Coronavirus: Malaysia confirms first citizen with coronavirus

Man had travelled to S'pore with China colleagues for a meeting last month; country now has 10 confirmed cases

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The Malaysian health authorities yesterday confirmed the first citizen to be infected with the coronavirus, bringing the total number of confirmed cases in the country to 10. The other new case announced yesterday was a Chinese national from Wuhan who has been in Malaysia since Jan 18.
The Malaysian man had travelled to Singapore for a meeting from Jan 16 to 23 with colleagues that included those from China, including one from Wuhan, the epicentre of the epidemic.

Malaysia's Health Minister Dzulkefly Ahmad said the 41-year-old Malaysian is from Selangor state. "He returned to Malaysia on Jan 23, and on Jan 29, he received treatment at a private hospital because of fever and cough," Dr Dzulkefly told a news conference.

The patient was referred to the Sungai Buloh Hospital, a coronavirus referral centre that is located at the edge of Kuala Lumpur, on Feb 2, and was admitted to an isolation ward. He was confirmed positive for the virus on Monday.

Singapore's Ministry of Health (MOH) said in a media release yesterday that it has initiated epidemiological investigations and contact tracing to identify individuals who had close contact with the man.

The man had stayed at the Grand Hyatt Singapore.

The hotel said it had taken steps to safeguard the safety and well-being of its guests after being informed of the case by Singapore’s MOH yesterday. "We are taking proactive measures ... including disinfecting public areas, restaurants, meeting spaces and rooms throughout the hotel," the hotel's manager Parveen Kumar said yesterday.

The other new patient is a 63-year-old man from Wuhan who had arrived at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport on Jan 18.

He had a fever on Jan 23, and sought outpatient treatment at a private hospital in Kuala Lumpur. He was placed under home surveillance for 14 days.

On Feb 2, he was still experiencing fever and was admitted into Kuala Lumpur Hospital. He tested positive for the virus on Feb 3.

Malaysia now has a total of 10 coronavirus cases. Nine of the patients are China citizens.

Meanwhile, Malaysia's Home Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said 147 Chinese citizens from Wuhan city and Hubei province had been denied entry into Malaysia between Jan 27 and Feb 3 due to concerns over the spread of the virus.
"However, Malaysia is not barring all Chinese arrivals that come here, but only those that are from Wuhan city or Hubei province," Tan Sri Muhyiddin was quoted as saying by Malay Mail online news.

Meanwhile, Resorts World Genting, owner of Malaysia's most popular tourist destination Genting Highlands, said it has introduced several international health and safety preventive measures to protect guests and staff.

All tour groups from China have cancelled their reservations for February at the mountaintop resort, its statement said, as quoted by The Star newspaper.

Among the measures taken are infrared thermal scanning at its cable cars and main entrances of various facilities, as well as at its staff entrances.

Resorts World Genting said that it has also increased the frequency of its cleaning programme.

Yesterday, 133 Malaysian passengers and crew arrived at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) after being airlifted from Hubei province.

They were met by a hazardous materials team and Health Ministry personnel on the tarmac before being taken by bus to the Air Disaster Unit at KLIA, where decontamination and health screening processes took place.

The 133 men and women were then sent to a monitoring centre for 14 days. People with symptoms will be hospitalised immediately.

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