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Hong Kong reports second case of China coronavirus as health declaration forms considered for high-speed rail arrivals

23 January 2020 13:09 • Jennifer Creery • 4 min read



Hong Kong health authorities have reported a second case of a man “highly suspected” of contracting the new, SARS-like coronavirus from China.

Preliminary tests for the 56-year-old came back positive for the novel virus, according to a statement from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health at around 1:30am on Thursday.

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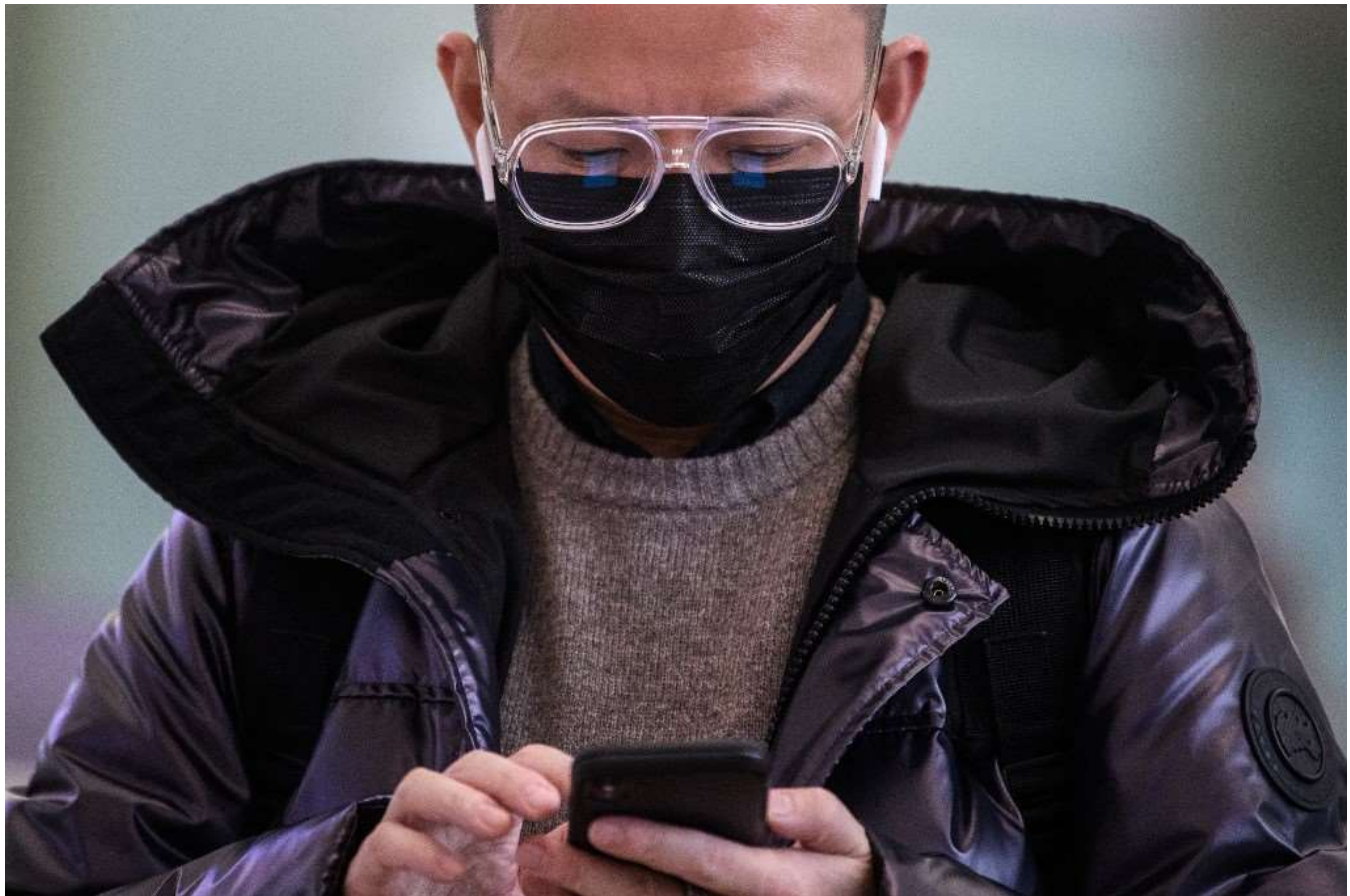
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Police say everyone should carry this new safety device that protects against attackers.

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A man uses his phone as he wears a face mask in the arrivals hall at the international airport of Hong Kong on January 22, 2020, after China recently confirmed human-to-human transmission in the outbreak of the new SARS-like virus. Photo: Anthony Wallace/AFP.

The announcement came hours after Hong Kong authorities on Wednesday confirmed the city's first case of infection from the pneumonia outbreak.

At least 17 people have died and more than 570 have been infected with the mystery strain in China so far, according to China's National Health Commission. Wuhan – where the virus was first detected – has been quarantined, while all transport in and out of the city has been ordered to halt. There have been four cases in Thailand, as well as single

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The second patient in Hong Kong flew from Wuhan to Shenzhen on January 19 and returned to Hong Kong, where he is a resident, via the Lo Wu Control Point on the MTR the same day. He developed a fever last Saturday but reported having no respiratory symptoms. He sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department at Prince of Wales Hospital the next day. No hospitalisation was required at the time.



Prince Wales Hospital. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

According to the statement, the man was admitted to the hospital on Tuesday after his fever failed to subside. He was transferred to Princess Margaret Hospital for isolation and management on Thursday. He has a history of good health and is currently in a stable condition.

“The CHP has immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing,” the statement read. “According to the patient, he neither visited any healthcare facilities, wet market or seafood market during the incubation period, nor had any exposure to wild animals or poultry or contact with patients with symptoms of pneumonia or upper respiratory tract infection.”

The CHP statement added that the man lived with his wife in Ma On Shan and had stayed at the Alva Hotel in Sha Tin on Monday. His parents in Wuhan and his wife have remained asymptomatic so far, authorities said.

The case has been reported to the World Health Organisation, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province and the health authority of Macau.

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Princess Margaret Hospital. Photo: Wikipedia.

The atypical form of pneumonia was first detected at a street market in Wuhan. It bears symptoms similar to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed over 300 people in Hong Kong in 2003.

Health Secretary Sophia Chan said on Wednesday that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department had prepared two camps in remote parts of Hong Kong as potential quarantine sites.

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Controller of the CHP Wong Ka-hing said at a press conference on Thursday morning that authorities have found three people who were in close contact with the two infected Hong Kong patients.

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Chuang Shuk-kwan (left) and Wong Ka-hing (center-left). Photo: Apple Daily screenshot.

The MTR Corporation released a statement on Thursday saying it had stopped the sale of high-speed rail train tickets to and from Wuhan.

Wong also said the government was actively considering expanding health declaration requirements for high-speed rail passengers.

Additional reporting: Kris Cheng.

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