COVID-19 Update: South Korean toll soars as global pandemic fears rise; China warns citizens against US travel

For updates from 25 February onwards click [here](https://example.com).

24 February

International

The Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, has revealed the findings of the WHO’s mission in China.

“They found that the epidemic peaked and plateaued [in China] between 23 January and 2 February, and has been declining steadily since then,” he said.

Ghebreyesus added that there had no significant change in the viruses’ DNA in China and that the fatality rate was 2-4% in Wuhan and 0.7% elsewhere.

“Dr Bruce Aylward, [the head of the delegation], will give more detail tomorrow on behalf of the joint team,” he continued. “But the key message that should give all countries hope, courage and confidence is that this virus can be contained.”

Happening now in Beijing:

Dr Bruce Aylward explains the impact of outbreak containment measures at a press briefing on the @WHO-China Joint Mission on #COVID19 pic.twitter.com/DpCpEdZOlT

— World Health Organization Western Pacific (@WHOWPRO) February 24, 2020

Discussing what he called the “deeply concerning” increase in cases in Italy, Iran and South Korea, Ghebreyesus said the outbreak was still a public health emergency of international concern and not yet a pandemic.

“Every country must make its own risk assessment for its own context. WHO is also continuing to do its own risk assessment and is monitoring the evolution of the epidemic around the clock,” he added.

“For the moment, we are not witnessing the uncontained global spread of this #coronavirus, and we are not witnessing large-scale severe disease or death.
Does this virus have pandemic potential? Absolutely. Are we there yet? From our assessment not yet”-@DrTedros #COVID19

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) February 24, 2020

China

The Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism today issued a travel safety alert advising Chinese tourists to avoid travelling to the US, citing “safety reasons”. China has been critical of the US response to the COVID-19 crisis, saying that its tourists have been treated unfairly due to excessive prevention measures introduced there. [Xinhua, Global Times]

China (Hong Kong)

Airport Authority Hong Kong has become the latest airport operator to introduce relief measures for its airport partners in light of the serious downturn in passenger traffic caused by the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Read more here

China

409 new coronavirus infections and 150 new deaths were reported yesterday (23 February) on the Chinese Mainland. The total number of confirmed cases reached 77,150, with 2,592 deaths. Hubei Province, the epicentre of the outbreak, reported 398 new cases with 149 new deaths.

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This graphic shows how case numbers have come down in China and in the COVID-19 epicentre of Hubei Province. But the disease’s rapid spread abroad now shapes as a huge challenge.

Qatar

Qatar Airways said today that all travellers arriving in Doha from Iran and South Korea should isolate
themselves at home or in a quarantine facility for 14 days.

“Passengers arriving from those countries who are showing symptoms will be transferred to the Communicable Disease Centre at the Hamad Medical Corporation,” the airline said in a statement. “We thank our passengers for their cooperation in this matter.”

Italy

Italy has assumed the unwanted status of Europe’s most-affected country by COVID-19 with the number of confirmed cases soaring to 157. Italy’s spike, mainly in the north, marks the biggest outbreak outside of Asia. Strict emergency measures were implemented over the weekend, including a ban on public events in ten municipalities.

The famous Venice Carnival was closed on Sunday, two days earlier than planned. Two of the region’s 25 cases occurred in Venice, a hugely popular tourist destination and home to the acclaimed T Fondaco dei Tedeschi by DFS. That business stands to be heavily affected by an expected prolonged downturn in Chinese visitors caused by COVID-19.

Our latest update from John Hopkins University shows a growing number of cases in Italy and Iran (click to enlarge)

23 February

South Korea
President Moon Jae-in today put the country on the highest possible Level 4 alert in its fight against COVID-19. The move empowers Moon’s government to lock down cities and take other drastic measures to contain the disease.

“The coming few days will be a critical time for us,” President Moon said. “This will be a momentous time when the central government, local governments, health officials and medical personnel and the entire people must wage an all-out, concerted response to the problem.”

South Korea’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs revealed today that 12 countries have banned or strengthened their entry procedures from Korea due to concerns over the country’s surge in COVID-19 cases.

Israel, for example, has banned visitors from Korea. It sent back approximately 130 Korean passengers on Korean Air KE957, which arrived in Tel Aviv last night. Bahrain has introduced similar measures.

“The spike of cases in South Korea and a rising death toll in Iran have added to fears that the window to avert a global pandemic is narrowing,” the New York Times wrote. “The World Health Organization warned African leaders of the urgent need to prepare for the virus; it identified 13 African countries as priorities because of their direct links to China.”

China

The National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China announced that on 22 February, 648 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Mainland China with 97 deaths. The death toll on the Mainland has now reached 2,422 out of 76,936 cases.

Hubei Province, home to COVID-19’s epicentre of Wuhan, reported 630 new confirmed cases and 96 deaths.

![COVID-19 New Confirmed Cases and Deaths in Mainland China](chart.png)

Source: The National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China
South Korea

Confirmed cases of COVID-19 continue to soar in South Korea – home to the world biggest duty free market. The total has reached 556 with five deaths, according to the country’s leading media agency Yonhap News. The potentially fatal illness has been identified in many regions, including South Korea’s 17 major provinces and cities, the report said.

On Friday, the government declared Daegu – epicentre of the Korean outbreak – and its adjacent county Cheongdo as “special care zones”.

Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun yesterday called the situation “grave”.

22 February

[Click on the YouTube icon above to watch The Moodie Davitt Report’s video snapshot of this week’s major developments from the COVID-19 coronavirus crisis]

Italy

Italy’s Health Ministry this morning confirmed the country’s first death from COVID-19, as a man in Padua passed away after contracting the virus. A second death was later reported in Lombardy by news agencies.

Health authorities have reported 15 cases of the virus in the northern region of Lombardy and two in Veneto where Padua is located.

China

Global Times reports 397 new coronavirus infections and a further 109 deaths in Mainland China. This takes the death toll to 2,345, with case numbers at 76,288.

In encouraging news from China, 18 provinces reported no new cases, offering hope that containment measures inside the country are working. As of Friday, the number of daily reported infections in regions outside Hubei dropped to 31, the lowest in a month, according to China’s National Health Commission.

21 February

China

The China Duty Free Group-run Sanya International Duty Free City (CDF Mall) has celebrated its reopening with record daily ecommerce sales of more than CNY44.28 million (US$6.3 million).

As reported, China Duty Free Group (CDFG) reopened its main duty free stores on Hainan Island, including the flagship CDF Mall in Sanya, on 20 February. The stores had been closed since 27 January due to the COVID-19 crisis. For full story, click here.
Back with a bang: Responsible retailing combined with a renewed focus on online shopping led to an encouraging reopening for the CDF Mall.

China’s domestic tourism revenue (including Hainan Province, home to China’s offshore duty free industry) is expected to plummet by -69% in the first quarter due to the COVID-19 epidemic, according to China Tourism Academy. Given a recovery later in the year, full-year revenue is set to fall about -21% the organisation said. [Source: Global Times]

As revealed by The Moodie Davitt Report yesterday, China Duty Free Group has reopened its main stores on Hainan Island.
Back in business: CDF Mall in Haitang Bay reopened yesterday, an important boost for Hainan Province’s beleagured offshore duty free sector

South Korea

South Korea, home to the world’s biggest duty free market, is now also home to the most confirmed cases of COVID-19 after China and the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship following a surge in the infection rate over recent days. The country’s leading news agency, [Yonhap, reported](https://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/רתא/2020/01/29/175155/2020-01-29T121009Z_267566136_RC270F5904FA_RTRMADP_3eworld-coronavirus) that 48 more cases have been reported today, bringing the total to 204.
The number of cases in South Korea has surged even since our latest daily update from John Hopkins University (click to enlarge)

**China**

The National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China announced that on 20 February, 889 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Mainland China with 118 deaths. The death toll on the Mainland has now reached 2,236 out of 75,465 cases.

Hubei Province, home to COVID-19’s epicentre of Wuhan, reported 631 new confirmed cases (319 in Wuhan) and 115 deaths (including 99 in Wuhan).

![COVID-19 New Confirmed Cases and Deaths in Mainland China](image)

Source: National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China

**20 February**

**International**

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced today that its initial assessment of the impact of the Novel Coronavirus 2019 outbreak (COVID-19) shows a potential -13% full-year loss of passenger demand for carriers in the Asia Pacific region.

Considering that growth for the region’s airlines was forecast to be +4.8%, the net impact will be an -8.2% full-year contraction compared to 2019 demand levels. In this scenario, that would translate into a US$27.8 billion revenue loss in 2020 for carriers in the Asia Pacific region – the bulk of which would be borne by carriers registered in China, with US$12.8 billion lost in the China domestic market alone.

In the same scenario, carriers outside Asia Pacific are forecast to bear a revenue loss of US$1.5 billion, assuming the loss of demand is limited to markets linked to China. This would bring total global lost revenue to US$29.3 billion (-5% lower passenger revenues compared to what IATA forecast in December) and represent a -4.7% hit to global demand. In December, IATA forecast global RPK growth of +4.1%, so this loss would more
than eliminate expected growth this year, resulting in a -0.6% global contraction in passenger demand for 2020.

These estimates are based on a scenario where COVID-19 has a similar V-shaped impact on demand as was experienced during SARS. That was characterised by a six-month period with a sharp decline followed by an equally quick recovery. In 2003, SARS was responsible for the -5.1% fall in the RPKs carried by Asia Pacific airlines.

The estimated impact of the COVID-19 outbreak also assumes that the centre of the public health emergency remains in China. If it spreads more widely to Asia Pacific markets then impacts on airlines from other regions would be larger.

It is premature to estimate what this revenue loss will mean for global profitability. We don’t yet know exactly how the outbreak will develop and whether it will follow the same profile as SARS or not. Governments will use fiscal and monetary policy to try to offset the adverse economic impacts. Some relief may be seen in lower fuel prices for some airlines, depending on how fuel costs have been hedged.

