Korea extends intensive social distancing

REUTERS, Seoul

South Korea yesterday said it will extend its intensive social distancing campaign scheduled to end on Monday by two weeks in a bid to curb the rate of coronavirus infections to around 50 a day.

The country has largely managed to bring under control Asia's largest epidemic outside China with around 100 or fewer new daily cases. But smaller outbreaks in churches, hospitals and nursing homes, as well as infections among travellers, continue to emerge.

This week, the government has been gauging whether it should extend a 15-day intensive social distancing policy it implemented on March 21, under which highrisk facilities were urged to close and religious, sports and entertainment gatherings were banned.

But it is "too early to be at ease," Health Minister Park Neung-hoo said, citing a recent spike in imported cases and small cluster infections which also prompted the government to cancel the re-opening of schools next week.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) reported 94 new cases on Saturday, taking the national tally to 10,156. The death toll rose by three to 177.

Social distancing played a role in restraining domestic group transmissions by some 70% during the first 11 days compared with the last 11 days before it took effect, Park said.

But there are signs that people restarted going out and socialising as fatigue about isolation grew, he

"We are well aware that many citizens are feeling exhausted and lethargic under continued social distancing," Park said. "But if we get loose, the strenuous efforts that the government and the people have made so far might come to nothing."



People observe 3-minute silence to mourn patients and medical staff killed by coronavirus pandemic in Beijing, yesterday.

Europe sees ray of hope

Drop in cases in European hotspots indicate pandemic might have peaked

Americans vesterday came to grips with recommendations to wear masks against the coronavirus, while Spain added to hopes that Europe could be turning a corner in the pandemic with a second daily drop in deaths.

China meanwhile came to a standstill as the nation where the virus first appeared held three minutes of silence to mourn the patients and medical staff killed by the outbreak.

Since COVID-19 emerged late last year, more than 1.1 million people have fallen ill. More than 60,000 people have died.

China, where over 3,000 people have died from the virus, appears to be over the worst of its outbreak and there are signs of normality returning. But large swathes of the world

Europe accounts for the lion's share

remain in crisis mode.

China pauses in memory of victims and 'martyrs'

Americans told to wear masks UK COVID-19 deaths climb by

new high of 708

Spain to extend lockdown until April 25



another rise in its death toll to bring healthcare systems. the total to just over 7,100.

Donald President administration on Friday suggested widespread use of simple masks or scarves might help slow the spread.

In Europe, Italy and Spain continue to bear the brunt of a pandemic that has kept millions of citizens confined

But official figures suggested unprecedented measures to restrict people's movements were working and that the peak may have hit on the continent.

Spain, which is under a near-total lockdown, on Saturday recorded a second successive daily fall in to their homes, closed schools coronavirus-related deaths with 809 of virus fatalities, but America logged and businesses and overwhelmed fatalities. The total number of deaths maximise protection.

in the country now stands at 11,744, second only to Italy. The number of new Spanish cases also slowed at 7,026, taking the total to 124,736.

Despite the gains, Spain extended the country's lockdown until April 25. Italy reported late Friday that

the daily rise of officially registered infections dropped to a new low of just four percent, while the number of people who had fully recovered was

In Germany, where the death toll again yesterday, Chancellor Angela Merkel said figures showing the virus's spread was slowing "give us a little bit of hope".

But she nevertheless warned citizens not to expect a loosening of the restrictions anytime soon.

German authorities joined the US and other countries in encouraging citizens to wear self-made masks in public, prompting a flurry of online tutorials and debate about how to

CNN ONLINE

according to Lecocq.

the rules," he said.

activity as much as possible.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

LATEST UPDATES

MORE THAN 60,000 DEATHS

More than 1,130,204 cases of infection, including 60,457 deaths, have been reported in 190 countries and territories around the world since the virus first emerged in China in December, according to an AFP tally compiled around 1330 GMT yesterday based on official sources. Italy has the highest official death toll with 14,681 fatalities. Spain follows with 11,744, the United States with 7,159, France with 6,507 and Britain with 4,313.

CHINA PAUSES FOR VICTIMS

China came to a standstill yesterday to mourn the more than 3,000 lives claimed by the virus on the mainland. Nationwide at 10 am (0200 GMT) the country observed a three-minute silence. Cars, trains and ships sounded their horns, air-raid sirens rang out and flags flew at half-staff.

ECONOMIC COST SURGING

The pandemic could cost the global economy \$4.1 trillion, equivalent to 4.8 percent of worldwide output, as it ravages major economies, the Asian Development Bank warns. In the US, employment plunged by 701,000 in March and the jobless rate surged to 4.4 percent. Latin America is heading into "a deep recession" in 2020, the UN says.

'HOPE' OR 'WORST YET TO COME'

German Chancellor Angela Merkel says the latest figures which show the spread of the coronavirus is slowing in Germany are a cause for "hope", but that it is too early to relax restrictions on public life. However UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says "the worst is yet to come," and COVID-19 is just arriving in theatres of conflict like Syria, Libya and Yemen, repeating his call for a global

UK QUEEN TO ADDRESS NATION

Britain reported 708 more deaths from COVID-19 in a new daily high, as the number of confirmed cases rose to nearly 42,000. Queen Elizabeth II will make a rare special broadcast on Sunday to Britain and the Commonwealth on the coronavirus pandemic. It will be her fourth such broadcast in her 68-year reign.

VIRUS CONTAGION SLOWS IN IRAN

Iran's new cases of coronavirus have dropped for the fourth consecutive day, official figures released showed. Iran registered 2,560 new infections of COVID-19 in the previous 24 hours. It is the fourth consecutive drop in new cases since Tehran declared 3,111 on March 31.

