

Bahrain records first coronavirus death in GCC

March 16 2020

A Bahraini woman has died from the novel coronavirus, the health ministry announced on Monday, marking the first death from the disease among Gulf Co-operation Council states.

The 65-year-old woman had pre-existing medical conditions, the ministry said on Twitter.

Nearly 1,000 cases of the virus have been recorded so far across the six nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Most of those infected have been people returning from Iran, where more than 850 people have died in the outbreak, according to official figures released by the Islamic republic.

Facing a mounting public health threat, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman have taken drastic measures to combat the pandemic.

The Gulf countries have shut down cinemas and other entertainment centres. Some have closed gyms and spas.

In the UAE on Monday, Burj Khalifa—the world's tallest building and one of the most popular tourist destinations in Dubai—said it was temporarily closing its observation decks.

Meanwhile, in Saudi Arabia, the authorities temporarily suspended "attendance at work places" in almost all government agencies, according to the official Saudi Press Agency.

Kuwait has taken the strictest measures in the GCC by largely locking down the country over the weekend.

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