“These are challenging times for the global air transport industry. Stopping the spread of the virus is the top priority,” said IATA Director General and CEO Alexandre de Juniac. “Airlines are following the guidance of the World Health Organization (WHO) and other public health authorities to keep passengers safe, the world connected, and the virus contained.

“The sharp downturn in demand as a result of COVID-19 will have a financial impact on airlines – severe for those particularly exposed to the China market. We estimate that global traffic will be reduced by -4.7% by the virus, which could more than offset the growth we previously forecast and cause the first overall decline in demand since the global financial crisis of 2008-09. And that scenario would translate into lost passenger revenues of US$29.3 billion.

“Airlines are making difficult decisions to cut capacity and in some cases routes. Lower fuel costs will help offset some of the lost revenue. This will be a very tough year for airlines.”

**China**

China Duty Free Group (CDFG) today reopened its main duty free stores on Hainan Island, including the flagship CDF Mall in Sanya, at 11am.

As reported, the CDF Mall, the epicentre of Hainan’s offshore duty free industry, and one of the world’s most important duty free locations, has been closed since 27 January due to the COVID-19 crisis.

In a phone interview, CDFG President Charles Chen confirmed to The Moodie Davitt Report that the CDF Mall and other key Hainan locations were open and safe for employees and customers.

[Read the full story here](#)
The entrance to the CDF Mall in Sanya after the store reopened today

**Singapore**

Changi Airport Group has announced a 50% rebate on monthly basic rental costs for six months for all retail, food & beverage and service concessionaires. It is the second major Asian airport operator in as many days to announce support for operators affected by the COVID-19 health crisis after Airports of Thailand yesterday announced a series of rent relief measures.

[Read the full story here](#)

**China (Macau)**

DFS today reopened its seven Macau stores after their forced temporary closure due to the COVID-19 crisis, accompanying the news with an evocative and upbeat message of hope.

In a message today to its Chinese consumers on the DFS WeChat platform, the retailer said in Chinese,

*No winter can’t be passed
No spring will not come*

[Read the full story here](#)

In other encouraging news from Macau, The Venetian Macau Resort Hotel reopened its casino today, and with it the Duty Free Americas (DFA)-run store in the resort complex, DFA Co-Owner Jerome Falic confirmed to The Moodie Davitt Report. The store had closed temporarily along with the casino due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Other Sands China locations in Macau also recommenced operations on Thursday, the hotel and casino operator said.

**Asia Pacific**

Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) CEO Dr. Mario Hardy has warned that recovery in tourism and travel markets may take longer following the COVID-19 outbreak than after past crises due to its deep economic impact.

In a letter to PATA members today, he said: “From past experiences (i.e. SARS), the industry began to show signs of recovery after approximately six months. However, there is a high risk that this time recovery may take longer. Why? Because all Chinese businesses in every sector are being financially impacted in ways that are almost unconceivable. It is likely that Chinese citizens may not be able to take as many overseas holidays later in the year and focus on making up for lost income.”

Dr. Hardy also underscored the importance of supporting businesses in the travel and tourism industry in China amid the outbreak.
He said: “While we encourage businesses and destinations to look at the domestic market and other source markets to fill the current void, we would also like to highlight the importance of showing messages of kindness and support to your respective partners and suppliers in China. Building and maintaining a close relationship
with your partners in China during this difficult time is key to quicker recovery once this situation is behind us.

“Already we are seeing some destinations like Thailand, Nepal and others showing compassion and kindness in their own respective ways. Some businesses are also extending refunds, letters of credit towards future bookings, and waiving late payment fees to assist their close partners and suppliers. Organisations should make good use of social media and build content to show their support during times such as these.

“At PATA, we are also asking all travel and tourism organisations around the globe to appeal to their members and partners to show compassion and empathy to our fellow colleagues during this trying time. We must look for ways to support each other, particularly those most affected by the current situation such as our partners in China and SMEs across the region, as well as bring confidence back to the industry. Only through concerted efforts by both the public and private sector can we face the complex challenge ahead of us.”

**New Zealand**

Announcing its 2019 results today, Auckland Airport said that the COVID-19 outbreak will hurt FY20 underlying profit, though the extent remains uncertain.

“Current forecast is approximately NZ$10 million (US$6.4 million) after tax impact in 2H FY20 over both aeronautical and non-aeronautical revenues,” the company said. This forecast assumes increasing impacts over March/April and a gradual recovery over May/June.

“We are now seeing an impact on passenger numbers with capacity to/from China reduced following travel restrictions,” Auckland Airport commented. Currently there are 8-11 services per week to and from China, compared to the usual number of up to 45).

For the full story, [click here](https://www.aucklandairport.co.nz).

**China**

Global Times reports 114 more deaths and 394 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection in the Chinese Mainland as of Wednesday night. The total number infected in Mainland China has reached 74,578 with 2,118 deaths.
19 February

Thailand

Airports of Thailand (AOT) has today announced a range of rent relief measures for commercial operators affected by the COVID-19 health crisis and the slump in travel to and from Thailand, making it the first airport owner to publicly reveal a relief package.

Read the full story here

Malaysia

The ACI Annual Airport Economics & Finance Conference & Exhibition and ACI-World Bank Annual Aviation Symposium, which were due to jointly take place in Kuala Lumpur 24-26 March, have been postponed.

A statement from the organisers (ACI World, ACI Asia-Pacific and ACI Europe) and the host (Malaysia Airports Holding Berhad) released yesterday (18 February) said: “Our foremost priority is the health and well-being of delegates, speakers, exhibitors and staff… As well, travel restrictions and limited connectivity within the region are making it challenging for some to travel to Kuala Lumpur.”

It added: “As a result, the organisers, together with the host, have made the difficult decision to postpone the event. We appreciate your understanding in these difficult circumstances which have developed very quickly over a short period of time.”

A new date for the event, likely to be in the fourth quarter of this year, will be announced shortly.

South Korea

51 cases of COVID-19 have now been reported in South Korea, with 20 new confirmed cases revealed yesterday. No deaths have yet been caused.

The health crisis is certain to have a big impact on the economy and the key tourism and travel sector. Moody’s Investor Service has cut its forecast for the country’s economic growth in 2020 to 1.9% from 2.1%, according to Voice of America.
Leading news agency Yonhap reports the surge in COVID-19 cases, mostly in the city of Daegu, 300 kilometers southeast of Seoul, and in the adjacent North Gyeongsang region.

**China**

The Moodie Davitt Report content partner Jing Daily has assessed the response of luxury brands in China to the crisis, noting that they have to “walk a tightrope between promoting their products or just offering helpful advice to consumers who might lack the motivation to shop for luxury items. A crisis like this poses a challenge to brands, particularly in the way a brand’s headquarters can work in tandem with their local Chinese teams to create swift but meaningful campaigns”.

It adds that these situations also help a company to relay its values to consumers, which shouldn’t come in the form of generic slogans from the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) department or one-off donations; it should be a code of responsibility that extends from all departments.

From what Jing Daily has observed, the big luxury groups have not been as agile as local players.

“Even basic consumer communication has been lacking. For example, few luxury brands informed consumers about shortened store hours or delays in shipping services on practically all channels, and only a few of them posted a caring message shortly after the outbreak. This was quite a contrast to local brands, many of which published...
in-store safety guides right away or offered creatively-designed respirator masks.”

For the full article, click here.

**China**

Global Times reports that that 136 new deaths and 1,749 more confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in the Chinese mainland in the past 24 hours. The total infection number reached 74,185 with 2,004 deaths.

Importantly however, the daily number of recovered novel coronavirus patients has surpassed that of new confirmed infections for the first time, according to the National Health Commission.

On Tuesday 1,824 people left hospital after recovery, higher than the number of confirmed infections on the same day (1,749).

A total of 14,376 patients have been discharged from hospital after recovery by the end of Tuesday.

Hard-hit Hubei Province reported 1,693 new cases of COVID-19 on 18 February, with 132 new deaths and 1,266 cases of recovery.
China

President Xi Jinping said yesterday that “visible progress” is being made to combat COVID-19 through China’s measures to prevent and control the epidemic. He made the assertions in a phone conversation with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, as reported by state-owned Global Times.

Xi said that the battle against the epidemic has arrived “at a crucial time”, stressing that China will strive to reduce the impact of the epidemic while resolutely carrying out prevention and control efforts.

He added that China is not only responsible for the safety and health of its people, but also committed to the cause of safeguarding international public health.

18 February

Singapore

Singapore Airlines is to cut flights across its network through to and including May as a response to weaker demand due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The airline and subsidiary SilkAir will slash capacity on major routes to destinations such as New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris, Frankfurt, Copenhagen, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Tokyo, Seoul, Jakarta and Taipei, among others, from March through to late May.

The cancellations during May take in the period during which TFWA Asia Pacific is due to take place, meaning probable rescheduling of travel plans for some visitors booked on Singapore Airlines.

Click here for the full list of cancelled flights from Singapore Airlines.

North Korea

Multiple sources in North Korea are reporting of an official who was shot dead for disobeying his quarantine following a visit to China.

North Korea sealed off its border with China on 30 January and instructed all who had either visited or interacted with Chinese nationals to be quarantined for 15 days. North Korean Leader Kim Jong-un specifically ordered the nation to apply the country’s military justice system against those who left the designated areas without permission during the quarantine period.

The North Korean official reportedly shot dead for disobeying his quarantine in North Korea’s northern city of Rason was a trade official who had visited China.

The sources also say that a colonel at North Korea’s National Security Agency was recently demoted to being a farm worker after his attempts to hide a visit to China were uncovered.
China

Ratings agency Moody’s has revised down its forecasts for Chinese GDP growth in 2020, from +5.8% to +5.2%, but maintained its forecast for 2021 of +5.7% growth.

