

Coronavirus: Tourism vouchers/Latest cases



Man who tested positive after SHN among 4 imported cases

Ang Qing

A 31-year-old man from India who tested positive after completing his stay-home notice (SHN) was among the four imported cases confirmed yesterday, said the Ministry of Health (MOH).

The training employment pass holder served his SHN at a dedicated facility upon arrival in Singapore on Sept 25. He was tested on Oct 5 while serving the SHN and his test result was negative.

He completed his SHN last Friday and had an onset of symptoms on the same day. He subsequently tested positive for Covid-19 infection on Monday in a pre-departure test taken in order to return to India.

Between last Friday and Monday, he had mostly remained at a hostel, Dream Lodge Singapore (172 Tyrwhitt Road), but he visited the National University Health System (NUHS) Tower Block last Friday.

The four imported cases confirmed yesterday took Singapore's total to 57,884.

There were no new local cases in the community or from workers' dormitories yesterday, said MOH. This was the first time since March 25 that no new cases from dormitories were reported.

The remaining three imported cases comprised a permanent resident who returned from India, a student's pass holder who arrived from France and a short-term visit pass holder who was allowed entry from the United Kingdom to visit a family member hospitalised here.

They were all placed on 14-day SHN upon arrival in Singapore and were tested while serving their SHN.

MOH also announced that the cluster at Mandai Lodge 1 (460 Mandai Road) has been closed as it has not had new cases linked to it for 28 days, or two incubation periods.

The average number of new daily cases in the community in a week has decreased from two cases two weeks ago to fewer than one in the past week.

The number of unlinked cases in the community in a week has also decreased from a daily average of fewer than one case to none over the same period.

With 12 cases discharged yesterday, 57,725 patients have fully recovered from the disease.

A total of 35 patients remain in hospital, with none in intensive care, while 81 are recuperating in community facilities.

Singapore has had 28 deaths from Covid-19 complications, while 15 who tested positive have died of other causes.

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Update on cases

New cases: 4

Imported: 4 (1 permanent resident, 1 student's pass holder, 1 training employment pass holder, 1 short-term visit pass holder)

In community: 0

In dormitories: 0

Active cases: 116

In hospitals: 35 (0 in ICU)

In community facilities: 81

Deaths: 28

Patients with Covid-19 who died from other causes: 15

Total discharged: 57,725

Discharged yesterday: 12

TOTAL CASES: 57,884

STB: \$100 vouchers for S'poreans meant for personal use only

This is so that the usage of SingapoRediscovered vouchers can be tracked and abuses avoided

Goh Yan Han

The \$100 tourism vouchers that all adult Singaporeans will receive from December are meant for personal use only, said the Singapore Tourism Board (STB).

Asked if the vouchers could be transferred or pooled together, Singapore Tourism Board (STB) brand director Lim Shoo Ling said the vouchers "must be used for their intended purposes so that usage can

be tracked and abuses such as fraud and resale can be avoided".

On how STB would enforce this rule, Ms Lim told The Straits Times that the agency is working out the parameters of the voucher scheme and will give more information in due course.

The SingapoRediscovered vouchers, announced in August, are meant to be spent on staycations, tickets to leisure attractions and local tours.

The \$320 million worth of vouch-

ers - aimed at giving local tourism businesses a boost - will be provided in denominations of \$10 and users can decide how much to use for each of their purchases.

They will be distributed via SingPass, and can be used at all licensed hotels, leisure attractions and for local tours by operators that STB has given the green light to reopen or resume.

As of Monday, 219 hotels, 40 attractions and 609 tour itineraries have resumed operations, said Ms Lim.

Asked if the vouchers can be used for local retail such as shopping and food and beverage outlets, she said the tourism industry adds vibrancy

to the retail and F&B sectors.

There are other support measures for the F&B and retail sectors, she said, adding that the agency hopes the vouchers will have a multiplier effect on spending at these merchants, when Singaporeans visit them while exploring the country.

Consumers and eligible merchants will get more information about eligible promotions and products in due course, she said.

In a radio interview with Money FM 89.3 on Monday morning, Minister of State for Trade and Industry Alvin Tan said many attractions and tours are starting to digitalise or innovate, to capture domestic demand, especially in the short term.

On whether the Government would monitor if the vouchers were disproportionately spent on hotels and staycations as compared with local tours - resulting in an "imbalance in recovery" - Mr Tan said there will be trickle-down effects as the vouchers are meant to stimulate demand.

"We're trying to cover the ground as much as possible. We're trying to look at ways... and in fact, help them to come up with packages. So it just doesn't benefit one segment, but it benefits a whole tourism ecosystem."

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Visitors at Jurong Bird Park last month. The \$100 vouchers, that all adult Singaporeans will receive from December, are meant to be spent on staycations, tickets to leisure attractions and local tours. The \$320 million worth of vouchers will be provided in denominations of \$10. ST PHOTO: KELVIN CHNG

Videos of alleged group of 10 partying in hotel spark probe

Adeline Tan

Videos and photos of a group of at least 10 people allegedly partying in a hotel suite have appeared on social media, sparking criticism and prompting an investigation over the breaching of safe distancing regulations.

