

Spain, UK report new virus cases as they hunt down carriers

February 9 2020, by Barry Hatton



A view of Kents Hill Park Training and Conference Centre, ahead of the repatriation to the UK of the latest Coronavirus evacuees who are due to land at RAF Brize Norton on Sunday, in Milton Keynes, England, Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020. A viral outbreak that began in China has infected more than 34,800 people worldwide. (Joe Giddens/PA via AP)

The U.K. confirmed its fourth case of the new virus from China and Spain reported its second case as European authorities pressed Sunday to contain the spread of the coronavirus by hunting down those who came into contact with infected people.

Both the new cases were acquired during trips to France, officials said.

Italian health authorities in Tuscany, meanwhile, were trying to re-trace the steps of a Taiwanese couple who stayed four days in a Florence hotel, flew to Hong Kong and then to Taiwan on Feb. 1 and were later confirmed to have the virus.

The new U.K. case is a known contact of a previously confirmed case there, the country's Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty said, adding that "experts ... continue to work hard tracing patient contacts."

In Spain, authorities were working to identify everyone who came into contact with a British man whose case was detected in Mallorca, a popular vacation island in the Mediterranean Sea, Spain's National Microbiology Center said.

The man, who lives on the island, contracted the virus at the end of January at a French ski resort, according to Fernando Simón, head of Spain's Coordination Center for Health Alerts and Emergencies.

The man, who was not identified, is healthy but was being kept in isolation in Palma de Mallorca, Simón told a news conference in Madrid. His wife and two daughters tested negative.



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In Britain, a plane evacuating more than 200 people from the Chinese city at the center of the epidemic landed Sunday at RAF Brize Norton. British officials said it brought back 105 British citizens and family members, as well as 95 European citizens and family members. In a carefully coordinated ballet of secure planes and buses, those passengers were distributed around Europe.

The British passengers were taken to a hotel-conference center in Milton

Keys, where they will be quarantined for 14 days.

Some 20 people from Germany on the British flight were taken to Berlin, to be tested and quarantined at a hospital for two weeks. Another 17 European evacuees were flown to Berlin and were being transported on to Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Romania on special flights.

Thirty-five French citizens on the British flight went on to southern France and were immediately taken to quarantine. The French government had already brought hundreds of Europeans and Africans from Wuhan back on two earlier flights to France.



Items are offloaded at Kents Hill Park Training and Conference Centre, ahead of the repatriation to the UK of the latest Coronavirus evacuees who are due to land

at RAF Brize Norton on Sunday, in Milton Keynes, England, Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020. A viral outbreak that began in China has infected more than 34,800 people worldwide. (Joe Giddens/PA via AP)



A man places an NHS coronavirus information poster in the window of a restaurant near China Town in London, Friday, Feb. 7, 2020. The director-general of the World Health Organization says a drop in the number of new coronavirus cases for two days is "good news" but cautions against reading too much into that. China reported 31,161 cases in mainland China in its update Friday. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)



Items of clothing are taken into Kents Hill Park Training and Conference Centre, ahead of the repatriation to the UK of the latest Coronavirus evacuees who are due to land at RAF Brize Norton on Sunday, in Milton Keynes, England, Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020. A viral outbreak that began in China has infected more than 34,800 people worldwide. (Joe Giddens/PA via AP)



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A man wears a mask as he takes a photograph in China Town in London, Friday, Feb. 7, 2020. The director-general of the World Health Organization says a drop in the number of new coronavirus cases for two days is "good news" but cautions against reading too much into that. China reported 31,161 cases in mainland China in its update Friday. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)



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A woman wears a mask as she works on a food stall in China Town in London, Friday, Feb. 7, 2020. The director-general of the World Health Organization says a drop in the number of new coronavirus cases for two days is "good news" but cautions against reading too much into that. China reported 31,161 cases in mainland China in its update Friday. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)

Eight Italians on the British flight were flown to Italy by the Italian air force and were transferred to a Italian military hospital in Rome to be quarantined. Aboard the same flight to Italy were also seven Danes, three Swedes and two Greeks.

The virus death toll in China rose Sunday to 811, passing the number of

fatalities in the 2002-2003 SARS epidemic, and officials said nearly 37,200 people have been infected there.

Europe has seen a total of 39 infections in nine countries, including 14 in Germany.

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