Moody’s Vice President Madhavi Bokil said in a research note: “The outbreak will first and foremost hurt China’s economy by lowering discretionary consumer spending on transportation, retail, tourism and entertainment. There is already evidence – albeit anecdotal – that supply chains are being disrupted, including outside China. Furthermore, extended lockdowns in China would have a global impact given the country’s importance and interconnectedness in the global economy.”

The agency added: “With the virus continuing to spread within China and to other parts of the world, it is still too early to make a final assessment of the impact on China and the global economy.”

China

Yesterday, 1,886 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Mainland China with 98 deaths (93 of them in Hubei Province).

The number of confirmed and recovered cases globally, according to John Hopkins University. Beyond a spike on 13 and 14 February when there was a change in how cases were tabulated, there has been a downward trend in the number of confirmed daily cases since 4 February. Click to enlarge.

Hubei Province, whose capital Wuhan is the epicentre of the crisis, reported 1,807 new cases with 93 new deaths and 1,223 cases of recovery. Nationwide, 1,223 patients were released from hospitals after being cured, including 761 in Wuhan.
Wuhan plans to build another ten ‘Fang Cang’ temporary hospitals, offering about 11,465 beds for patients infected with milder cases of COVID-19, Global Times reports.
China

The National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China said today that the proportion of severe and critical cases of COVID-19 among all confirmed cases has decreased significantly in China.

In Wuhan, the proportion of severe cases fell from a peak of 32.4 percent on 28 January to 21.6 percent on 15 February.

The proportion in other parts of Hubei province dropped from a peak of 18.4 percent on 27 January to 11.1 percent on 15 February.

The percentage in other provinces in China also decreased significantly, falling from a peak of 15.9 percent on 27 January to 7.2 percent on 15 February.

China

The most important statistics in the COVID-19 outbreak are not those that annotate the economic, tourism or travel retail toll but those that tell the human cost.

Yesterday, 16 February, 105 deaths (100 in Hubei Province) and 2,048 new confirmed cases of infection were
reported in Mainland China. The total infection number rose to 70,548 with 1,770 deaths by midnight last night. [Source: The National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China.]

The medical community in China and beyond is watching intently to see if the outbreak’s inflection point has come, as predicted by one leading Chinese medical expert on Saturday. Yesterday’s new confirmed cases nationwide figure was slightly higher than the 2,009 from the previous day, though the death toll was down from the earlier 142.

In hard-hit Hubei Province, where the city of Wuhan is the epicentre of the outbreak, 1,933 new cases of COVID-19 were reported yesterday with 100 more deaths and 1,016 cases of recovery. Again, that was slightly up on the previous day’s 1,843 new cases (i.e. under the new, wider definition; 888 were clinically confirmed), though again the death toll was down from 139.

16 February

China

“The real inflection point [of the COVI-19 outbreak] has come. Over the past five days, the number of fever cases has dropped. It is like a downward slope. It’s not coming back, I’m confident.”
Those were the bold words this weekend of the head of Leishenshan Hospital, the facility in Wuhan built in remarkable quickfire fashion to treat COVID-19 patients. It’s a powerful statement which, if true, will offer the medical and business communities and society at large, real cause for optimism.

State-controlled Chinese media Global Times, which has provided outstanding real-time coverage of the crisis from its early days, also reported that the proportion of critical COVID-19 patients to all confirmed cases in Wuhan, Hubei Province and the rest of China has dropped.

The ratio peaked at 32.4% on 28 January and fell to 21.6% in Wuhan on Saturday 15 February. It dropped from 15.9% on 27 January to 7.2% in other places outside Hubei on 15 February.

Fellow media company CGTN reported that the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has reached 68,584 in China with 510 abroad. The death toll has risen to 1,666 in China (including one in Hong Kong), with three abroad. 9,419 patients have recovered.

That positive message was reinforced by Mi Feng, spokesperson for the National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China. Speaking to reporters (click here to watch a translated version of his comments) he said that the ratio of critical coronavirus patients to confirmed cases has decreased significantly in China, including Hubei Province and its capital city Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak.

“As the national efforts against the epidemic have shown results” – Mi Feng, spokesperson for the National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China

In other important news, the Wuhan government has set a stern three-day target to step up progress against the disease. It vows to put all confirmed COVID-19 patients into treatment; finish nucleic acid tests with all suspected patients; perform proper tests on all patients with fever; and put all close contacts in quarantine.

Meanwhile, Fapilavir, the first domestically developed drug with potential effect for treating COVID19, has received approval for sale. Fapilavir is one of the three medicines that have shown to good effect in clinical trials. [Source: Global Times]
15 February

South Korea

Asiana Airlines is to reduce flights to Southeast Asia, in addition to the suspension and reduction of 24 out of 26 China routes, *The Korea Herald* reported. China routes accounted for 19% of the carrier’s sales in the third quarter last year.

The airline’s Incheon-Taipei route will be suspended from 26 February while Incheon-Chiang Mai (Thailand) flights will be halted from 3 March.

Asiana Airlines said that it will also reduce flights to Hanoi, Bangkok, Singapore, Nha Trang and Saipan until mid-March.

France

An 80-year-old Chinese national has died in France after contracting COVID-19, French Health Minister Agnès Buzyn confirmed today. This is the first reported fatality outside Asia.

China

Global Times reports 143 new deaths and 2,641 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of 14 February in the Chinese mainland, citing details from the National Health Commission. The total number infected is now 66,492, with 1,523 deaths.

14 February

[Click on the YouTube icon above to watch The Moodie Davitt Report’s video snapshot of this week’s major developments from the COVID-19 coronavirus crisis]

International

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) estimates that Japan could lose US$1.29 billion in tourism revenue in the first quarter of 2020 due to reductions in Chinese air travellers, followed by Thailand at US$1.15 billion.

ICAO reports that globally some 70 airlines have cancelled all international flights to/from mainland China, and that a further 50 airlines have curtailed related air operations. This has resulted in a -80% reduction of foreign airline capacity for travellers directly to/from China, and a -40% capacity reduction by Chinese airlines.

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, airlines had planned to increase capacity by +9% on international routes to/from China for the first quarter of 2020 compared to 2019.

ICAO’s preliminary estimates indicate that the first quarter of 2020 has instead seen an overall reduction ranging from -39% to -41% of passenger capacity, or a reduction of 16.4 to 19.6 million passengers compared to what airlines had projected. This equates to a potential reduction of US$4-5 billion in gross operating revenues.
for airlines worldwide.

The agency also noted that COVID-19 impacts are expected to be greater than those caused by the 2003 SARS epidemic, in light of the higher volume and greater global extent of the flight cancellations being seen. Seasonal passenger load factors are another extenuating factor, as is the fact that China’s international air traffic has doubled, and its domestic traffic increased five-fold, since the 2003 period.

**Singapore**

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has said the shops of Changi have been “hard hit” by COVID-19 on a visit to the airport.

“I came to visit Changi Airport because Changi is on the front line with the travel industry substantially impacted. Flights are down by a third and shops here are hard hit,” he commented.

Describing the outbreak as “very intense”, Lee said the impact on the wider Singaporean economy had already been greater than SARS and that the country’s finances would take a hit “at least in the next couple of quarters”.

“Economies of the region are much more interlinked together [than they were at the time of SARS],” he added. “China is a much bigger factor in the region. I can’t say whether we will have a recession or not, but our economy will definitely take a hit.”

**China**

State-owned media Global Times reports that the COVID-19 death toll has reached 1,380, with numbers infected standing at 63,851, in the Chinese mainland.

Importantly, daily infection case numbers reported outside the epicentre in Hubei Province have declined for the tenth consecutive day.

**13 February**

**International**

In its results for the six months to the end of December 2019, Pernod Ricard said it was expecting a “severe impact” in its Asian travel retail sales for the third quarter as a result of COVID-19, with a significant hit to passenger traffic and business performance visible in early February.

[Read the full story here](#)

**International**

Cruise company Carnival Corporation has said cancellations and the loss of bookings as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak will have a “material impact” on its financial results.

Travel restrictions as a result of the coronavirus have forced the suspension of cruise operations from ports in China, and are now resulting in the cancellation of voyages in other parts of Asia.

If the company was forced to suspend all of its operations in Asia until the end of April, its fiscal 2020 financial
performance would be impacted by as much as US$0.55 to US$0.65 per share, including guest compensation, Carnival estimated. It added that the impact on global bookings would further affect financial performance.

The company said it was currently evaluating contingency plans to mitigate the impact.

The Carnival Corporation share price has slipped from US$51.90 on 17 January to US$43.39 today.

**France**

Groupe ADP CEO Augustin de Romanet has said the COVID-19 outbreak could have a “real material” impact on the performance of Paris’s two main international airports. [Read more here](#).

**Spain**

The world’s largest phone show, Mobile World Congress (MWC), has been cancelled because the coronavirus made it “impossible” to hold the event.

The trade show, which is a staple of the telecommunications calendar and had been due to take place 24-27 February, brings more than 100,000 people to Barcelona every year.

In a statement, event organiser GSMA said: “With due regard to the safe and healthy environment in Barcelona and the host country today, the GSMA has cancelled MWC Barcelona 2020 because the global concern regarding the coronavirus outbreak, travel concern and other circumstances, make it impossible for the GSMA to hold the event.”

**Asia Pacific**

Travel analytics company ForwardKeys has said that the COVID-19 outbreak has resulted in a -10.5% slowdown year-on-year in outbound travel bookings for March and April across Asia Pacific markets (excluding China and Hong Kong).

As of 9 February, the setback looks likely to be most marked in North-East Asia, where outbound bookings for March & April, are -17.1% behind where they were at the equivalent moment last year. Bookings from South Asia are -11% behind; from South-East Asia are -8.1% behind and from Oceania -3.0% behind.

