

## Novel Corona Virus (2019nCoV) Update

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020

### Background

The world has seen the emergence of a **novel Corona Virus** on 31 December 2019, officially referred to as **2019-nCoV**. The virus was first isolated from persons with pneumonia in Wuhan city, China. The virus can cause a range of symptoms, from ranging from mild illness to pneumonia.

Symptoms of the disease are **Fever, cough, sore throat and headaches. In severe cases difficulty in breathing and deaths can occur.**

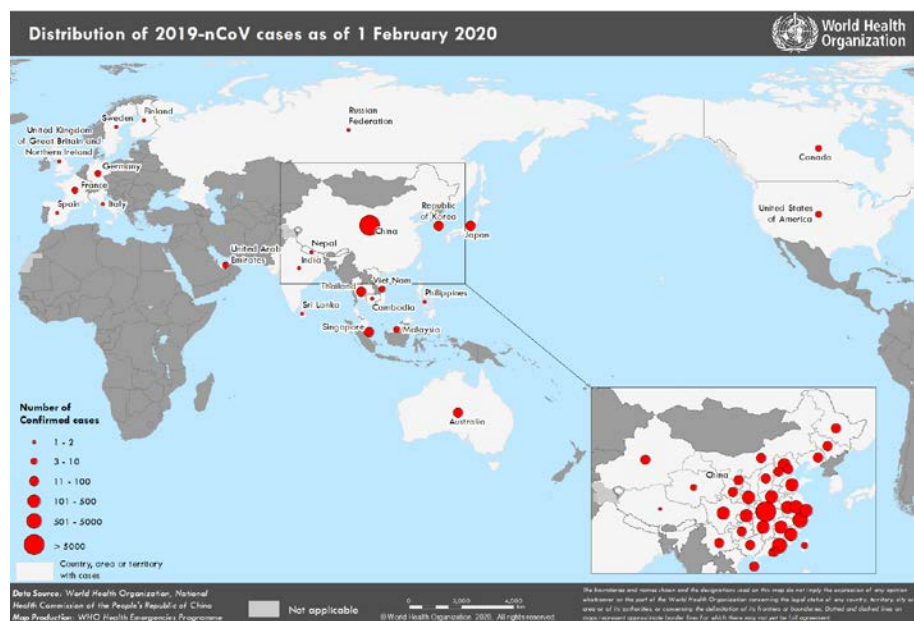
There is **no specific treatment** for people who are sick with coronavirus, and no Vaccine to prevent the disease.

Considering the current situation and spread of the disease globally, the Director General of WHO declared the outbreak to be a **public health emergency of international concern PHEIC**. The Emergency Committee has provided advice to WHO, the People's Republic of China, all countries, and to the global community on measures to control this outbreak.

Member states such as Maldives are focusing to detect cases imported in the country and limit more infection from these cases.

### Global Situation

- A total of **11953 confirmed cases** have been reported for novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) globally;
- Of the **11953** cases reported, **11821** cases were reported from China, including Hong Kong SAR (13 confirmed cases), Macau SAR (7 confirmed cases) and Taipei (10 confirmed cases).
- **132** cases outside of China in **23** countries have been confirmed.
- **4 countries** in the **WHO South East Asia Region** have reported confirmed cases of nCoV – **Thailand** (19), **Nepal** (1), **Sri Lanka** (1) and **India** (1).



- Of the 11821 confirmed cases in China, **1795 cases** have been reported as **severely ill** and a total of **259 deaths** have been reported to date.
- The majority of cases are linked to Wuhan, China. The information received so far shows that most, but not all, of the cases in other countries have direct links to Wuhan, China.

