

AH1N1 death of Cuban migrant alarms Panama

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A Cuban migrant's death from the AH1N1 influenza virus has alarmed authorities in Panama, where nearly 1,000 other Cubans are stranded near the border with Costa Rica, according to an official on Tuesday.

The country's [health ministry](#) said the 53-year-old Cuban man was taken to a hospital near the border on Saturday and died the next day of "severe respiratory problems" linked to the virus.

Two other Cubans admitted at the same time with similar symptoms were said to be doing well under special supervision.

Authorities were now examining sanitary conditions for the hundreds of Cuban stuck on the border, which Costa Rica has closed to them since December 19. They have started vaccinations and say they are ready to contain any outbreak of the [flu strain](#).

Nearly 8,000 other Cubans are currently in Costa Rica, stranded there by Nicaragua's decision mid-November to likewise prevent them passing through its territory on their way to the United States.

An agreement between several Central American nations is meant to see dozens of the Cubans flown from Costa Rica to El Salvador within days to allow them to continue their journey, but no date or transport details have yet been given.

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