For the full story, [click here](#).

**China**

Hubei Province, home to Wuhan, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak, reported what state-controlled media Global Times dubbed a “staggering” 14,840 new infections yesterday after door-to-door searches and (critically) changing its standard to review suspected cases.

Hubei Province reported 14,840 new cases (including 13,332 clinically diagnosed cases) of COVID-19 on 12 February with 242 new deaths and 802 cases of recovery. The total number of infections in the province surged to 48,206, with 1,310 deaths and 3,441 cases of recovery.
Germany

Fraport Group today said that flight cancellations in late January due to the coronavirus outbreak had a negative effect on its passenger traffic figures last month. Frankfurt Airport handled 4.6 million passengers in January, down by -0.7% year-on-year.

The company said the decline was mainly due to weak German and intra-European traffic throughout the month, but that in late January it was “further impacted by flight cancellations to and from China in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak”. Aircraft movements fell by -3.4% as airlines consolidated their flight schedules.

In China, traffic at Xi’an Airport, which is run by an alliance led by Fraport, dropped by -6.5% to 3.5 million passengers.

Japan

The Japanese Health Ministry confirms 44 more cases of COVID-19 onboard the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship docked in Yokohama, taking the number of infections to 218.

More than 3,700 passengers and crew members have been quarantined since 3 February, as reported.

12 February

China

More positive signs have emerged in the wake of cities nationwide implementing enhanced measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak, Global Times reports, sparking more speculation on when the inflection point will come.

The state-controlled media reported that new infections continued to decline for the eighth straight day outside Central China’s Hubei Province, home to the epicentre of Wuhan. Newly confirmed cases in Wuhan also dropped below 2,000, the lowest since the start of February, according to official data on Wednesday. The death rate also appeared to slow, with an improving recovery rate.

The National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China said on Wednesday that the number of daily confirmed novel coronavirus pneumonia cases has seen a 48.2% decline between 4 February and Tuesday 11 February. A spokesperson said during a press conference that although China still faces a severe situation, some positive signs have emerged after authorities launched a series of effective measures. Meanwhile, the overall recovery rate has been improving in the past few weeks.

China

Marketing and digital strategist China Skinny has predicted an “explosive” recovery of Chinese travel from COVID-19 based on the travelling public’s activity following SARS in 2003.

China Skinny Associate Marketing Manager Sheryl Shen wrote: “The similarities of the virus’s severity and timing brings the all-too-infamous 2003 SARS outbreak back into memory. From April to June 2003, China’s
inbound, outbound and domestic travel markets faced a challenging time.

“However, shortly after the end of the epidemic, an explosive rebound happened as Chinese consumers could finally unbottle their long-built-up passion to travel. The whole market quickly recovered as a result.”

Read the full story here

Cambodia

After being turned away from ports in Japan and Thailand, Westerdam is now sailing for Sihanoukville in Cambodia, where it is due to arrive at 7am local time tomorrow (13 February).

Once there, the cruise will end and guests will be allowed to disembark, with onward travel being paid for by Holland America Line.

“All approvals have been received and we are extremely grateful to the Cambodian authorities for their support,” Holland America Line said.

The cruise line added that all guests onboard are healthy and there are no suspected cases of the coronavirus.

China

The fight against the novel coronavirus now known as COVID-19 is at a critical stage, according to Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

State-controlled media Global Times, which has provided outstanding up-to-the-minute coverage of the health crisis, reported Xi’s comments made during a video call with medical care personnel in Wuhan on Monday,

“We must persist and resolutely win the defensive battle in Wuhan and Hubei, which will also guarantee a national victory against the virus,” Xi said, according to Xinhua News Agency.
Global Times reported that new confirmed cases of COVID-19 outside Central China’s Hubei Province, where the virus originated, have been dropping for seven consecutive days. But the situation in the provincial capital of Wuhan remains a core challenge.

Total confirmed cases nationwide reached 42,725 as of Tuesday midnight with the death toll hitting 1,017.

The epidemic situation outside Hubei has shown downward trends, as other provincial-level regions have recorded decreasing numbers of new confirmed cases for the seventh consecutive day, He Qinghua from the National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China said at a press briefing on Tuesday.

Citing local analysts, Global Times advised against premature optimism given the mass migration of people during the return from the extended Lunar New Year holiday.

Zhong Nanshan, China’s top epidemiologist, told Global Times on Tuesday that the inflection point of the outbreak cannot be predicted now. “It may peak in mid or late-February,” he said.

Singapore

The Singapore Tourism Board expects a decline of -25% to -30% year-on-year in international visitor arrivals in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19.

Speaking to Bloomberg TV, CEO Keith Tan said: “The decline will depend on how long or short this period lasts and how fast the recovery will be.”
Keith Tan: “We are losing about 18-20,000 visitors on average per day”
(Source: Bloomberg TV)

He noted that China accounts for about one-fifth of Singapore’s total visitor arrivals, but added: “This is not just confined to China as we thought it might be at first; there is a larger rippling impact. More and more non-Chinese travellers are deferring travel to Singapore and to the region.

“From when this crisis began to now we are losing about 18,000-20,000 visitors on average per day. The longer this lasts, the worse it could get.”

He said the industry was confident of sustained recovery once the crisis is over. “I don’t think this is a long-term crisis. It is serious but if we look at the past, to SARS or H1N1 or 9/11, tourism demand always bounces back. The uncertainty is how long it takes. We are already positioning ourselves for the recovery.”

**Japan**

39 more passengers and crew have tested positive for COVID-19 onboard the cruise ship *Diamond Princess* in Yokohama, Japan, reports *The Japan Times*, citing Japan’s Health Minister Katsunobu Kato. It takes the total infected to 175.

More than 3,700 passengers and crew members have been quarantined since 3 February, as reported.

**International**
11 February

Switzerland

The World Health Organization (WHO) today announced COVID-19 as the official name of the novel coronavirus from China. The name is derived from the words ‘corona’, ‘virus’ and ‘disease. 2019 represents the year that the strain emerged (the outbreak was reported to the WHO on 31 December).

China

The inflection point (in this case the peak) of the coronavirus outbreak cannot be predicted, but it may peak in mid-or late-February, according to China’s top epidemiologist Zhong Nanshan [Source: Global Times]
Hopeful news at last from China

China

The Moodie Davitt Report is to donate 100% of advertising funds from a long-planned eZine on the spectacular new Daxing International Airport to the Wuhan coronavirus relief effort.

The eZine (part of our acclaimed Spotlight Series), out later this month, features exclusive on-location coverage by Martin Moodie from the new Beijing gateway and interviews with leading players including China Duty Free Group, Lagardère Travel Retail, Plaza Premium Group and others.

The Moodie Davitt Report is in discussions with China Duty Free Group to find an appropriate source for the funds and will make a further announcement soon.

Read the full story here

International

Tax Free World Association (TFWA) and the Asia Pacific travel Retail Association (APTRA) say they are continuing their preparations for the TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition & Conference in Singapore on May 10 to 14 against the backdrop of the coronavirus outbreak. TFWA’s Management Committee in early March will discuss the latest situation “with a view to moving forward in the best interests of our industry”.

In a joint statement, TFWA and APTRA said they are “working closely with their members across retailers, brands, airports, F&B and inflight operators to monitor and evaluate the fast-moving situation caused by the outbreak of novel coronavirus. Both associations are working together to assess the situation as it develops to provide the most valuable support they can offer the industry, especially to businesses in Asia Pacific”.

TFWA President Alain Maingreaud said: “Our first thoughts must be with the victims of this outbreak, and with
the individuals and companies most affected. All of us at TFWA stand with our colleagues and partners in
China and in Asia Pacific, where the impact of the current situation has been felt most keenly. Our friends at
APTRA and ourselves are in constant contact to share information on fresh developments and to assess how our
industry is being affected.”

APTRA President Grant Fleming said: “The current measures on travel restrictions and recent store closures in
some locations are sensible precautions to help limit the spread of the virus and, although they are painful
commercially in the short-term, we wholeheartedly support these mitigation strategies for the long-term benefit
of the industry. The health and safety of employees and customers is an absolute priority.

“Asia Pacific is unquestionably resilient and resourceful and there is proven analysis of the bounce-back from
previous crises, such as SARS or the 2008-9 global financial crash. There are underlying long-term positives,
with IATA reporting an influx of 450 million additional Chinese air passengers over the last ten years and
analysis that China will become the largest aviation market within the next five years, within long-term growth
projected to deliver 1 billion new passengers by 2037, to 1.6 billion. When Chinese tourists start travelling again
at full pace, which they will do, we should expect a return to commercial growth with the same vigour and
energy we’ve seen when faced with other headwinds. We are, after all, a region that thrives on fast change.”

On the plans for the Singapore event, Maingreaud said: “We are of course fully aware of the negative impact of
the current crisis on TFWA’s members and those of APTRA. However, we are continuing to prepare for our
event in Singapore, which is the major annual gathering of our industry in Asia Pacific. The TFWA Board and
team are in constant contact with our partners in Singapore along with government authorities, and are
monitoring the situation very closely. The TFWA Management Committee will meet as planned in early March
and will take stock of the situation at that time, with a view to moving forward in the best interests of our
industry.”

Fleming added: “We support TFWA’s plans for the Singapore event in May – a crucial rendezvous in the
industry calendar. This will be an important opportunity to discuss how we will rebound from what has been,
for all our members, an exceptionally challenging start to the year.”

**Thailand**

Holland America Line’s cruise ship *Westerdam* will not be given permission to dock in Thailand, according to
media reports.

The ship had been sailing to Laem Chabang port near Bangkok ahead of arrival on 13 February, but Thai public
health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul is reported to have now said: “I have issued orders. Permission to dock
refused.”