#### **Maldives Situation and Actions Taken**

In Maldives, there has been **NO** confirmed case of 2019-nCoV as of today (2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020)

- **One suspected case** of nCoV has been reported from a local person returning from China. The suspected case is currently placed in K. Fonadhoo island for isolation. Confirmatory diagnosis of the Corona virus infection is being undertaken in a WHO Accredited laboratory. **Results** are awaited within the next **48hrs**. The **case is doing well and recovering**.
- Health Emergency Operations Plan **HEOP** has been **activated** and several measures have been taken.
- Ministry of Health has initiated screening of passengers in the International Airports and Sea Ports based on Ministry of Health's Standard Operating Procedures. **Thermal cameras** have been installed in Velaana and Addu International airports in addition to a **Health Information Card** to be filled upon entry to the country. Hand held thermal scanners are being used at the VIP gates, with 6 more thermal cameras and 10 hand held thermal scanners currently under procurement by the government.
- Screening has been scaled up at all the sea ports around the country, including the passengers coming by cruise ships and passenger liners.
- The island of Fonadhoo (near the airport) has been designated as the isolation facility for suspected cases. Another 12-bedded coronavirus isolation facility is ready in Hulhumale, in addition to a designated isolation area in Velaana International Airport.
- An intensive care treatment facility has been established for treatment of severe cases of nCoV at IGMH Dharumavantha Hospital 11th floor.
- Ambulances have been allocated for transfer of suspected cases as well as a designated Sea Ambulance for inter-island and atoll transfers as needed.
- SOPs adapted from WHO guidelines have been shared and sent to all islands and atolls, with screening forms and mechanism along with reporting routes finalized and established.
- The National Institute of Virology at NIV Pune has been accredited and arrangements for sample transfer and testing of suspected cases from Maldives are in place with the support of WHO Regional Office and country office.
- **Regular press briefings** to disseminate the current situation of corona virus and in the Maldives, context is ongoing. Minister of Health, Minister of Tourism, Minister of Foreign Affairs along with epidemiologist from Health Protection Agency and a clinician have been participating in the briefings.

- Awareness Messages along with Standees have been positioned at airports, sea ports and ferry terminals in both English and Chinese. More IEC materials are being developed and shared by WHO in other regional languages such as Bengali as well as more developed in local language Dhivehi.
- Government of Maldives has suspended all direct flights from China until further notice.

### WHO's key message

- Governments and Ministries **NEED TO BE VIGILANT** to detect imported cases and take appropriate action outside of China and areas in China where the disease is not endemic.
- **Much remains to be understood about this new coronavirus (2019-nCoV):** Not enough is known to draw definitive conclusions about how it is transmitted, clinical features of the disease, its severity, the extent to which it has spread or its source.
- **WHO encourages all countries to continue preparedness activities to detect and manage imported cases:** We have issued interim guidance on how to do this and continue to update this information in consultation with networks of experts across the globe.
- **More cases could be expected in other parts of China and in other countries in coming days.**
- WHO is working with its networks of researchers and other experts to coordinate global work on surveillance, epidemiology, modelling, diagnostics, clinical care and treatment, and other ways to identify, manage the disease and limit onward transmission.



### What people should do

WHO's standard recommendations for the public to reduce exposure and transmission of Corona Virus and a range of illnesses are as follows:

- Frequently **clean hands** by using **alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water**
- When coughing and sneezing **cover mouth and nose** with **flexed elbow or tissue** – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands
- **Avoid close contact** with anyone who has fever and cough
- If you have **fever, cough and difficulty breathing** seek medical care early and share previous **travel history** with your health care provider
- When visiting live markets in areas currently experiencing cases of novel coronavirus, **avoid direct unprotected contact with live animals** and surfaces in contact with animals;
- The consumption of **raw or undercooked animal products** should be **avoided**. Raw meat,

milk or animal organs should be handled with care, to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked foods, as per good food safety practices.

### Advise to travelers

WHO advises **no** restrictions on travel.



WHO **does not recommend** any specific health measures for travelers. All travelers are encouraged to follow the above standard advise on hygiene.

All travelers to China or with history of contact with infected people, are advised to **self-report** to a nearby health facility or HPA HOTLINE and seek medical care if symptoms of Corona Virus infection appear within in **14 days** of return to the country.

### WHO recommendations for use of Mask

A mask is **not required** for members of the **general public** who do not have respiratory symptoms, as no evidence is available on its usefulness to protect non-sick persons.

Masks are recommended for the following categories

- People with **respiratory symptoms**, e.g. cough or difficulty breathing. Including when seeking medical attention;
- People **providing care to individuals** with respiratory symptoms;
- **Health workers**, when entering a **room with patients or treating an individual** with respiratory symptoms.



### For further Information please contact

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For further reference kindly see: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>