

TRADE

China exporters 'can handle' overseas competition

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China's small exporters, whose operations have been disrupted by the government's zero-Covid policy, will stay competitive even as rivalry intensifies with their counterparts in Vietnam and other emerging markets, according to an executive at Alibaba Group Holding.

The country's small and medium-sized exporters were still doing fine despite increased

manufacturing activity in markets such as Vietnam, Alibaba.com general manager Zhang Kuo said in a live-streaming session on June 9, according to a report on Sunday by Jiemian.com.

That assessment by Zhang comes after China's export growth rebounded in May following the gradual return to normal of manufacturing activity in Shanghai towards the end of its lockdown.

Alibaba, owner of the *Post*, yesterday confirmed Zhang gave the speech last week, but did not elaborate on his remarks.

Alibaba.com, the company's first business, operates an online wholesale market that connects Chinese and foreign suppliers to overseas wholesale buyers.

The bullish outlook by Zhang reflects China's broader effort to turn around its faltering economy following relief packages introduced by the government in May.

The country's exports totalled US\$308.25 billion in May, up by 16.9 per cent from a year earlier, according to data released by customs last Thursday.

That marked a significant

improvement from April when overall exports increased by 3.9 per cent from a year ago to US\$273.62 billion, the lowest growth rate since June 2020.

Export momentum at the time was weakened by strict Covid-19 control measures, which disrupted manufacturing supply chains across the country.

Alibaba has been ramping up efforts to make cross-border e-commerce more accessible to small and medium-sized enterprises as domestic consumption has slowed.