First Coronavirus Case Confirmed In Lebanon

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Lebanese Minister of Health Hamad Hasan has confirmed in a press conference held on Friday, February 21st, at around 3 PM that a Lebanese patient has been diagnosed with the Wuhan Coronavirus.

The patient, who has since been placed in quarantine at Rafik Hariri Hospital in Beirut, arrived in Lebanon aboard the controversial Iranian plane that landed in Beirut on Thursday, February 20th.

This was after Iranian authorities had announced the spread of the virus across the country, where 18 cases of the novel coronavirus have been confirmed at the time of writing.

In the press conference, Minister Hamad Hasan said that "the 45-year-old patient was quarantined upon her arrival," after the medical team identified the symptoms of the virus when they examined her.

The Lebanese Red Cross was then tasked with isolating her and transporting her to Rafik Hariri Hospital, which is now being utilized as a "center for quarantining arrivals from Iran and other countries

where the presence of the virus has been confirmed."

Moreover, the minister revealed that there are currently 2 other individuals suspected to be carrying the Wuhan coronavirus in Lebanon, saying "we are undergoing procedures as per the guidelines of the World Health Organization."

These suspects have been transported from their homes to the Rafik Hariri Hospital. "There's no need to panic," the minister added, "the preventive measures we are taking in Lebanon are enough."

The Health Ministry will also review the list of arrivals in Lebanon since 10 days ago to ensure that they're not infected with the novel coronavirus, Minister Hasan announced. He also assured that all the passengers who were aboard the Iranian plane will be examined and quarantined if need be.

On the other hand, Minister Hamad Hasan said that the Ministry of Health "will not take any measures to halt trips to and from Iran until after discussing the matter with the Prime Minister."

He then urged people to pay attention to cleanliness and to wash their hands frequently, saying that If any symptoms of the virus manifest, the following number should be called: **76/592699**.

"Schools and other social centers must take precautionary measures to prevent infection; there's no need so far to announce a state of emergency," Minister Hasan concluded.

Notably, before the case was confirmed by the Lebanese Health Ministry, the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation at Beirut's Rafik Hariri International Airport released a statement assuring the public that the Iranian plane that recently arrived in Lebanon was

coronavirus-free.