

COVID-19 UPDATE OF STATEMENT

Kingston, Jamaica. Feb. 27, 2020

- Members of the Media,
- Ladies and gentlemen all,
- Good morning.

We wish to use this opportunity to provide the country with an update on the novel coronavirus/COVID-19.

EXPANDED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

The Ministry of Health and Wellness wishes to advise that based on the risk assessment and the World Health Organization Situation Report 37 on the COVID-19, dated February 26, 2020, additional countries will be incorporated into the travel restrictions.

This is having regard to the fact that the majority of cases in those countries have been due to in-country transmission.

The countries to be added for travel restrictions are as follows:

- Italy (322 cases, 11 deaths);
- South Korea/Republic of Korea (1,261 cases, 12 deaths);
- Singapore (91 cases, no deaths); and
- Iran (95 cases; 15 deaths).

Of note is that we are reviewing the situation in Japan, where there are 164 cases and 1 death); and will advise whether that country is to be included in the list of restricted countries.

Therefore:

- a) all Jamaicans who have visited Italy, South Korea, Iran, and Singapore in the last 14 days will have landing privileges in accordance with the law but will be subject to a health assessment and quarantine;
- b) persons who have visited Italy, South Korea, Iran and Singapore in the last 14 days and who do not have permanent residency or marriage exemption in Jamaica will not be granted landing privileges at any of the country's ports of entry;
- c) non-Jamaicans who have permanent residence and marriage exemptions who are landed and who had visited Italy, South Korea, Iran, and Singapore in the last 14 days will be subject to a health assessment and quarantine;
- d) persons who have visited Italy, South Korea, Iran and Singapore and have been granted landing privileges and classified by the Ministry of Health and Wellness as high risk will be quarantined in Government facilities; and those who are assessed by the Ministry of Health and Wellness as low-risk will be quarantined at home under the supervision of the Parish Health Department; and
- e) individuals returning from Italy, South Korea, Iran and Singapore who have been granted landing privileges and who display any symptom of

COVID-19, as per the case definition published by the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, will be placed in immediate isolation at a health facility.

The Ministry of Health and Wellness will continue to assess the situation in light of the spread and will make recommendations for adjustments based on the risk assessment.

SEAPORT READINESS

There is a well-established system in place for the protection of our sea ports and it has been since the enactment of the Quarantine Act of 1951. This was in evidence on Tuesday, Feb 25 in St. Ann.

As previously reported, a cruise line with more than 4,500 passengers and more than 1,600 crew members denied access to the port of call in Ocho Rios, St. Ann.

The vessel arrived at approximately 8:30 a.m. and, upon inspection by Port Health Officials, it was discovered that a crew member was placed and been put in isolation on board. The crew member had a cough, fever and associated muscle pains, together with a with a travel history to a country of interest relating to the COVID-19.

QUARANTINE& ISOLATION UPDATE

As at Feb 26, **141** persons arrived in Jamaica who had been in China 14 days prior to arrival here.

There are now **5** persons in quarantine in Government facilities.

There are now **5** persons in home quarantine.

There are now **2** persons in isolation and for whom we are awaiting test results.

We have now designated **4** number of quarantine facilities in anticipation of new arrivals.

NATIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

As previously announced Cabinet had instructed that a national coordinating committee be put in place.

That committee – co-chaired by the Prime Minister and Minister of Local Government Desmond McKenzie – is comprised of a wide cross section of stakeholders, including members of industry, the public sector and civil society.

The committee will host its first meeting early next week and will examine all of the preparedness functions of the entire Government apparatus.

As we continue to refine our preparedness for COVID-19, the Ministry and our stakeholders urge the public for its continued cooperation and partnership.

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