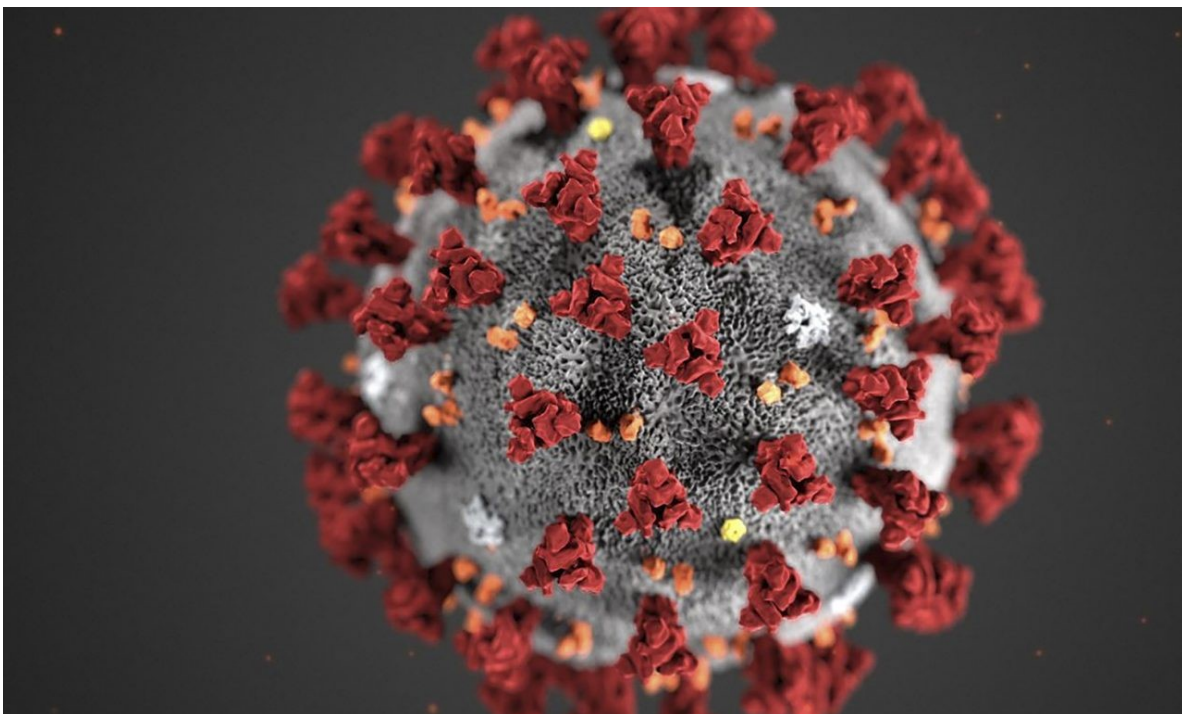


[thescoop.co](https://thescoop.co)

# Brunei reports first COVID-19 case - The Scoop

4 minutes



This illustration created at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, reveals ultrastructural morphology exhibited by the new coronavirus, COVID-19. Photo: CDC/AFP

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN** – Brunei has confirmed its first COVID-19 case after a 53-year-old Bruneian man tested positive for the coronavirus in initial laboratory tests on Monday.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Health said the coronavirus-infected patient returned to Brunei from Kuala Lumpur with three friends on March 3.

He developed symptoms including body ache, fever, cough and runny nose on March 7 and sought treatment at Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha Hospital's Accident & Emergency Department the next day.

The patient, who is warded at the National Isolation Centre in Tutong, is reported to be in a stable condition.

The ministry said the patient's test result is currently undergoing additional verification in line with guidance from the World Health Organization.

It added that contact tracing began after the preliminary test results, with close contacts including the patient's family members as well as the three friends who joined the trip.

All family members living with the patient have been ordered to undergo 14 days of quarantine. The patient's contacts will also undergo tests to detect COVID-19 infection.

With the recent jump in COVID-19 cases in the Asia-Pacific, the ministry said it will continue to maintain vigilance in preventing and controlling the spread of the coronavirus in the country and heighten surveillance to detect COVID-19 infections in the community.

The ministry called on the public to postpone unnecessary travel to coronavirus-affected countries to reduce the possibility of more imported cases.

Brunei recently stepped up travel restrictions, imposing a [travel ban](#) on foreign visitors from Iran and Italy last week as COVID-19 cases continue to rise in both countries.

The sultanate had earlier banned the entry of visitors from China's

[Hubei](#), Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces.

The ministry urged the public to be responsible if they develop symptoms by seeking treatment, avoiding crowded places and social gatherings as the virus can be contracted through human-to-human transmission.

The public are also advised to maintain a high level of personal hygiene and wash their hands frequently with clean water and soap, especially before handling food, before eating, after using the toilet, or after coughing and sneezing.

“Wear a mask if you have symptoms of respiratory infections such as cough or cold and cover your mouth with tissue during coughing or sneezing, and used tissue must be discarded into the bin immediately,” the statement added.

The ministry also warned the public to avoid the spread of incorrect and unauthorised information, as well as respect the privacy of the patient and families involved.

The latest information can also be acquired by contacting the health advice line at 2381380 and 2381383 during office hours or by visiting the Ministry of Health’s [website](#).