

South Korea reports zero new domestic coronavirus cases

April 30 2020



South Korean nurses start their shift caring for patients infected with COVID-19

South Korea Thursday reported no new locally transmitted coronavirus cases for the first time since the disease was detected in the country more than two months ago.

Health authorities said, however, there was an additional death—taking the toll to 247.

"For the first time in 72 days, we have zero new domestic cases," President Moon Jae-in posted on his Facebook account.

The country has seen 10,765 cases since its first infection was reported on February 18.

Other parts of Asia have also seen success in bringing outbreaks under control, with Hong Kong going five days with zero new infections and Taiwan four days as of Thursday.

For a time South Korea had the world's second-largest outbreak, but the spread was tackled through widespread testing and a contact-tracing drive, along with widely observed social distancing.

With a dwindling number of cases, Seoul held a national election on April 15, becoming one of the first with a major outbreak to go to the polls since the global pandemic began.

The election was run with a raft of safety measures in place, including a requirement that voters wear face masks and gloves.

It saw the highest turnout for a generation and handed President Moon's Democratic party a parliamentary majority in what was seen as recognition of officials' handling of the outbreak.

No one had been infected at polling stations, Moon said, adding: "This is the strength of South Korea and its people."

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Citation: South Korea reports zero new domestic coronavirus cases (2020, April 30) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-04-south-korea-domestic-coronavirus-cases.html>

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