

Japan confirms virus in man who had not been to China

28 January 2020

Japanese authorities said Tuesday a man with no recent travel to China has contracted the novel strain of coronavirus—apparently after driving tourists visiting from Wuhan, where a deadly outbreak began.

The man in his sixties from Nara in western Japan drove two groups of Wuhan tourists earlier in January and was hospitalised on Saturday with flu-like symptoms, the [health ministry](#) said.

Health Minister Katsunobu Kato said the country had confirmed two new cases, bringing the total so far in Japan to six.

"One of them has no record of visiting Wuhan, and drove tourists from Wuhan on a bus twice in January," he told reporters.

A health ministry official confirmed to AFP that there was "no information" that the man had been anywhere in China recently, including Wuhan.

"If this is true then he might have been infected by tourists from Wuhan. And if so, this would be the first person-to-person transmission in Japan," the official added.

The other cases so far confirmed in Japan all involve people who have been to Wuhan.

Japan has imposed new checks on travellers arriving from China, and is planning to dispatch a plane to Wuhan on Tuesday night to evacuate Japanese nationals from the city.

The plane is expected to bring back around 200 nationals, of some 650 who have asked to be repatriated, authorities said.

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