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Russia Thanks 'Real Friend' Jack Ma for Gift of a Million Virus Masks

By Reuters

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Jack Ma, the co-founder of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba had spoken by telephone to Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and told him how touched he had been by Moscow's own help for China. **Wikicommons**

Russia has received more than a million masks and 200,000 coronavirus testing kits as a gift from Chinese billionaire businessman Jack Ma, its Defense Ministry said on Thursday.

Calling Ma "a real friend," the ministry said in a statement that the co-founder of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba had spoken by telephone to Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and told him how touched he had been by Moscow's own help for China.

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The foundations of Alibaba and Ma said on Wednesday they had sent medical equipment

to Russia. The Russian Defense Ministry said Ma's gift had been delivered in a Russian Air Force plane which had flown from China.

President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday he hoped Russia would defeat coronavirus in two to three months if it imposed tough measures, as authorities suspended international flights, ordered most shops in Moscow to shut and halted some church services.

Russia on Thursday reported 182 new coronavirus cases, its biggest one-day rise yet, bringing its official tally to 840.

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