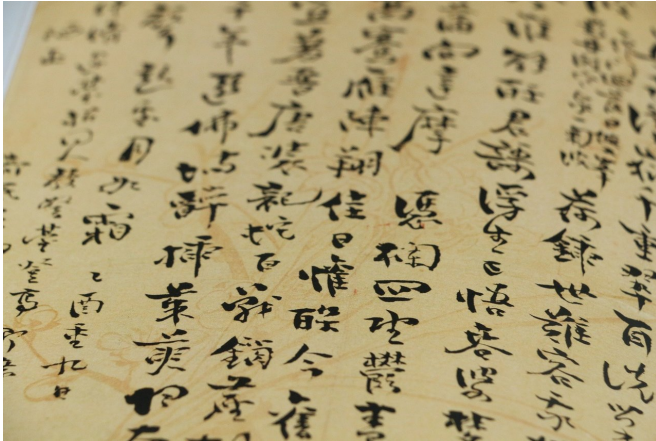


Russia bans Chinese citizens over virus concerns: agencies

18 February 2020

There are no more coronavirus cases in Russia after two women, who returned from China recently, were released from hospital.

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Russia on Tuesday said it would ban all Chinese citizens from entering its territory from February 20, in a drastic measure against the spread of the new coronavirus, local news agencies said.

"The entry of all Chinese citizens via Russia's state frontiers will be suspended from February 20 for work travel, private travel, study and tourism," said Deputy Prime Minister in charge of health, Tatiana Golikova, according to agencies.

She said the decision was taken "because of the worsening of the epidemic in China and the fact that Chinese nationals are continuing to arrive on Russian territory."

Several Chinese nationals visit Russia as tourists or live there for work or study and many transit through Russian airports en route to the West.

Russia has taken drastic measures to stop the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak which has claimed nearly 1,900 lives in China and around the world. It has already closed its 4,250-km (2,650-mile) border with China.

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