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Mongolia confirms its first coronavirus case in French worker

Reuters Editorial

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ULAANBAATAR (Reuters) - Mongolia said on Tuesday that a French national working in the country has been confirmed to be infected with the coronavirus that has spread throughout the globe, marking the country's first case.

The National Emergency Commission said in a statement the patient, a 57-year-old man, traveled to Mongolia from France and transited through Moscow. The government has identified 42 people the patient has met with and another 120 individuals who had close contact with the patient, who works for Badrakh Energy in southern Dornogovi province and is in stable condition.

Mongolia has suspended all local travel in Dornogovi province, the commission said.

The infection comes despite stringent border and travel controls imposed by Ulaanbaatar to keep out the virus, which emerged first in China and has now infected more than 100,000 people globally.

Mongolia has halted border crossings from China, imposed travel bans on people from Japan and South Korea until March 11 and suspended schools through end-March.

Mongolian President Battulga Khaltmaa and other government officials submitted to a 14-day quarantine in late February after returning home from their visit to China as a precautionary measure.

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