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FILE PHOTO: This handout photo taken and released by Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's health department on Thursday

shows a government health personnel wearing protective clothing disinfecting a house after family members were infected with Covid-19 coronavirus in Bangkok. (AFP/Bangkok Metropolitan Administration photo)

Thailand has recorded its first coronavirus death.

The 35-year-old male retail worker had dengue fever and the new disease known as Covid-19, Suwannachai Wattanayingcharoenchai, director-general of the Department of Disease Control, said in a briefing Sunday. "This was a case of local transmission, and he was at risk because he had exposure to Chinese tourists," he said.

The patient had been hospitalised since Feb 16 at a private hospital and transferred to Bamrasnardura Infectious Diseases Institute and died on Saturday after multiple organ failure.

The Public Health Ministry is still looking into the role played by the coronavirus in the fatality, Dr Suwannachai said.

Tests for the coronavirus came back negative since Feb 16 but "the damage was already done to his body" from the earlier bout of infection by the new disease, said Tawee Chotpitayasunondh, the department adviser.

Thiravat Hemachudha, chief of the emerging disease centre of Chulalongkorn Hospital, on Sunday morning posted on his Facebook page that the man died at 6.25pm on Saturday, Feb 29.

The Department of Disease Control said another patient was in serious condition at Bamrasnaradura and doctors at the institute are closely monitoring the patient.

The department repeated a warning on Sunday that any persons

suspected of contracting the virus are required to contact public health officials within three hours, according to the dangerous communicable disease announcement that took effect on Sunday.

The announcement, signed by Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and published in the Royal Gazette on Saturday, also gave authorities more power to combat the spread of the virus.

Almost 3,000 people have died from the infection, mostly in its epicentre China. Thailand has reported 42 cases of infection, with 30 of those discharged.

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