

S. Korean nurses' bandages become badges of honour

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Across their foreheads, cheeks and noses, the nurses on the front line of South Korea's struggle against the coronavirus outbreak wear bandages that have become badges of honour.

They apply the wrappings before each shift at the Keimyung University Daegu Dongsan Hospital, in the southern city at the centre of what has become the largest national outbreak outside China, where the virus first emerged.

The pads, plasters and tape protect their faces from painful sores that can develop from their protection suits as they tend to [coronavirus](#) patients for hours on end.

Teams of full-time and volunteer nurses operate at the [hospital](#), one of the biggest in Daegu, and the bandages have come to represent their self-sacrificing efforts.

"I'm trying hard," said [nurse](#) Kim Eun-hee.

They have been lauded for their efforts, with one poster on South Korea's Naver portal telling them: "You guys are truly heroes to me. I am infinitely grateful to you."

Letters of support are also displayed at the hospital. "The whole nation is behind you," read one, from a well-wisher who sent thermometers and snacks.

Around 200 nurses are working eight-hour shifts at the facility, hospital representative Jung Sang-min told AFP, nearly half of them volunteers.

"More nurses wear bandages than doctors because they spend more time tending patients," he said, adding that it takes about half an hour to don the protective suits they wear.

"The nurses are the ones who truly dedicate the most in this fight," Jung said.

South Korea on Friday reported 110 new infections, its lowest for three weeks, and for the first time the figure was less than the number of recovered patients discharged.

Nurse Park Hye-mi told AFP: "Soon something good will happen."

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