

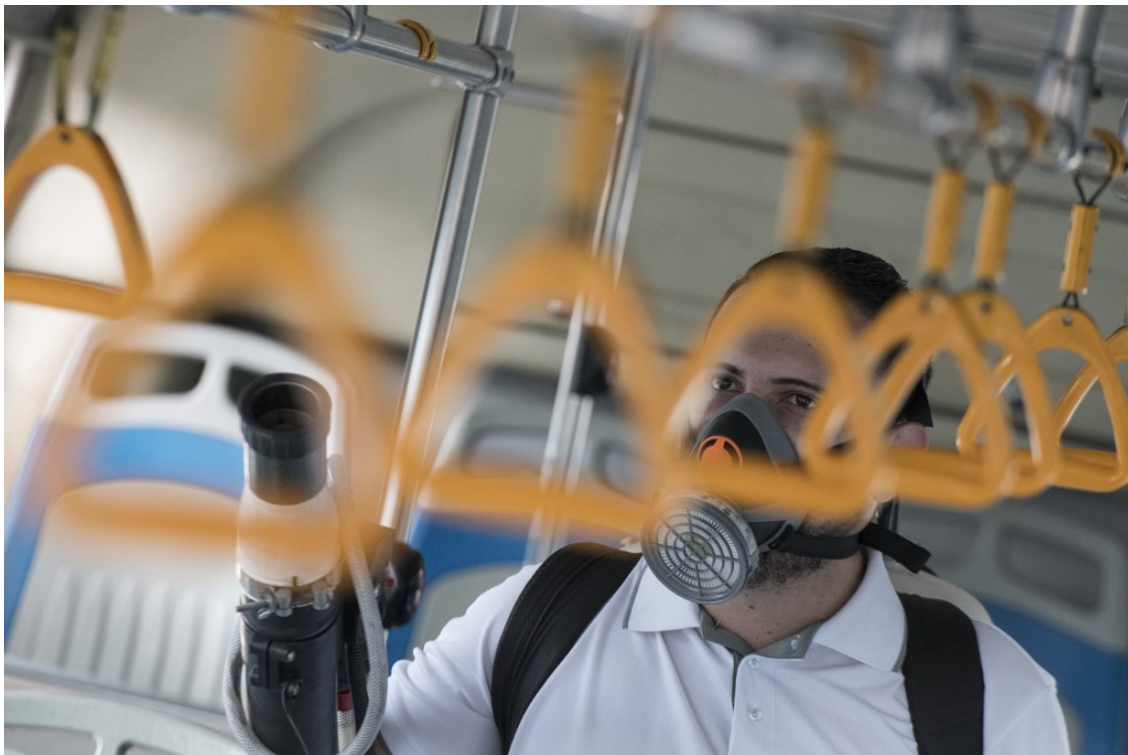
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# Costa Rica sees first virus death

News Desk

Agence France-Presse

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A worker disinfects a bus as a preventive measure against the spread of the new coronavirus, COVID-19, in San Jose, Costa Rica, on March 18, 2020. ( AFP/Ezequiel Becerra)

Costa Rica saw its first death from the novel coronavirus Wednesday, an 87-year-old man who had been hospitalized, the government said.

He was in intensive care at the hospital in Alajuela city, 15 kilometers northeast of the capital San Jose, where most of the country's infections are concentrated, the health ministry said in a statement.

The announcement came hours after health minister Daniel Salas announced a sharp rise in the country's total cases, up to 69 from 50.

Although the COVID-19 illness was initially slower to take hold in Latin America than other parts of the world, it is increasingly affecting Central and South America.

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