CONFINEMENT ORDER FOR UNDER-20S

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan issued a mandatory confinement order for everyone aged under 20 starting from midnight, as part of tougher measures to stem the spread of the coronavirus in Turkey. In a television address, Erdogan also announced that vehicles would no longer be able to leave or enter 31 towns and cities, including Istanbul and Ankara, for

Pandemic is making

Earth vibrate less

Once-crowded city streets are now empty. Highway traffic has slowed to a

minimum. And fewer and fewer people can be found milling about outside.

have seemingly made the world much quieter. Scientists are noticing it, too.

seismic noise -- meaning, the vibrations generated by cars, trains, buses

and people going about their daily lives. And in the absence of that noise,

Earth's upper crust is moving just a little less.

at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

in Belgium, first pointed out this phenomenon in Brussels.

Global containment measures to combat the spread of the coronavirus

Around the world, seismologists are observing a lot less ambient

Thomas Lecocq, a geologist and seismologist at the Royal Observatory

Brussels is seeing about a 30% to 50% reduction in ambient seismic

Seismologists in other cities are seeing similar effects in their own cities.

Lecocq said the graphs charting human noise are evidence that people

"From the seismological point of view, we can motivate people to say,

The data can also be used to identify where containment measures

might not be as effective, said Raphael De Plaen, a postdoctoral researcher

are listening to authorities' warnings to stay inside and minimize outside

'OK look, people. You feel like you're alone at home, but we can tell you that everyone is home. Everyone is doing the same. Everyone is respecting

noise since mid-March, around the time the country started implementing

school and business closures and other social distancing measures,

15 days. SOURCE: AFP

Four acquitted in Pearl murder rearrested

Four men acquitted in the kidnapping and killing of American journalist Daniel Pearl in in jail while prosecutors appeal the ruling, officials said. A Pakistani court sparked US outrage on Thursday after it guashed the murder conviction of British-born militant Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh who had been on death row over the 2002 killing. Three alleged accomplices also had their convictions overturned. But Pakistan's interior ministry said late Friday the four would remain in jail while prosecutors appeal their acquittals in the country's Supreme Court. Pearl, 38, was the South Asia bureau chief for The Wall Street Journal when he was abducted in Karachi in January 2002 while researching a story about Islamist militants. A graphic video showing his decapitation was delivered to the US consulate in the city nearly a month later.

Trump fires intel official who set his impeachment

President Donald Trump announced Friday he was firing a senior intelligence official who had a central role in the complaint last August that sparked the impeachment trial of the US leader. In a letter to the Senate Intelligence Committee, Trump said he had lost confidence in Michael Atkinson, the independent inspector general of the broad US intelligence community. Atkinson reviewed and transmitted an anonymous whistle-blower's complaint in August that alleged that Trump had sought personal political favors from Ukraine in violation of US law. The complaint became the basis for Trump's impeachment, which saw him put through a historic trial for removal in the Senate in January. Ultimately Trump was voted not guilty by the Republicancontrolled Senate in early February.

G77, China demand end to sanctions in pandemic

The Group of 77 and China called Friday for an end to unilateral sanctions against developing countries during the coronavirus crisis, warning they could hinder efforts to tackle the pandemic. In a statement implicitly aimed at the United States, which has tough sanctions against Iran and Venezuela. It warned that such measures would affect targeted countries' acquisition of medical equipment and supplies "to adequately treat their populations in the face of this pandemic." China takes part in G77 business but does not consider itself to be a member of the 134-member coalition, meaning official statements are issued by the "G77 and China." The grouping represents three quarters of United Nations members and some 80 percent of the world's population, according SOURCE: AFP



A drone used by police to monitor activities of people and spread awareness announcements is seen during a nationwide lockdown in Chennai, yesterday.

Virus may spread through air via normal breathing

AFP, Washington

The new coronavirus might spread through the air via normal breathing and speaking, a top US scientist said Friday as the government recommended the use of face masks for everyone.

Anthony Fauci, head of infectious diseases at the National Institutes of Health, told Fox News the guidance on masks would be changed "because of some recent information that the virus can actually

be spread even when people just speak, as opposed to coughing and sneezing. As it stands, the official

advice is that only sick people need to cover their faces, as well as those caring for them at home.

Fauci's comments come after the National Academy

of Sciences (NAS) sent a letter to the White House on April 1 that summarized recent research on the subject.

It said that though the research isn't yet conclusive, "the results of available studies are consistent with aerosolization of virus from normal breathing.

Until now, US health agencies have said that the primary pathway of transmission is respiratory

droplets, about one millimeter in diameter, expelled by sick people when they sneeze or cough. These quickly fall to the ground around a meter

But if the virus can be suspended in the ultrafine mist we expel when we exhale, in other words an aerosol, it becomes much harder to prevent its spread, which in turn is an argument in favor of everyone covering their faces. A recent NIH funded

study published in the New **England Journal of Medicine** found that the SARS-CoV-2 virus could become an aerosol and remain airborne for up to three hours.

This triggered a debate even as critics said the findings were overblown

because the team behind the study used a medical device called a nebulizer to deliberately create a viral mist and argued this would not occur naturally. So far, the World Health Organization (WHO)

has been more cautious on the airborne threat. In an analysis published on March 29, it wrote that aerosol transmission was only known to occur during particular medical treatments that required assisted breathing.



At the best locations of Uttara & Bashundhara Residential Areas

Please Feel Free To Call 01714 039846, 01713 367486 01714 016717 Tel: (+8802) 55068001-5



Asset Developments & Holdings Ltd 91 Gulshan Avenue