“We are aware of the reports regarding the status of *Westerdam*’s call to Laem Chabang (Bangkok), Thailand.”
a statement from Holland America Line said. “We are actively working [on] this matter & will provide an
update when able.”

The cruise line has reiterated that the ship is not in quarantine and no guests are believed to have the coronavirus.
We are aware of the reports regarding the status of Westerdam’s call to Laem Chabang (Bangkok), Thailand. We are actively working this matter & will provide an update when able. We know this is confusing for our guests and their families & we greatly appreciate their patience.

— Holland America Line (@HALcruises) February 11, 2020

South Korea

Lotte Duty Free is to donate KRW300 million (US$254,000) to Korean Red Cross efforts to support communities affected by the coronavirus. The company said that money due to have been spent on a 40th-anniversary celebration event on 14 February has been diverted to help Wuhan residents as well as vulnerable children in Korea.

The Korean Red Cross is assisting with relief to families in China and Wuhan in particular.

In addition, hygiene kits will be provided to protect the health of Korean elementary school-age children with weak immunity.

Click here for the full story.

China

Foreo has joined the fight against the coronavirus outbreak by donating 2,500 protective suits to three hospitals in Hubei province. Read more here

China

State-owned media Global Times reports that the death toll has now passed 1,000, reaching 1,018. There have been 108 more deaths and 2,478 new confirmed cases of coronavirus in the Chinese mainland, with the numbers infected now 42,648 on Mainland China and 43,112 globally.
10 February

Thailand

The Holland America Line ship *Westerdam* is sailing for Laem Chabang port near Bangkok and will dock there on 13 February.

The cruise had been scheduled to end at Yokohama on 15 February after calling at five other Japanese destinations but, as reported on 7 February, authorities refused to let the ship dock in Japanese ports due to suspected cases of the coronavirus on board.

Holland America Line said in a statement: “Guests on board continue to be safe and well cared for. The ship is not in quarantine and we have no reason to believe there are any cases of coronavirus onboard despite media reports.”

The cruise line added that all guests will receive a complete refund, and that the 15 February cruise on *Westerdam* has been cancelled.

As reported, MSC Cruises Head of Retail Adrian Pittaway had warned of the impact the coronavirus outbreak would have on the Chinese cruise retail industry. “We must pay attention to the significant effect this will have for us in the cruise retail sector. As of last week, the entire outbound Chinese mainland cruise market has been suspended and there are currently no cruises operating from China,” he said.

China/International

Two-thirds of international capacity to and from China has been cancelled as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, according to analyst OAG. In less than four weeks the number of weekly international seats operated from China has fallen by some 1.4 million seats since the week commencing the 20 January, as the below table from OAG highlights. “In comparative terms that reduction in capacity is more than all of the scheduled international capacity planned from France this week,” OAG said.
The impact in Japan has been severe too, the analyst said, with scheduled airline capacity falling by some 200,000 per week compared to the week of the 20 January; a 60% fall in capacity in four weeks.

Looking ahead, OAG expects international capacity from China “may again fall over the next few days but that we have seen the worst of the cuts with airlines having responded quickly to the virus”.

The analyst concluded: “Ultimately we know from previous events of this nature that capacity and demand will return quickly but the numbers are certainly some of the most dramatic we have ever seen in any market.”

**Japan**

Japanese broadcast media NHK World reports 60 more cases of passengers testing positive for the coronavirus onboard cruise ship *Diamond Princess* in Yokohama, Japan, taking the total to around 130.

More than 3,700 passengers and crew members have been quarantined since 3 February.

**China**

As of midnight, Beijing time on 9 February, 97 new deaths and 3,062 new confirmed cases of the coronavirus infection had been reported on the Chinese Mainland during the previous 24 hours. The total number of cases on the Mainland reached 40,171 with 908 deaths. [Source: Global Times]
Key travel retail store temporary closures due to the coronavirus crisis

- 26 January: China Duty Free Group closes its busiest duty free location, the cdf Mall in Haitang Bay, Sanya. For many beauty suppliers this is their biggest travel retail door in the world.
- 3 February: Lotte Duty Free shuts its Jeju downtown store to prevent the spread of the coronavirus domestically. The store resumed operations on 7 February.
- 3 February: The Shilla Duty Free shuts down its downtown stores in Seoul and Jeju. These reopened on 7 February.
- 6 February: DFS Group suspends operations across its seven stores in Macau from 6 to 19 February inclusive, with a planned reopening on 20 February.
- 7 February: Lotte Duty Free announces a temporary shutdown of its flagship Seoul Myeong-dong store after the country’s then 23rd confirmed novel coronavirus-infected patient (a female Chinese traveller from Wuhan) had visited the Lotte Department Store on the same site. The store reopened on 10 February.
- 8 February: DFS shuts down T Galleria by DFS, Hong Kong in Tsim Sha Tsui East; and Hong Kong T Galleria Beauty by DFS, Moko from 8 to 29 February.

Source: Moodie Davitt Business Intelligence Unit

China (Hong Kong & Macau)

Contacted by The Moodie Davitt Report about the latest store closures in Hong Kong, DFS said in a statement: “In our continued efforts to protect our employees and customers in the current health environment, and to curb the spread of the coronavirus, we have made the decision to temporarily close two of our stores in Hong Kong – namely, T Galleria by DFS, Tsimshatsui East and T Galleria Beauty by DFS Moko – until the end of February.

T Galleria Beauty by DFS Moko is one of nine DFS stores to be closed temporarily due to the crisis [Photo: DFS]

“This is a purely preventative step which will allow us to focus our resources and efforts on a reduced store footprint while balancing the need to continue to serve our customers. To date, there have been no cases of the coronavirus in any of our store locations and we will continue to take all necessary precautions to ensure our stores remain hygienic and safe environments for all.
“We look forward to serving customers at our T Galleria by DFS, Canton Road or T Galleria Beauty by DFS, Causeway Bay stores, which remain open as usual, or through our Click and Collect service on dfs.com.

“We apologise for any inconvenience to our loyal customers during the temporary closure of two of our stores. We will continue to closely monitor the situation and we look forward to reopening as soon as possible.”

Commenting on the earlier closure of the Macau stores, DFS said: “Also, to align with the direction of the Macau SAR Chief Executive to prevent further contagion of the coronavirus, all DFS stores in Macau will be closed until February 19 inclusive. Casino operations and entertainment venues have also been requested to close during this period. We will resume normal operations in Macau on February 20.”

**International**

The Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, has warned “we may only be seeing the tip of the iceberg” and that all countries “must use the window of opportunity” to contain the spread of the virus.

Ghebreyesus made the comments as a team of experts from the WHO headed to China to investigate the outbreak.

“I reiterate my call for calm. I reiterate my call for solidarity – human, financial and scientific solidarity. Any breach in solidarity is a victory for the virus,” he added.

The latest scale of the outbreak at 9.13am (GMT) on 10 February, according to John Hopkins University (click to enlarge).
9 February

China (Hong Kong & Macau)

DFS yesterday suspended operations at two stores in Hong Kong to add to the seven shops temporarily shut down in Macau on Thursday.

The measures have been taken in the wake of a tourism collapse in both locations.

DFS advises Chinese consumers of the two Hong Kong store closures

DFS has shut down T Galleria by DFS, Hong Kong in Tsim Sha Tsui East; and Hong Kong T Galleria Beauty by DFS, Moko from 8 to 29 February.

Earlier, the retailer suspended operations in Macau from 6 to 19 February inclusive, with a planned reopening on 20 February.

The Macau stores are:

- T Galleria Beauty by DFS, Macau, Wynn Palace
- T Galleria Beauty by DFS, Macau World Galaxy Macau
- T Galleria Beauty by DFS, Macau
- T Galleria Beauty by DFS, Macau, MGM Macau
- T Galleria By DFS, City of Dreams, Macau
- T Galleria by DFS, Macau, Four Seasons
- Studio City Macau at T Galleria by DFS

DFS has also adjusted its trading hours at numerous stores worldwide to reflect vastly reduced trading.

From 28 January to 29 February its T Gallerias in Canton Road and Causeway Bay are trading from 11.00 to 20.00 only.

Similar hours are in place at T Gallerias in Bali and Cambodia. In Sydney, the T Galleria is open from 11.00 to 19.00; while in Singapore the downtown store is trading from 12.00 to 20.00. T Galleria by DFS in Auckland is open from 11.00 to 20.00.

DFS has put in place strict hygiene controls at its stores to ensure staff and customer safety. Disinfection and cleaning is being carried out daily; while all T Galleria by DFS counters in Hong Kong are equipped with
disinfection solutions for use at any time of the day.

Every T Galleria by DFS employee in Hong Kong has to take their temperature before starting their shift and wear a mask while serving customers.

As the largest beauty hall in Hong Kong, DFS’s Hong Kong T Galleria Canton Road store has temporarily suspended product testing services. Beauty consultants are disinfecting their hands with alcohol before and after receiving customers.

China (Hong Kong)

Travel Blue, the fast-growing supplier of travel-related goods such as pillows and adaptors, has sourced and then donated to China 100,000 surgical masks with help from its Poland office. The company said that it is committed to providing safe and happy journeys for everyone, whether from one country to another, or from the workplace to home.

China (Hong Kong)

The Department of Health in Hong Kong has lifted a quarantine on Dream Cruises’ World Dream cruise ship, which has been docked at the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal since last Wednesday. The move came after crew members and passengers were cleared after tests for the virus.

Dream Cruises said it was suspending operations of World Dream until further notice, effective immediately.

The cruise line said in a statement: “Dream Cruises is pleased to report that the Department of Health has confirmed that all guests and crew onboard World Dream have passed extensive health screenings and temperature checks, and all of the samples taken from the 1,814 crew members have tested negative for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

“Guests onboard World Dream have been cleared to disembark the ship this afternoon and Dream Cruises will be arranging shuttle transportation and assisting international guests with complimentary hotel accommodations.
and the rebooking of onward travel arrangements.”

