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# Zambia records first COVID-19 death as cases rise

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## JOHANNESBURG

Zambia recorded its first COVID-19 related death as the number of cases rose to 39, the country's top doctor said Thursday at a news conference streamed online.

"I am saddened to report that we have lost one of our COVID-19 patients," Chitalu Chilufya said in the capital of Lusaka flanked by other ministers.

"The said patient had an underlying chronic respiratory disorder and a history of travel to South Africa."

He said the deceased was being treated at a private hospital before being admitted to a government isolation center where he was tested for COVID-19 and given advanced treatment.

Chilufya said Zambia has tested more than 700 people for coronavirus. "In the last 24 hours we carried out 160 tests and out of these we have confirmed three new cases – this brings Zambia's cases to 39," he said.

After first appearing in the Chinese city of Wuhan last December, the virus has spread to at least 180 countries and regions.

The global death toll from the virus has surpassed 51,330 with nearly 1 million confirmed cases, and more than 208,600 recoveries, according to the U.S.-based Johns Hopkins University.

While the epicenter has shifted from China to Europe, the highest number of cases for any country is in the U.S. with nearly 234,500.

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