



Weekly Security Review

Safety and security highlights for clients operating in Myanmar

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Dates covered: 22 – 28 January 2020

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Ministry of Health confirms no Coronavirus in the country yet

According to media reports, there have been no confirmed cases of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), in Myanmar to date.

27 January 2020 - The Union Minister for Health and Sports organized a coordination meeting in Yangon and met with tourism stakeholders and public health sectors, both being largely effected by the outbreak. Statements released by the World Health Organization and international health organizations, the Ministry of Health and Sport's increased monitoring efforts at international entry/exit gates, spreading guidelines, preparations for systematic transference of suspected patients according to standard procedures, and preparing separate rooms for these patients in hospitals.

Statements released by the Department of Aviation, all flights from Wuhan-Yangon and Wuhan-Mandalay have been suspended until 29 February to prevent the spread of novel coronavirus.

26 January 2020 - the United Wa State Army (UWSA) an ethnic armed group with autonomous territory bordering China said it is imposing strict measures to check on people crossing through its border gates and shutting down the entertainment centers to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Wuhan Virus

	Cases	Deaths	Total
Mainland China	4494	106	<div style="background-color: #cccccc; padding: 20px; text-align: center;"> <h1>4559</h1> <p>cases</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #000000; color: white; padding: 20px; text-align: center;"> <h1>106</h1> <p>deaths</p> </div>
Hong Kong	8	--	
Macau	7	--	
Taiwan	5	--	
Rest of Asia	30	--	
Europe	4	--	
North America	6	--	
South America	--	--	
Australasia	5	--	
Rest of the world	--	--	

Source: China's NHC

26 January 2020 - Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention announced the beginning of research and development of a vaccine for the coronavirus. The 2019-nCoV does not currently have an effective medicine treatment or vaccine.

The pneumonia outbreak was first reported in Wuhan City, central China's Hubei Province, in December 2019. Experts have attributed the outbreak to a novel coronavirus that has since spread across China and abroad.

Myanmar Embassy in Beijing announced that 60 Myanmar students studying near Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the disease will be evacuated to Mandalay.

Disease background

31 December 2019 - the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission in Wuhan City, Hubei province, China reported a cluster of pneumonia cases of unknown aetiology, with a common reported link to Wuhan's Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market (a wholesale fish and live animal market selling different animal species).

9 January 2020 - China CDC reported that a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) had been detected as the causative agent and the genome sequence was made publicly available. Sequence analysis showed that the newly-identified virus is related to the SARS-CoV clade.

20 January 2020 - a total of 295 laboratory-confirmed cases infected with 2019-nCoV have been reported, 291 from Wuhan, China and four travel-associated from Thailand (2), Japan (1) and South Korea (1). Four deaths have been reported among the cases. Chinese health authorities have confirmed human-to-human transmission and 15 healthcare workers are reported to have been infected in Wuhan.

The original source of the outbreak remains unknown and therefore further cases and deaths are expected in Wuhan, and in China. It is possible that further cases will also be detected among travelers from Wuhan to other countries.

Two Myanmar migrant workers with high fever were detected at the Muse checkpoint and put under medical surveillance. The workers were travelling back to Myanmar from Ruili for Chinese New Year.

There were reports of outbreak in Sino-Burma border town Ruili, Yunna, but all border gates with China remain open.



Assessment

- the potential impact of 2019-nCoV outbreaks is high;
- further global spread is likely;

- there is currently a moderate likelihood of infection for international travellers visiting Wuhan;
- there is a high likelihood of case importation into countries with the greatest volume of people travelling to and from Wuhan (i.e. countries in Asia);
- there is a high likelihood of detecting cases imported into Myanmar;

Eight people injured by landmines in northern Shan in January alone

According to the Ta'ang Women's Organization (TWO), eight civilians have been injured by landmines in northern Shan State this month. TWO spokesperson said this includes six people in Kyaukme Township, one person in Namhsan, and one more in Namtu. The explosions occurred on 3, 6, 19, 21, and 23 January. It is unknown which armed group planted the landmines. Locals have demanded that both the Tatmadaw and ethnic armed organizations not plant landmines near civilian villages and farms.

The Tatmadaw, Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS), and various military-backed People's Militia Forces are active in Kyaukme, Namhsan, and Namtu townships in northern Shan State.

Two foreigners on motorbike hit a landmine in Hsipaw Township in northern Shan State on 26 November 2019. One of the foreigners was killed on the spot and the other was seriously injured.

Assessment

Northern Shan State is home to several ethnic armed groups that frequently clashed with the Tatmadaw. Rival ethnic armed groups have been fighting each other in the region also; particularly the RCSS and the TNLA. Both the Tatmadaw and the ethnic armed groups are known to plant landmines in northern Shan State's Kyaukme, Hsipaw, Namtu and Namhsan townships, though they all consistently deny responsibility when civilians are killed or injured.

Avoid non-essential travel to the region due to active armed conflict and land mines.

An interactive map revealing armed conflict, landmines and violence for January 2020 can be assessed for a period of time at

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Sc4V3Fttfydk7-z1zmnMBKujf4l_fW7E&usp=sharing

List of Acronyms

TNLA : Ta'ang National Liberation Army. The armed wing of the Palaung State Liberation Front group, claiming more autonomy for the Ta'ang regions. Created in 2009, the TNLA now fields more 7,000 soldiers across Ta'ang populated regions of Northern Shan State.

KIO/KIA : Kachin Independence Organization/Kachin Independence Army. Created in 1961, the KIO/KIA claims to represent the struggle of the Kachin population for self-determination. The KIA fields more than 10,000 soldiers operating in 10 different brigades throughout Kachin and Shan States, as well as Sagaing Region.

RCSS : Restoration Council of Shan State. A 10,000 strong armed group based on the Thai border. Founded in 1996, RCSS joined the national cease-fire with central government in 2015 and subsequently started to move northward to the Chinese border where it has clashed regularly with other armed groups operating in the region.

Source Information

This product represents highlights from a comprehensive review of Myanmar and English language print, electronic, and social media as well as information obtained from sources in law enforcement, government, diplomatic missions, the United Nations, international NGOs and other Exera partners active in the region. Supplementary research is conducted by Exera investigators and analysts.

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