“Dream Cruises would also like to extend their appreciation to the government of Hong Kong for their dedication to safeguarding the health and welfare of our passengers and the people of Hong Kong, and would also like to thank all of the officers and crew of World Dream for the hard work, professionalism and care they have provided during this extremely challenging time. Dream Cruises would like to reiterate that it maintains the highest preventative hygiene and sanitation standards onboard its fleet and is committed to ensuring the health of all guests and crew.”

Elsewhere, a quarantine remains in place for 3,700 people onboard cruise ship Diamond Princess in Yokohama, Japan, where 61 have tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

Cambodia

A brilliant headline in Asia Pacific current affairs media The Diplomat (referencing Colombian Nobel Prize-winning author Gabriel García Márquez’s novel Love in the Time of Cholera) neatly captures Cambodia’s support for China

China Duty Free Group’s (CDFG) Cambodian business has donated 20,000 much-needed face masks to the city of Wuhan to help curb the spread of the coronavirus. Chinese travel shopping WeChat platform Globuy, a partner of The Moodie Davitt Report, reported the initiative today. It saluted Kira Pina, a CDFG employee in Cambodia, who personally spent five days sourcing the masks from various locations including Thailand. CDFG has three downtown stores in Cambodia, in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Sihanoukville.

At our request, Globuy also published The Moodie Davitt Report’s news that King Power International Group in Thailand remains open for business.
Cambodia has been extremely supportive of China throughout the outbreak. Prime Minister Hun Sen arrived in Beijing last Wednesday, giving a public vote of confidence in China’s ability to control the epidemic.
我不是中国人
但我是央企人

中国铁建集团

3月的疫情爆发后，中国铁建所属中铁二局海外企业迅速在海外采取行动。

3月23日，中铁二局的新加坡分公司员工，联合驻新加坡4个驻华使馆，
在5天的时间里，通过各种渠道采购口罩，累计捐赠1200个。
Singapore

This short clip sent to us by a reader yesterday underlines how quiet Changi Airport has become as the coronavirus outbreak takes its toll on passenger traffic.

China

The death toll from the novel coronavirus outbreak has now exceeded the SARS health crisis of 2002-03. State-controlled Chinese media Global Times reported today that 811 deaths had been recorded on the Chinese Mainland by 8pm yesterday. There have been two further deaths abroad. SARS killed 774 people, but the mortality role was spread over 24 countries. 89 new deaths were reported in Mainland China yesterday with 2,656 new confirmed cases.

8 February

Asia Pacific
Stefano Baronci, Director General of Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific, today issued a stark outline of the coronavirus outbreak’s impact on aviation, airports and tourism.

Here are some of his key observations (and click here for full story):

– Given that China is the world’s second-largest economy, the coronavirus outbreak seems certain to have a significant effect on the global economy for at least a quarter or two. The impact of SARS in 2003 was estimated to be a global economic loss of about US$40-50 billion, and at that time China was only the world’s seventh-largest economy.

– However, given that China’s GDP share of 17% globally in 2019 was four times higher than in 2003 and with confirmed cases more than double the total of SARS (as of 7 February), the coronavirus outbreak may cost the global economy well above US$300 billion.

– The impact on air passenger traffic in the Asia Pacific region will be certainly acute in Q1 of 2020. According to ICAO data, history shows that SARS had the most serious impact on traffic. At the height of the outbreak (May 2003), monthly RPKs of Asia Pacific airlines were -35% lower than their pre-crisis levels. Overall in 2003, Asia Pacific airlines lost 8% of annual RPKs and US$6 billion of revenues. We can likely expect a much more significant impact on traffic this time.

– In 2003 the total number of passenger moving through Chinese airports amounted to about 187 million vs 1.26 billion passengers handled by Chinese airports in 2018. Notably, the volume of international passengers increased from 50 to 114 million over the same period (annual average growth by +9.6%) – the segment that will be more largely impacted by the air transport ban.
– ICAO also estimates that the **seat capacity reduction** in February and March compared to 2019 will be about -35% for Chinese domestic carriers and -75-83% for foreign carriers. In absolute terms, the reduction in passenger traffic in China would amount to approximately 16.4 to 19.6 million passengers for 1Q 2020, which would translate to approximately US$4.1-US$4.9 billion potential loss of revenue for Q1 2020. (ICAO estimates based on OAG scheduled data).

– The **impact on tourism** will also be substantial. China is the world’s largest spender, with one-fifth of international tourism spending (US$227 billion in 2018), with Thailand, Japan and Australia to be particularly impacted by the loss of Chinese tourists (respectively US$9.5 billion, US$8.1 billion and US$1.4 billion). More information is provided in [this presentation from the ICAO Air Transport Committee](#) which convened on 7 February.

In absolute terms, the reduction in traffic in China would amount to 16.4-19.6 million passengers for Q1 2020, which would translate to approximately US$4.1-US$4.9 billion potential loss of revenue in the quarter. [Image: ACI Asia-Pacific]

**Japan**

Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare has confirmed three more cases of coronavirus onboard the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Yokohama, Japan. This takes the total number to 64 on the ship. Those affected have been hospitalised while all other passengers continue to be quarantined.

**International**
A snapshot of the coronavirus outbreak through January until today, with the distribution of laboratory-confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV worldwide, as of 8 February, 8am CET. These cover the number of cases confirmed per day inside China and internationally. (Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control)

San Francisco International Airport (SFO), usually a gateway for large numbers of Chinese travellers, is reeling from the effect of the coronavirus outbreak.

San Francisco Chronicle yesterday reported on an eerily still airport in the wake of a near six-week shutdown on
flights to Mainland China. It said that China Eastern Airlines will stop flying from SFO to Shanghai and Qingdao on Sunday and the last SFO flight to the Mainland – China Southern Airlines’ route to Guangzhou — is scheduled to end 16 February.

United Airlines, which accounts for 40% of SFO’s traffic, has cancelled its flights to China through to 28 March and to Hong Kong until 20 February.

“Yesterday you could have shot off a cannon in here and not hit anybody,” said Carol Feiner, Vice President of Airport Travel Agency, which offers a range of travel services at SFO from luggage storage to travel insurance. “It’s a combination of not just cancelled flights, but people are freaked out in general.” Feiner, who has worked at SFO for 35 years, said the coronavirus impact has been worse than either the SARS or swine flu epidemics.

The loss of Chinese passengers has stern repercussions for high-end retailers such as duty free operator DFS Group. SFO usually boasts the second-largest number of departures to China of any US airport, behind Los Angeles International, the report said. While 21 roundtrips per week to Hong Kong will continue, that’s a far cry from the 90 round trips a week SFO normally sees to Mainland China and Hong Kong in February.

China

The human toll of the coronavirus outbreak soared yesterday (7 February) as 86 new deaths and 3,399 new cases were confirmed in Mainland China. The total number of cases surged to 34,546, with 722 deaths on the Mainland. Hubei Province, home to the city of Wuhan – the epicentre of the outbreak – has seen 699 people die; 24,953 cases be confirmed; and 1,115 patients recover. [Source: Global Times]

Consider this for a statistic. On 6 February, the 28th day of China’s 40-day Spring Festival travel season, 11.17 million passenger trips were made, down -85.9% compared to the same day last year. [Source: Ministry of Transport of the People’s Republic of China]
7 February

[Click on the YouTube icon to watch The Moodie Davitt Report’s video snapshot of this week’s major developments from the coronavirus crisis]

**Qatar**

Qatar Airways has volunteered free air cargo transportation for medical relief organised by Chinese embassies and consulates to help fight the coronavirus outbreak.

The airline has said it will fly medical supplies donated by Chinese communities worldwide through its network of 170 destinations to its cargo gateways in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Macau.

For the full story, click here.

**International**

Stringent preventative measures to combat the spread of the coronavirus 2019-nCoV have come into effect today (7 February) on cruise ships worldwide.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) – whose lines account for more than 90% of ocean-going cruise capacity globally – said that from today its members “are to deny boarding to all persons who have travelled from, visited or transited via airports in China, including Hong Kong and Macau, within 14 days before embarkation”.

For the full story, click here.

**Japan**

Japanese authorities are refusing to let the Holland America Line ship, *Westerdam*, call in Japanese ports.

In a statement, Holland America Line said: “The ship is currently in a holding pattern off the coast of Japan, southeast of Okinawa, while we are working to finalise a new port of disembarkation. Please be assured that the ship is not in quarantine and we have no reason to believe there are any cases of coronavirus on board.”

The 14-day cruise left Hong Kong on 1 February and had been due to call at five Japanese ports before its turn in Yokohama on 15 February. The *Westerdam* sailing due to start on 15 February has been cancelled.

“The ship has sufficient fuel and food provisions to last until the end of the voyage. We are providing free internet and phone access for our guests and crew so they can contact loved ones at home,” Holland America Line added.
We’ve been notified that the Japanese Govt. will not permit Westerdam to call at Japanese ports. We are working on alternate plans. The ship isn’t in quarantine; there are no known cases of coronavirus on board at this time. The 2/15 cruise is cancelled: https://t.co/HA8M1DnpoD

— Holland America Line (@HALcruises) February 6, 2020

The development follows 61 passengers testing positive for the coronavirus on the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship, which has been quarantined in Yokohama for 14 days.

**International**

As the coronavirus crisis continues, questions on the possible length, severity and impact of the outbreak remain. The *Moodie Davitt eZine*, published today, attempts to answer some of the key questions in a series of articles covering reaction and responses from across the travel retail industry and beyond. Also featuring its usual array of columns, analysis and insights, the latest issue of The Moodie Davitt eZine can be read [here](#).

**Singapore**

The coronavirus outbreak’s impact on the aviation sector will be worse than that of SARS in 2003, Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan said yesterday. The Minister’s comments were featured in a lead article by Singapore’s leading media *The Straits Times*. He made the remarks while visiting Changi Airport.

