



## News

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### Government acting proactively to combat the repercussions of the Novel Coronavirus, states Minister Jagutpal



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**GIS – 03 February, 2020:** Government has been at the forefront and is acting proactively to ensure public safety and well-being through a series of measures, such as the development of a response strategy in line with the recommendations of the World Health Organisation (WHO), and consultations with relevant authorities and stakeholders, to combat the repercussions of the Novel Coronavirus.

The Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr Kailesh Kumar Singh Jagutpal, made this statement at the National Assembly, today. He was replying to the Leader of the Opposition's Private Notice Question which pertained to measures being taken to ensure the survival and prosperity of Mauritius following the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus in China which has quickly escalated into a public health emergency with severe repercussions worldwide.

Minister Jagutpal stated that surveillance at SSR International Airport and the seaport is also being reinforced. Hence, all passengers arriving from China are systematically being screened, body temperature of passengers is being taken individually in the corridor as they disembark from the plane as well as by the Thermal Detector at the Public Health Desk.

A dedicated desk has been set up at the Public Health Counter for all passengers arriving from China, where Public Health Inspectors enquire about the health status of each and every passenger. Also, a dedicated and fully equipped ambulance service is on stand-by at the airport on a 24-hour basis to cater for any emergency with protective equipment in case there is any need to transfer suspected cases to Souillac Hospital.

In addition, all passengers travelling from China are invariably and systematically being put on surveillance (quarantine or isolation) for a period of 14 days; passengers and staff members travelling by cruise ships and private yachts are automatically subjected to body temperature check both on departure and arrival; and surveillance is being carried out for all crew members of cargo ships including fishing vessels.

Furthermore, Minister Jagutpal recalled that a Multi-Sectoral team and a Rapid Response team have been in existence for more than a decade within the structure of the Public Health Division of his Ministry. He stated that since the outbreak of the novel Coronavirus, the Inter-Sectoral Team has met on two occasions, while the Rapid Response Team is on alert at all times.

Two consecutive High-Level meetings chaired by the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister for Rodrigues, Outer Islands and Territorial Integrity, Mr Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, were held on Friday 31 January and Sunday 02 February 2020. The meetings took stock of the measures already in force and to discuss on additional measures to contain the risks of the virus reaching our territory. During these two meetings, he added, the WHO representative in Mauritius reaffirmed that the measures being taken by the Government of Mauritius are fully in compliance with the WHO norms and standards.

Concerning the number of persons suspected of presenting the symptoms who can be accommodated at the New Souillac Hospital, Dr Jagutpal pointed out that the facilities for Isolation and Quarantine that were put in place in 2010 and designed to accommodate some 16 persons, have been upgraded by the Ministry of Health and Wellness to accommodate up to 36 persons. Provision is also being made for an additional 20 beds, he added.

The Minister of Health and Wellness emphasised that Government is leaving no stone unturned to protect citizens from any unwarranted risks that may be unleashed by such public health emergency of international concern.