The New Paper understands that the alleged incident took place at a hotel at Resorts World Sentosa (RWS).

Chinese-language newspaper Shin Min Daily News reported that the gathering took place last Saturday night.

In the videos and photos, a group of at least 10 people can be seen drinking and dining in a hotel suite.

Social gatherings of more than five people are prohibited due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

A video posted on Instagram allegedly shows the group entering the hotel together.

Another picture shows a row of glasses next to what seems to be a bottle of Japanese whisky.

Mr Chew Tiong Heng, Singapore Tourism Board's executive director of infrastructure planning and management, told TNP: "As investigations are under way, we are unable to share more details."

Under the Covid-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020, first-time offenders can be fined up to \$10,000, jailed for up to six months, or both.

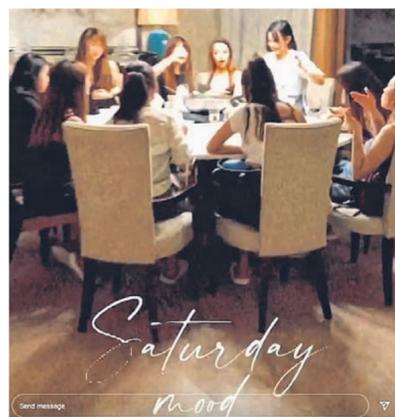
Repeat offenders may face a fine of up to \$20,000, imprisonment of up to 12 months, or both.

An RWS spokesman said the resort requires all guests to be registered with the hotel's front desk, and mandatory safe management measures are highlighted and explained during check-in.

Guests are also reminded to observe the measures, with prominent signs at common areas such as elevators.

The spokesman said: "We would like to remind all guests to strictly observe and comply with all safe management measures for the health, safety and well-being of the Singapore community."

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In images posted on social media, at least 10 people could be seen drinking and dining in a suite, reportedly at a hotel at Resorts World Sentosa. PHOTO: SHIN MIN READER

Patient battling Covid-19 survives rare complication

Joyce Teo Senior Health Correspondent

When Mr Ullah Kefayet was battling Covid-19 in the intensive care unit at the National Centre for Infectious Diseases in May, his family thought they had lost him.

"My family thought I had died already," he told reporters in a brief video chat yesterday.

Hooked up to a ventilator and in a comatose state then, the 39-year-old delivery driver was in no condition to contact his wife and nine-year-old son back in Bangladesh.

Fortunately, that lasted just four days. But, it was a rare complication that he developed before he was admitted to ICU that took his doctors by surprise. He experienced acute pain in his right foot and developed early gangrene in three toes on that foot.

Doctors found that it was due to a thrombus, or blood clot, in his aorta, the main artery carrying blood from

the heart to the rest of the body.

They quickly operated on him, inserting a permanent aortic stent via his groin. Three months later, his gangrene fully vanished and he could walk properly again.

"It's very rare for a blood clot to develop in the aorta, which is a high-flow blood vessel," said Adjunct Assistant Professor Glenn Tan, head of general surgery and a senior consultant at Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTS)."

It was all the more surprising as Mr Kefayet, who was admitted for shortness of breath and fever, had no underlying illness, Prof Tan said at a press conference yesterday.

Studies have shown that there is a high risk of severely ill Covid-19 patients developing sticky blood and blood clots that can lead to strokes, heart attacks and other life-threatening complications.

This is but one of the many ways Covid-19, initially viewed as a seemingly simple respiratory disease, can harm the body.

But it is not clear why some Covid-19 patients have blood clots.

Prof Tan said one likely cause is that Covid-19 causes severe inflammation in some patients. This boosts the production of cytokine (proteins produced by immune cells), which can lead to the formation of blood clots.

Another cause could be some damage to the blood vessel wall resulting in a higher risk of clot formation, he said, adding that it is not common to see Covid-19 patients here developing blood clots, possibly as most of them are relatively young and healthy.

He and other experts, including Adjunct Associate Professor Pua Uei, a senior consultant at TTS's diagnostic radiology (clinical) department who treated Mr Kefayet, published a paper on the treatment of arterial blood clots in Covid-19 patients in the British Journal of Surgery in August.

Prof Tan said: "A few studies showed that some people had recur-

rent blood clots in the legs... and my first suspicion was that there were actually clots in the aorta that were not recognised at that time. It's important to look for the source.

"It's very unusual for young people to have gangrene in their legs when they do not have any other medical problems like diabetes, so we wanted to see whether there were other causes."

So a scan of Mr Kefayet's leg was followed by a scan of his aorta. That was when doctors found the source of his problem and discovered that aortic clots were breaking off from his aorta and going into not only his right leg but also the spleen and kidneys. "If we had left the clots alone, they would probably have started travelling to his left leg and going into his intestinal blood vessels," said Prof Tan.

Without the timely surgery, Mr Kefayet could have lost his toes, and possibly his legs.

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Adjunct Assistant Professor Glenn Tan (left) and Adjunct Associate Professor Pua Uei in a video call yesterday with Mr Ullah Kefayet (on screen, left), who had Covid-19 and developed a blood clot in his aorta. PHOTO: TAN TOCK SENG HOSPITAL