Turkey confirms first coronavirus death

March 17 2020

Turkey confirmed its first novel coronavirus-related death on Tuesday as the number of cases in the country rose to 98.

"Today, I lost my first patient in our fight against coronavirus," Health Minister Fahrettin Koca told a televised press conference, adding that the victim was an 89-year-old man who contracted the virus from an employee with connections to China.

The minister also said the number of cases had risen from 47 to 98.

"The big majority of those who tested positive are recovering," Koca said.

Turkey has announced a series of preventive meaasures in an effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus, including travel restrictions on 20 countries and the closure of schools and universities.

Authorities on Monday suspended collective mosque prayers until further notice and ordered the closure of public spaces, including cinemas.

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