Chinese travellers accounted for just 5% of Changi’s passenger numbers in 2003. “Now, they account for 11%, so it is double in terms of percentage and even more by absolute numbers,” Khaw said. “But the purchasing power has increased even more… they account for one-third of retail sales in Changi, and the one-third has evaporated.”

Meanwhile, the Singapore Ministry of Health has raised the alert level for the outbreak to orange (the second-highest). This requires the cancellation of large-scale events and daily health checks in workplaces.

The news comes just four months before Lotte Duty Free takes over the key liquor & tobacco concession at Changi from 40-year incumbent DFS Group on 9 June. For full story click [here](#).

**UK**

Luxury brand Burberry this morning issued a statement on the impact of the coronavirus outbreak, ahead of its financial year-end on 31 March.

Currently 24 of its 64 stores in Mainland China are closed with remaining stores operating with reduced hours and seeing “significant footfall declines”.

This is affecting retail sales in both Mainland China and Hong Kong, said the company. It noted: “The spending patterns of Chinese customers in Europe and other tourist destinations have been less impacted to date but given widening travel restrictions, we anticipate these to worsen over the coming weeks. We are taking mitigating actions but the benefit in the current year will be limited given the proximity to our March year end.

“We also intend to continue our key growth initiatives in preparation for a recovery in luxury demand. We will provide a retail trading update following our financial year end.”
“The outbreak of the coronavirus in Mainland China is having a material negative effect on luxury demand,” says Burberry CEO Marco Gobbetti

Chief Executive Officer Marco Gobbetti said: “The outbreak of the coronavirus in Mainland China is having a material negative effect on luxury demand. While we cannot currently predict how long this situation will last, we remain confident in our strategy. In the meantime, we are taking mitigating actions and every precaution to help ensure the safety and wellbeing of our employees. We are extremely grateful for the incredible effort of our teams and our immediate thoughts are with the people directly impacted by this global health emergency.”

Previously, in its Q3 update on 22 January, Burberry said that Asia Pacific grew by a low single-digit percentage driven by Mainland China (up mid-teens), while Hong Kong sales halved amid continuing unrest.

**Japan**

41 more passengers on cruise ship *Diamond Princess* in Yokohama, Japan have tested positive for the novel coronavirus, taking the total number to 61, the Health Ministry confirmed on Friday. Those who have tested positive have been transferred to hospitals across Tokyo for treatment. More than 3,700 people onboard have been quarantined for 14 days.

As we noted previously, Princess Cruises has confirmed the cancellation of the cruises on *Diamond Princess* that were due to set sail on 4 February and 12 February.

As reported, MSC Cruises Head of Retail Adrian Pittaway had warned of the impact the coronavirus outbreak
would have on the Chinese cruise retail industry. “We must pay attention to the significant effect this will have for us in the cruise retail sector. As of last week, the entire outbound Chinese mainland cruise market has been suspended and there are currently no cruises operating from China,” he said.

**South Korea**

Lotte Duty Free has this afternoon shut down its flagship Seoul Myeong-dong store after receiving notification that the country’s 23rd confirmed novel coronavirus-infected patient (a Chinese traveller) had visited the Lotte Department Store which occupies the same site, writes Min Yong Jung.

Following the Korea Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s notification at 2pm Seoul time, Lotte Duty Free decided to temporarily close the store to ensure the safety of customers and employees. The famed Lotte Duty Free Department Store will also close.
The store is South Korea’s biggest-selling duty free location, underpinned by its acclaimed beauty offer.

The store will resume operations on Monday 10 February after a thorough disinfection. A Lotte Duty Free representative said, “As soon as we confirmed that a confirmed coronavirus case had visited Lotte Department Store’s headquarters, we quickly closed our operations today and decided to take temporary shutdown measures.”

He added: “Lotte Duty Free will do its best to ensure the safety of its customers and employees by conducting additional quarantine work.”

The store is South Korea’s highest-grossing downtown duty free door, having generated KRW4,202.3 billion (US$3.82 billion) in sales for 2018, a figure sure to have soared in 2019. The total Korean duty free downtown market grew by +29% last year. For full story click [here](#).
Asia Pacific

Andrew Herdman, Director General of the Asia Pacific Airlines Association (AAPA), has criticised “arbitrary restrictions and blanket travel bans”, which he says are not helping the coronavirus crisis and result in unnecessary inconvenience and added public uncertainty.

“Regrettably, some of these measures, whilst well-intentioned, seem to lack any proper public health justification, whilst causing significant and widespread disruption to travel and trade activities across the world”

In a hard-hitting statement issued today on the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak, Herdman said, “It is worth noting that the WHO [World Health Organization] has to date not recommended any restriction of international travel or trade based on the current information. It would, however, be prudent for people who are ill to delay international travel and for people developing symptoms following international travel to seek medical attention.”

Noting that several governments have nevertheless introduced various measures including travel advisories, border entry restrictions and quarantine requirements, Herdman commented, “Regrettably, some of these measures, whilst well-intentioned, seem to lack any proper public health justification, whilst causing significant and widespread disruption to travel and trade activities across the world.

“Arbitrary restrictions and blanket travel bans are inconsistent with the International Health Regulations, and result in unnecessary inconvenience and added uncertainty amongst members of the public.” For full story click [here](#).
The crisis continues to escalate after 73 new deaths and 3,143 new confirmed cases were reported yesterday (6 February) on the Chinese mainland, according to the National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China.

The latest scale of the outbreak at 9.23am (GMT) on 7 February, according to John Hopkins University (click to enlarge).

6 February

Japan
Shiseido shows its heart and its resources as it lends support to the urgent battle to combat the coronavirus outbreak

Shiseido Group has responded to the novel coronavirus outbreak with a strong showing of practical support.

The Japanese beauty company — whose travel retail business remains its fastest-growing division, according to group results released today — has expressed its deepest condolences and sympathies to those whom the virus has affected.

In the wake of the outbreak, Shiseido Group has announced its Relay of Love Project which aims to support the victims and the regions most affected by the novel coronavirus.

The project will allocate 1% of Shiseido Group’s sales in Asian markets (between February and July this year) as in-house funds to support various charitable activities.

According to the company, these activities include the donation of utility products and supplies from Shiseido Group to areas in need, donations to charities that support the restoration of victims’ lives, and the invigoration of people through ‘the power of beauty.’

In addition to the Relay of Love Project, Shiseido Group has also donated CNY1 million (US$143,000) to the Charity Federation of Wuhan; and donated CNY10 million (US$1.43 million) to the Shanghai Charity Foundation. The funds will help with medical treatment and infection prevention in affected areas.

In the statement, the company said: “Shiseido would like to express its deepest condolences to those who have suffered loss from the novel coronavirus, and sympathy to all whom it has affected. We sincerely wish for the situation to get well soon.”

International
Several giants of the beauty industry have unveiled their quarterly results over the past two days, each offering important insights into how the coronavirus crisis is affecting – or likely to affect – their business.

Underlining just how quickly things can change in business, The Estée Lauder Companies today unveiled what CEO Fabrizio Freda described as “superb” second-quarter results while proceeding to warn that the company was updating its fiscal year outlook due to the health crisis.

The third quarter is anticipated to be the most negatively impacted with sales declining versus the prior-year period, the company said. It added: “Global travel retail, localities most affected by the virus outbreak and destination markets favoured by tourists are expected to experience the greatest negative impact in the coming months followed by a gradual recovery later in the fiscal year. The company stands ready to facilitate the recovery as soon as the market dynamics support it.” Read more here

Japanese beauty giant Shiseido also commented today on the outbreak as it released strong 2019 results, driven by an outstanding showing by its travel retail arm – the group’s fastest-growing division.

Whereas the Chinese domestic market grew by +47% year-on-year (for the four brands Shiseido, Clé de Peau Beauté, NARS and Elixir) between 1-23 January, it contracted by -55% from 24-30 January as the virus began to take an increased human and market toll. Japan – Shiseido’s biggest market – had negative growth over the same periods of -3% and -16% respectively. Travel retail in Japan was more resilient with year-on-year increases of +25% and +13% over the two periods, although contraction began in early February (see chart below).

Read more here

Travel retail in Japan has so far been more resilient than the local market for Shiseido in the face of the coronavirus outbreak.

Coty, whose portfolio is more fragrance-orientated than major rivals such as Lauder and L’Oréal (also releasing today) said that while it would take a hit from the coronavirus, any impact would be less significant than for its competitors. China accounts for just 3% of the company’s overall sales. Read more here

Revealing record 2019 results late this afternoon, L’Oréal Chairman and CEO Jean-Paul Agon commented: “This context will have a temporary impact on the beauty market in the region and therefore on our business in China and Travel Retail Asia, even if it is too early to assess it. The experiences we have had with similar situations in the past (SARS, MERS, etc.) show that, after a period of disturbance, consumption resumes
stronger than before.

“Therefore, at this stage, and assuming that this epidemic follows a similar pattern, we are confident in our capacity this year again to outperform the beauty market and achieve another year of growth in both sales and profits.” Read more here

Singapore

The Tax Free World Association (TFWA) said that it is “continuing as planned with its preparations for the TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition & Conference” due to take place in Singapore in May.

A pop-up that appears when opening the association’s website says: “In light of the recent coronavirus outbreak, TFWA will follow recommended guidelines from local and international organisations in planning the event.

“TFWA is closely monitoring the situation and is liaising with authorities in Singapore as well as other relevant bodies, and will take appropriate action in the interests of the industry as and when necessary.

“We remain optimistic that the effects of the current outbreak will be short term, and we believe it is important to be ready for business to resume as quickly as possible once the immediate issues have been resolved.”

