

Taiwan's high-tech safeguards protect the public from the global Covid-19 outbreak

Amid the growing number of confirmed cases of coronavirus infections globally, Taiwan has been effective in curbing the outbreak by moving swiftly to deploy necessary precautions to ensure public health and safety.

A recent example of how Taiwan has leveraged its IT expertise involves the coordination of health and travel data. In an effort to identify citizens with or at risk of having the Coronavirus, Taiwan has pioneered and implemented a cloud system to connect its citizens' health insurance or identity cards with customs data on travel histories. By accessing this data via health insurance cards, Taiwanese doctors can immediately check the patient's travel contact history to help the doctors to more precisely diagnose and treat patients with flu-like symptoms and offer them the best medical care.

Another example of the proactive effort involves measures to prevent the hoarding of surgical masks. To help all citizens acquire facial masks to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, the government rapidly stockpiled all masks in Taiwan and enforced a real-name purchase policy that only allows people to purchase a limited number of masks in one week. Mobile phone apps have also been quickly developed to let citizens know where masks are available for purchase and how many are left in stock.

Taiwan's government wasted no time to work closely with health and immigration services as well as the domestic IT industry to effectively control and limit the spread of the Coronavirus.

***As of today, Friday Feb 14, the outbreak has reached a total of 64,437 confirmed cases reported worldwide. As of writing, Taiwan has a total of 18 confirmed cases, none of which were community-acquired cases, and no new confirmed cases have been reported since Feb 9. Moreover, one of the confirmed cases has fully recovered, and the remaining 17 are on the way to a full recovery and are in stable condition. The risk of infection to international travelers within Taiwan is considered low to minimal.

**The latest reports state that the number of total confirmed cases in China, including Hong Kong (53) and Macau (10), is 63,962, followed by a cruise ship currently in international conveyance (218), Singapore (58), Thailand (33), Japan (33), Republic of Korea (28), Malaysia (19), Taiwan (18), Germany (16), Vietnam (16), Australia (15), United States of American (15), and France (11), UK (9), UAE (8), and Canada (7).