar, who have a long history of trading and intermarrying, are standing together to fight the virus.

 Jiexiang is home to the largest industrial park in Ruili, which employs more than 2,000 workers from Myanmar who cannot speak Chinese. A special coordinated service team comprising police, medical workers and villagers has been set up by the Jiexiang border police station.

 When patrols detect people intending to enter or leave China illegally, the health workers disinfect and quarantine them. Members of the team from Myanmar provide interpretation services for illegal immigrants.

 Yu Haiyang, 28, an officer at the station, works more than 10 hours a day on average. When travelers complain about long waiting times for border inspection, he said he greets them with a smile.

 Meng Hanshuai, a Myanmar national who moved to Jiexiang after marrying a Chinese woman 12 years ago, has volunteered to join the team. He outlines efforts to contain the pandemic to workers from Myanmar.

 "We feel at home here in China, and I believe everyone will stay safe," he said.

 Hu Wenwu, an instructor at the station, said every effort is made to guard the border and prevent cases of COVID-19 being imported to China.

 Traffic inspections

 Along the 12-km-long Ruili River, which forms part of the border between China and Myanmar, officers from the task force at Ruili police station prevent people stowing away on vessels, including kayaks and rafts. In addition to patrolling the river, they inspect road traffic.

 Wang Youyu, head of the team, said: "Since September last year, our team members have worn protective clothing each day to transfer illegal immigrants, other criminal suspects and those who surrender to police. We also have eight ambulances on the roads.

 "Sometimes, the officers don't have time for dinner and they work until midnight, while in summer, they are soaked in sweat."

 The officers mainly eat instant noodles and sleep in tents, enabling them to act immediately a suspicious incident is reported along the river. They don't have clean drinking water, electricity or internet access, Wang said.

 To date, the team has seized 47 vessels operating illegally, 40 illegal immigrants and turned back 35 people trying to enter China unlawfully from Myanmar. Since January last year, team members have transferred to China about 13,000 Chinese who entered Myanmar illegally, but turned themselves in to police, as they wanted to escape the virus.

 Zhang Juntian, deputy head of the team, said, "We cannot relax for one moment, because there is always hidden danger."

 Taking only a few days off when his wife had their baby, Zhang said: "She understands and supports my work. She often says that only when everyone stays on top of their job can Ruili be truly safe."

 According to experts, guarding the borders in Southwest China is key to preventing COVID-19 cases, which is vitally important nationwide and "a bottom line for security" as the nation pursues the goal of zero infections.

 Ruan Chengfa, former Party secretary of Yunnan, said the province aims to plug loopholes in illegal immigration and emigration by improving infrastructure, tightening inspections and optimizing community governance.

 When night falls, the 160-km border with Myanmar in Ruili is lit for patrol work, and more than 3,500 border workers on are duty in different shifts day and night. In some remote areas, the local power supply bureau has invested more than 3 million yuan ($468,300) to supply electricity.

 Thousands of locals have also sacrificed their holidays and family reunions.

 Li Ruizhong, an officer with the exit and entry management unit at Tengchong police station, helps foreigners worried about the pandemic, calling them in individually to reassure them and provide self-protection instruction.

 When the pandemic emerged, vehicles were barred from the roads in Tengchong and the border points were closed. Li and her colleagues helped more than 800 people from Myanmar return home. She also worked overtime to track outsiders and investigate criminal cases that threatened border security.

 However, this work meant she had no time to spend with her daughter.

 Li said: "She took the national college entrance examination last year, but when I came home feeling exhausted, she had already fallen asleep. Every time she saw me answering phone calls, she complained that I was not taking good care of the family."

 The good news is that her daughter was accepted for university entrance.

 Instead of returning home to celebrate the National Day holiday early this month, Zi Xinyun visited a resident surnamed Chen in Leiyun village, Yunnan, on Oct 2 to help dry his rice. Zi and his colleagues routinely patrol the area each day to tell locals about pandemic control measures.

 Zi, who works at the Leiyun branch of the Ruili immigration inspection station, said Leiyun is a border village where legal awareness is low and where teenagers sometimes commit criminal offenses. "Our work not only involves guarding the border gate, but also helping local residents," he said.

 Zi has not seen his family for three months. He returned to the office at 7 pm one day to make a video call to his wife, in which he noticed candles had been placed on a cake to celebrate his child's second birthday.

 "They are kind of getting used to my absence at home," Zi said, adding that many police officers remain on duty during holidays.

 **Lifelong duty**

 For some, guarding the border is a lifelong mission.

 Yan Cong, a 61-year-old border patrol officer in Mengka town, Ximeng Wa autonomous county, Pu'er city, Yunnan, has refused to retire, saying his life "is edged with boundary stones".

 He began patrolling the Myanmar border with his father and grandfather when he was 5. Years ago, there were no paved roads between boundary stone markers, only forests, cliffs and dense, thorny undergrowth.

 Yan was once beaten badly by illegal immigrants, but he remains undeterred. "I need to safeguard our territory," he said, adding that his father told him that guarding the border is "a good thing that should be passed down from generation to generation".

 He likes to guide young officers in repeatedly walking the 7.9 km of border roads in the area. A provincial intangible cultural heritage inheritor, Yan can play 30 musical instruments popular among the Wa ethnic group. He often sings songs and plays music when patrol officers take a break.

 Humans are not the only ones working hard. At Manchang village in Xishuangbanna Dai autonomous prefecture, Yunnan, a dog and two geese are playing their part in pandemic control by barking or cackling every time they encounter a stranger.

 The border with Myanmar at Menghai stretches for about 146 km, with Daluo Port, located 86 km from Myanmar and 240 km from Thailand offering a land route from China to the two countries.

 After COVID-19 spread worldwide, the number of people entering China through the port surged, posing a significant challenge to controlling the outbreak.

 Villager Yan Wenjiao said that as dogs are particularly sensitive to smell, and geese to sound, they can make a lot of noise at night to signal the alarm.

 "Geese are fearless, have high awareness of guarding their territory, and are aggressive. They can help deter illegal immigrants and even scare away snakes," he said.

 Police officer Li Haizhen said the Daluo immigration inspection station, where he is based bought a dog from a villager several months ago. "It remains alert even when it's sleeping, as its ear pick up any kind of sound. In addition, it is a good companion and gives us a lot of fun," he added.

 Ming Qingzhong, director of Yunnan University of Finance and Economics' tourism and cultural industry research institute, said border areas are key to safeguarding national safety and stability. In addition to military security, safeguarding the border includes cracking down on illegal immigration and emigration, smuggling, extreme nationalism and terrorism, Ming said.

 It is also easier to discover and control imported COVID-19 cases by using airplanes, and attention should also be paid to cases imported through land ports, Ming added.

 Long borders and complex natural terrain pose great challenges. Frequent human exchanges and a lack of sophisticated equipment also add to the pressure. Ming said.

 In view of this, it is insufficient to rely solely on the police. Establishing an intelligent safety management system by using wireless sensors, drones, artificial intelligence, biological information recognition and real-time positioning, as well as increasing international cooperation on border management, should provide good solutions, he added.

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