

Novel Corona Virus Update

29 January 2020

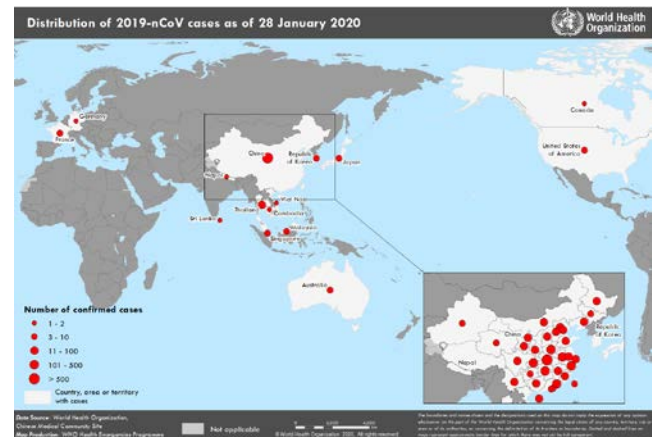
Background

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. People may experience **Fever, Flu like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and headaches** and in some cases, **breathing difficulty**.

There is **no specific treatment** for people who are sick with coronavirus. Treatment includes **isolation as a precaution**, and **supportive medical care** for those who experience the above **symptoms**. People infected with 2019-nCoV should receive supportive care to help **relieve symptoms**. WHO is working with global experts to develop a vaccine for the virus as well.

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



This can be achieved through a combination of public health measures, such as rapid identification, diagnosis and management of the cases, identification and follow up of the contacts, infection prevention and control in healthcare settings, implementation of health measures for travelers, awareness raising in the population, risk communication.

WHO recommendations are for **masks** to be used by:

- 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.

A medical 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.

Global Situation

- A total of **6065 confirmed cases** have been reported for novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) globally;
- Of the **6065** cases reported, **5997** cases were reported from China, including Hong Kong SAR (8 confirmed cases), Macau SAR (7 confirmed cases) and Taipei (7 confirmed cases).
- There have been **68** confirmed cases outside of China from **15 countries**.
- **4** confirmed cases reported in **United Arab Emirates**, in individuals traveling from Wuhan City.
- Of the 5997 confirmed cases in China, **1239 cases** have been reported as **severely ill** and a total of **132 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** case reported as of today (30th January 2020)

- The minister of Health along with the Minister of Tourism convened a press conference on the evening of the 28th of January 2020, to provide an update on the current situation as well as the ongoing efforts for preparedness and response currently in place.
- Ministry of Health has initiated screening of passengers in the International Airports and Sea Ports based on Ministry of Health's Standard Operating Procedures using Thermal cameras. Thermal camera has been installed in Velaana an Addu International airport. Hand held cameras 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.
- Health Emergency Operations Plan has been activated and several measures have been taken.
- SOPs have been developed for case identification, diagnosis and treatment with the support and help of WHO guidance documents.
- IGMH has convened its own emergency taskforce to prepare and respond to a case or suspected case of nCoV in the country.
- A designated 12 bedded coronavirus isolation facility is ready in Hulhumale, as well as a designated isolation area in Velana International Airport.
- An intensive care treatment facility has been established for severe cases of nCoV to be shifted and treated at IGMH Dharumavantha Hospital 11th floor.
- Ambulances has been allocated for transfer of suspected cases as well as a designated Sea Ambulance for inter-island 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.

- 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.

WHO's key message

- Governments and Ministries **NEED TO BE VIGILANT** to detect imported cases and take appropriate action outside 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:** 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.**
- A team of WHO experts are concluding a mission with health officials in Wuhan working on the response to 2019-nCoV. The mission is part of **ongoing information-sharing between the Government of China and WHO.**
- **Emergency committee meeting of the IHR** happened on 22 and 23 January and will be reconvened this week, or earlier should the Director-General deem it necessary to deliberate if the situation is a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).**
- WHO is working with our 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. WHO has issued interim guidance for countries, updated to consider the current situation.

What people should do?

WHO's standard recommendations for the general public to reduce exposure to and transmission of a range of illnesses are as follows, which include hand and respiratory hygiene, and safe food practices:

- 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.
- Within healthcare facilities, **enhance standard infection prevention and control practices** in hospitals, especially in emergency departments.
- WHO **does not recommend** any specific health measures for travelers. In case of symptoms suggestive of respiratory illness either during or after travel, the travelers are encouraged to seek medical attention and share their travel history with their health care provider. Travel guidance has been updated.



For further Information please contact

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