



# **COVID-19 Outbreak Update 24 February**

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Solace Global advises against all travel to China at this time due to the ongoing travel restrictions, cancelled flights, government warnings and confirmed cases of the virus. Business operations in China continue to face significant disruption and further travel restrictions in both China and Asia are possible.

**Latest Updates**

Authorities in South Korea have issued a red alert, the highest level on a four-tier system, in response to the outbreak of COVID-19. As a result, the school year has been postponed for the first time in the nation's history. South Korean airlines have also begun suspending flights to Daegu, the city at the epicentre of the country's outbreak. While North Korea has not reported any cases of the virus, but the state media outlet has reported quarantining 380 unidentified "foreigners."

The governments of Kuwait, Bahrain and Afghanistan have all confirmed there is at least one confirmed case of the virus in their countries. Afghanistan also announced the suspension of all air and road travel to Iran because of the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in Iran. Eight people have now died from the virus in Iran, the largest number of fatalities of any country other than China. Most of the country's infections are in the Shi'a Muslim holy city of Qom. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Turkey and Afghanistan have all imposed travel restrictions on the country.

Italy has imposed stringent controls across several towns in the Lombardy region. Austria has suspended train services over the Alps from Italy and is expected to discuss whether to impose further border restrictions today. A joint WHO-ECDC mission is set to arrive in Italy on Tuesday, 24 February. The Veneto Region has activated the toll-free number 800462340 to assist and inform citizens. The director general of the WHO has spoken of a narrowing in the window of opportunity to control the current epidemic, stating that the tipping point - after which the ability to prevent a global pandemic ends - seems a lot closer now. Experts are warning that the disease is outpacing efforts to contain it.

In China, Wuhan had announced measures to relax its strict lockdown on Monday, 24 February. However, the authorities quickly backtracked, saying the announcement had been made in error. The reversal has prompted anger and confusion in China as well as adding to fears that the government is mishandling its response to the virus.

Current Statistics (Numbers Vary Between Sources)					
Current Total Infected (new cases)	79,729 (+958)	Total Confirmed Recoveries	25,262 (+2,048)	Total confirmed Deaths	2619 (+158)
<b>Current confirmed case numbers</b>	China (77,345), South Korea (833), <i>Diamond Princess</i> (691), Italy (224), Japan (146), Singapore (90), HK (79), Iran (61), Thailand (35), USA (35), Taiwan (30), Malaysia (22), Australia (22), Germany (16), Vietnam (16), United Arab Emirates (13), UK (13), France (12), Macau (10), Canada (9), Philippines (3), Kuwait (3), Israel (2), Afghanistan (1), Bahrain (1), Sweden (1), Lebanon (1), Iraq (1). <b>All cases have recovered in:</b> India (3), Russia (2), Spain (2), Nepal (1), Cambodia (1), Sri Lanka (1), Sweden (1), Finland (1), Belgium (1), Egypt (1)				
<b>Deaths</b>	China (2,593), Iran (12), South Korea (8), Italy (5), <i>Diamond Princess</i> (3), Hong Kong (2), Japan (1), Taiwan (1), France (1), Philippines (1)				
Travel Restrictions (these restrictions remain fluid and are subject to change at short notice, keep up to date with potential restrictions if travelling)					
<b>China</b>	<b>Quarantined and lockdown cities/regions</b>	Majority of Hubei Province, Wenzhou, Nanchang, Zhengzhou, Linyi, Harbin, Fuzhou some cities in Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces.			
	<b>Limited restrictions on public transport services (i.e. long-distance bus services, ride-hailing services, inter-city travel)</b>	Majority of Chinese cities, additional health screenings at all public transport hubs			
	<b>Flight Restrictions</b>	Majority of international airlines have ceased operations to and from Chinese mainland. Flight operations to and from HK and Macau are also being impacted.			
<b>Countries that have some form of warning or ban on travel to China</b>	Schengen Countries, Australia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Czech R., DRC, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mauritius, Micronesia, Mozambique, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, S. Sudan, Turkey, Uganda, UK, Ukraine, US				
<b>Italy</b>	<b>Current restrictions</b>	11 north Italian cities mostly around Codogno, Lodi Province, are in lockdown. Austria is currently considering the introduction of border controls.			
<b>South Korea</b>	<b>Current restrictions</b>	Deagu and Cheongdo cities			

**Solace Global Advice**

<b>Advise against all travel:</b>	China	<b>Advise against all but essential travel:</b>	Hong Kong, Macau, Iran
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- Solace Global advises to monitor countries experiencing outbreaks due to currently in place travel restrictions.
- Ensure your healthcare and insurance providers are aware of any essential travel to China.
- Continue to monitor the situation closely, as new travel restrictions and further outbreaks may occur with no warning.
- Do not travel if ill, as you may be subject to additional screening, delays and even quarantine, regardless of destination or country of origin.
- Monitor yourself for symptoms, should you suspect that you have contracted the virus, self-quarantine and immediately call your relevant embassy and/or consult your doctor.
- Maintain a good hygiene level, use hand sanitizer and wash hands regularly if travelling in the coming days.
- Regularly check updates via your respective government agency and the World Health Organisation for travel information and potential restrictions.