Bangladesh has confirmed its first three cases of the coronavirus, which has infected more than 106,000 people and caused over 3,600 deaths across the world after originating in China by the end of last year.

Two men and a woman, all aged between 20 and 35, have tested positive for the virus, the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research or IEDCR Director Meerjady Sabrina Flora said on Sunday.

Two of them had recently returned from Italy, according to the government's disease control agency. The other is a relative of one of the returnees. The two returnees from Italy are not related.

“They are all in stable condition and being treated in a hospital,” said Flora.

Their diagnosis was confirmed on Saturday, she said, adding: “Two of them showed symptoms of the virus upon returning to the country. Once we received a call to our hotline, we collected their samples and sent them for testing. The results came back positive.”

FILE PHOTO: The authorities in Bangladesh keep suspected coronavirus patients in an isolation ward of a hospital in Dhaka.

IEDCR HOTLINE
The IEDCR has opened a service for the public to report suspected coronavirus cases. Any person showing symptoms of COVID-19 and suspected to have contracted the coronavirus is requested to call
IEDCR hotline numbers:
01927711784, 01927711785, 01937000011, 01937110011
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Four others, who came into contact with the infected people, were later tested, according to the IEDCR director.

“One of them tested positive for the virus but the others were negative. We’ve kept the others in isolation as precaution,” she said.

IEDCR chief Flora said one of the three coronavirus patients had a slightly high temperature, one had cough and other had both fever and cough. “They don’t need special treatment,” she said.

“We’ve tracked down the contacts of the patients. We are communicating with them. We don’t think we need to take special measures for them,” she said.

The IEDCR has tested 116 people, including the three patients, for coronavirus until Sunday after receiving 156 phone calls with reports of suspected COVID-19 cases to its hotline. It is the only facility with the capacity to test coronavirus in Bangladesh.

Seven Bangladeshi expatriates had earlier tested positive abroad – five in Singapore and one each in Italy and the United Arab Emirates.

File Photo: Meerjady Sabrina Flora briefs the media on the health condition of Bangladeshis evacuated from China amid the new coronavirus outbreak. Photo: Mahmud Zaman Ovi

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‘What are the symptoms?’ ‘Is there a cure?’ and other coronavirus questions

Surfaces? Sneezes? Sex? How the coronavirus can and cannot spread

What is the test for coronavirus and how does it work?

Italy’s outbreak of the coronavirus is the worst in Europe, having infected more than 5,800 people and killed 233. Only China, the epicentre of the outbreak, has more deaths from the coronavirus.

COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus, has affected other countries in South Asia. After India, Pakistan and Nepal, the Maldives confirmed its first two cases on Saturday.

Also Read

IEDCR advises against handshakes, hugs as coronavirus spreads further

IEDCR suggests home quarantine for returnees from countries with coronavirus cases

Bangladesh designs three-level alert system to stop coronavirus outbreak
Earlier on Sunday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called for calm over the novel coronavirus and urged citizens to follow the government's health directives on the virus to prevent an outbreak in Bangladesh.

“Coronavirus has become a global problem. It has severely affected the economy in many countries. We're monitoring the situation and taking necessary measures. But I would request all to maintain hygiene,” said the prime minister.

Hasina pointed out that the health ministry is issuing directives every day on what to do to prevent catching the virus while stressing the need to follow these.

‘NO NEED TO SHUT SCHOOLS, COLLEGES’

Flora urged all not to panic saying the situation is not so bad that the virus can spread all over the country.

“There is no need for shutting schools and colleges now,” she said.

The director reiterated the call for maintaining cough etiquette.

>Please stop spitting here and there. Please avoid handshakes, hugs,” she said.

The IEDCR chief said people may avoid gatherings to stop a possible outbreak, but there was no need to worry considering the measures taken to contain a possible outbreak.
ALERT ON PEOPLE FROM 6 COUNTRIES

Flora also asked all to avoid travel to and from Bangladesh unless it is necessary.

She said the IEDCR was communicating with all the missions abroad to discuss the impact of the situation on the Bangladeshi expatriates and travellers.

Speaking about the returnees, she said, "I urge the Bangladeshs who have come from abroad not to travel now if they show any symptoms. Please stay wherever you are. We will reach you if you contact the IEDCR."

Later, Health Officer Shahriar Sazzad at Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka told bdnews24.com that they would isolate travellers from six countries if they showed any symptoms of coronavirus in temperature screening.

The six countries are China, Italy, South Korea, Iran and Thailand.

The suspected cases will be kept at the Kuwait Bangladesh Friendship Government Hospital, he said.

He urged all the returnees from those six countries to isolate themselves for 14 days, the incubation period of the virus.
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Abdiftah Ismail Mohamed · 3 days ago

i am somali student live in bangladesh special dhaka ...............

Md Amran Howlader · 2 days ago · edited

The immigration officer
The air-hostess
The driver
All the people in the flights
All the people in the public transports they traveled

-- are now at risk!

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