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23

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South African strain: Two more Dubai travellers test positive

Both had landed in Bengaluru and travelled to Ballari

KARNATAKA BUREAU
BENGALURU/HASSAN

Two more international travellers, who returned from Dubai and landed in Bengaluru on February 24, have tested positive for the South African strain of SARS-CoV-2. Both persons had landed in Bengaluru and travelled to Ballari.

Sources at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) told *The Hindu* on Thursday that the reports of the two samples had been sent to the Centre on Thursday and would be announced by the Centre on Friday. The samples were sent from the airport to genome testing lab at NIMHANS on February 24.

Meanwhile, two family members of a person in Shivamogga, who was the first case found infected with the South African strain of the virus, tested negative for COVID-19. On Wednesday, the 53-year-old man's repeat test results also came out negative. The samples of the other primary contacts and secondary contacts too have tested negative.

The Shivamogga resi-

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RAJESH SURAGIHALLI,
District Health Officer, Shivamogga

dent, who had returned from Dubai on February 21, had given his sample at the Bengaluru airport and reached Shivamogga to join his family the next day. Later, he tested positive for COVID-19. On Wednesday evening, it was found that he was infected with the South African strain of the virus - the first such instance in Karnataka.

Now, with two more travellers testing positive for this strain, Karnataka has three South African strain positive cases. This is apart from 29 U.K. strain positive cases.

Health officials had isolated him and shifted him to McGann Hospital in Shivamogga. His wife and son were also isolated. "The dis-

trict administration identified nine primary contacts and took their samples for testing. We have got the test reports of his wife and son. Both have tested negative," said Rajesh Suragihalli, District Health Officer.

The person was quarantined for a week after he reached Shivamogga. Later, he moved around. After the district administration learnt that he was infected with the South African strain of the virus, staff were deployed to identify his primary and secondary contacts. "We had collected 30 samples from people in the locality where he moved around all these days. All the samples have tested negative for COVID-19," said Dr. Suragihalli.

Shivamogga Deputy Commissioner K.B. Shivakumar told *The Hindu* that the administration has taken measures to avoid a spread of the infection. "The individual has been isolated. His primary contacts have also been isolated. Besides that, random sampling of samples in the locality is being done as a preventive measure."