Algeria reports second coronavirus death

March 12 2020

Algeria has registered two deaths from the novel coronavirus, the health ministry announced Thursday, as schools were closed for three weeks.

The first case was a man, aged 67, who had heart disease, the ministry's director general, Djamel Fourar, told reporters.

The second death announced in the evening by the health ministry was of a 55-year-old Algerian who had returned home from France.

Seven new COVID-19 cases have been recorded, bringing the total number of confirmed cases on Algerian soil to 26, the ministry said.

Other patients included two Algerians who had been in France.

Seventeen members of the same family in Blida, southwest of the capital, have been infected with the virus, in connection with confirmed cases among Algerians living in France.

The 67-year-old man whose death was announced Thursday was related to the family from Blida, Fourar said.

The health ministry urged Algerians returning from countries with high infection rates to postpone "family visits unless absolutely necessary".

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, for his part, ordered all Algerian schools to close from Thursday until April 5, his office said.

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Citation: Algeria reports second coronavirus death (2020, March 12) retrieved 5 May 2024 from
https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-03-algeria-coronavirus-death.html