Beat: Health

SARS-like virus kills 5 in Saudi Arabia, raising toll to 16

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USPA News - Seven people in Saudi Arabia have been diagnosed with the new novel coronavirus (nCoV), including five people who have died of the SARS-like virus in recent days, health authorities said on Thursday. It raises the overall death toll to sixteen.

The Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia said laboratory tests confirmed seven cases of infection with the novel coronavirus in the Ahsaa province in the kingdom`s eastern region. Five of the victims died in recent days while the two others are being treated at an undisclosed hospital and remain in a critical condition. The ministry said it is investigating the cases but said it did not appear the victims, who are not from the same family, had traveled recently or had been in contact with animals. It raises the global total of confirmed cases of human infection with the novel coronavirus to 24, including 16 deaths. The World Health Organization (WHO) said Thursday it urges countries to continue their surveillance for severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) and to carefully review any unusual patterns. "WHO is currently working with international experts and countries where cases have been reported to assess the situation and review recommendations for surveillance and monitoring," a statement said. It had been more than a month since the last reported cases of the novel coronavirus. There were two fatal cases in late March, including a man who died in Britain after traveling to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and a 73-year-old man from the United Arab Emirates who died at a hospital in southern Germany after being flown from a hospital in Abu Dhabi. The new coronavirus first emerged in the Middle East last year and is part of a group of viruses that causes ailments such as the common cold and SARS. Investigators have so far found no evidence of continuous human-to-human transmission, but it remains unclear how humans are being infected.

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