In the wake of the SARS outbreak in 2003, the association cancelled that year’s TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition & Conference.
Asia Pacific

The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) today hosted a webinar to examine the effects of the coronavirus on travel markets. It examined how the travel and tourism industry in Asia Pacific in particular can mitigate against the impact of the downturn in outbound China traffic.

A key message from panellists (PATA CEO Dr. Mario Hardy, travel analyst ForwardKeys President – Insights Olivier Ponti and travel research firm Twenty31 Consulting Partner Oliver Martin) was the need to rebalance the tourism business from its recent heavy reliance on Chinese outbound travel.

Martin said: “We have been lucky in the Chinese outbound market growth but have become so reliant on that market at the expense of not doing things differently or balancing our portfolio of geographic markets. We have to do this so we are not beholden to the impact of one crisis.”

Hardy added: “It is critical that destinations do not just rely on one source market but have a balanced portfolio. This should be a wake-up call to anyone in tourism that we need balance in our source markets.

He said that China and Chinese companies also needed support from tourism and business partners worldwide. “China will still be critical in the recovery. What we need to do as an industry is to pay attention to our business partner in China and provide assistance to them. They are suffering the most here. For business who trade with China, can they offer refunds or letters of credit or other measures so we can maintain these very important relationships for the future?”

Click here for the full story.

Taiwan

The Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) has announced all international cruise ships will be banned from calling at ports of Taiwan from today.

The news comes after 20 people, including one passenger from Taiwan, on the *Diamond Princess* ship in Japan tested positive for the coronavirus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Ministry of Health & Welfare in Taiwan have also extended travel restrictions to the island. The entry of all Chinese residents will be suspended, and all travellers from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau are required to be under home quarantine when entering Taiwan.

Australia/China (Hong Kong)

Virgin Australia will withdraw its services between Australia and Hong Kong after the airline conducted a comprehensive review and concluded it is no longer commercially viable to fly to the special administrative region.

Virgin Australia Group Chief Commercial Officer John Macleod said: “Hong Kong has continued to be a challenging market. With a decline in demand following ongoing civil unrest and growing concerns over the coronavirus outbreak in the wider region, we have made the decision to withdraw services.”
The previously-announced suspension of the airline’s Melbourne to Hong Kong Service will take effect from 11 February, and its Sydney to Hong Kong operations will cease from 2 March.

The Moodie Davitt Report’s close Chinese partner Jessica’s Secret has joined our public efforts to support King Power International’s business in Thailand, which has been hit by a meltdown of Chinese group tour business. King Power, Thailand’s leading travel retailer, yesterday issued a statement to all nationalities and tour agencies through The Moodie Davitt Report emphasising that the company’s downtown stores in Bangkok, Phuket and Pattaya, as well as its airport shops, are safe and fully open for business.

Group tour business into the downtown stores (which usually runs at about 10,000 visitors a day) has come to a complete halt in recent days due to concerns over the coronavirus. But King Power says its shops have impeccable health standards and has encouraged Chinese tourists and all other travellers to return.

Jessica’s Secret, a hugely popular app-based platform for Chinese consumers, today published our article in Chinese, as a statement of solidarity with King Power International, a company it already works with closely.
Japan

Ten more passengers on cruise ship *Diamond Princess* have tested positive for the novel coronavirus, taking the total number to 20. More than 3,700 people on board have been quarantined for 14 days.

As we noted yesterday, Princess Cruises has confirmed the cancellation of the cruises on *Diamond Princess* that were due to set sail on 4 February and 12 February.

As reported, MSC Cruises Head of Retail Adrian Pittaway had warned of the impact the coronavirus outbreak would have on the Chinese cruise retail industry. “We must pay attention to the significant effect this will have for us in the cruise retail sector. As of last week, the entire outbound Chinese mainland cruise market has been suspended and there are currently no cruises operating from China,” he said.

China

In its up-to-the-minute reporting on the coronavirus, Chinese state-owned media Global Times says that 3,694 new confirmed cases were reported on 5 February in the Chinese mainland, citing the National Health Commission. The total number infected globally has now climbed to 28,296, with 565 deaths.
5 February

International

The Moodie Davitt Report today hosted a phone-in audience with Dr. David Heymann, Professor of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and Head of the Centre on Global Health Security at Chatham House, London.

“There are several factors required to understand this outbreak,” Dr Heymann said. “That includes the transmissibility – the ability of the virus to spread from person to person; it includes the way the virus is transmitted from person to person and the third factor that is not understood is the severity of the infection.”

Read edited highlights from the discussion here

Thailand

King Power International has issued a statement to all nationalities and tour agencies through The Moodie Davitt Report emphasising that the company’s downtown stores in Bangkok, Phuket and Pattaya, as well as its airport shops, are safe and fully open for business.

A senior executive told us, “The King Power stores are checked constantly – many times each day in fact – to ensure they are fully hygienic, free from the novel coronavirus, and totally safe to shop.”

Read more here
The King Power downtown store in the tourist destination of Phuket is open, ultra-safe and ready for shopping.

**Japan**

Ten people have tested positive for the coronavirus on the cruise ship *Diamond Princess*. They include two Australians, three Japanese, three from Hong Kong, one American and a Filipino crew member.

This comes after the 3,500-plus people onboard were tested for the coronavirus following the revelation that a former passenger on the vessel had contracted the illness.

The ten people who have tested positive are being taken ashore to be cared for by Japanese medical professionals. The ship and the remaining passengers will remain in quarantine in the port of Yokohama for at least 14 days.

Princess Cruises has confirmed the cancellation of the cruises on *Diamond Princess* that were due to set sail on 4 February and 12 February.

**As reported**, MSC Cruises Head of Retail Adrian Pittaway had warned of the impact the coronavirus outbreak would have on the Chinese cruise retail industry. “We must pay attention to the significant effect this will have for us in the cruise retail sector. As of last week, the entire outbound Chinese mainland cruise market has been suspended and there are currently no cruises operating from China,” he said.

**South Korea**

In welcome news, The Shilla Duty Free has decided to resume its Seoul and Jeju downtown operations from Friday 7 February. As reported, the stores were closed temporarily to allow professional quarantine disinfection.

The Shilla Duty Free first announced a temporary shutdown of its flagship Seoul store on 2 February after receiving a notification that a customer, later confirmed with the novel coronavirus, had visited the shop in January.

Grim scenes in recent days will give way to business as (almost)
Normal from Friday

The Jeju store was closed the same day following the Jeju provincial government’s announcement that a Chinese customer had been confirmed with the coronavirus after returning home.

During the temporary closure, The Shilla Duty Free has actively cooperated with the health authorities in epidemiological investigations and thoroughly disinfected all the facilities and supplies of the stores, the company noted.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced, “Coronavirus that escapes from the human body dies within hours of exposure to the atmosphere, and the places where the confirmed patient visited are safe after proper disinfection measures were completed.”

A spokesperson for The Shilla Duty Free said, “The Shilla Duty Free place top priority on the safety and health of customers and employees and will continue to cooperate with relevant authorities to prevent infections and do our best to carry out quarantine activities.”

Meanwhile, The Shilla Duty Free will temporarily change its business hours to the following.

? Temporary change of business hours (From 7 February until further notice)

- Seoul Store 09:00~18:00
- Jeju Downtown Store 09:30~18:30

Shilla Duty Free’s notification means that the Seoul store will close 2 hours and 30 minutes earlier than before and the Jeju store 30 minutes earlier. Previously the Seoul store operated from 09:00 to 20:30 and the Jeju store was open between 09:00 and 19:00.

Similar measures have been implemented by other duty free operators with Lotte Duty Free announcing a store operation hours change from yesterday, 4 February.

UPDATE: Lotte Duty Free has just confirmed to the Moodie Davitt Report that the Lotte Duty Free Jeju store will resume operations on 7 February.

China

Important news from the admirable state media Global Times this morning local time, summarised here:
In important news, Global Times reports that a batch of Remdesivir, an antiviral drug that will be put into clinical trials to test its efficiency on the novel coronavirus, will arrive in China today (Source: Ministry of Science and Technology). Remdesivir has been used to treat Ebola infections abroad. Although the drug has not undergone all the procedures of clinical trials on the 2019-nCoV abroad, it has shown fairly good vitro activity in related domestic research, said Sun Yanrong, an official of the ministry, at a press conference conducted by the National Health Commission. Recently, the National Medical Products Administration has approved the China-Japan Friendship Hospital and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, two applicants to test Remdesivir, to conduct clinical trials on the drug, Sun added. [Source: Global Times]

- Let us never, never forget the human cost of this crisis. He Hui, a 54-year-old volunteer in Wuhan, died yesterday because of the novel coronavirus infection. He served as a volunteer driver picking up medical staff in the city. Chinese netizens mourned his death on Sina Weibo.
- 3,156 new cases of novel coronavirus, 65 new deaths and 125 recovered patients were reported in Hubei Province yesterday. Total infection numbers rose to 16,678, with 520 recovered and 479 dead in the province.
- A total of 24,324 cases of novel coronavirus were confirmed on the Chinese mainland as of Tuesday, with 490 deaths, said the National Health Commission.
- The average age of patients who have died of novel coronavirus-related conditions in Wuhan is 68.
- Important words too from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, which pointed out that the mortality rate of the coronavirus outbreak China-wide as of Monday night was about 2.1%, much lower than previous epidemics, including 17.4% for 2009 H1N1 influenza which originated in the US and 34.4% for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). Since Saturday more people have been recovering from the disease than dying from it, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said during an online media briefing yesterday. However, the fatality rate of confirmed novel coronavirus cases in Wuhan was 4.9%, due to early treatment capacity being way below demand.
- The Ministry also reiterated the World Health Organization’s advice to refrain from rumour-mongering, saying that the virus is terrible, but rumors and panic are even more terrifying. WHO has called on countries to take convincing measures based on facts and China has adopted unprecedented control
mechanisms, the Foreign Ministry added.

For older updates click here