

# Bus passengers from Italy blocked in France in coronavirus scare

24 February 2020

A bus that arrived in the French city of Lyon from Milan in Italy was sealed off for several hours Monday after the driver showed symptoms of possible coronavirus infection, security sources said.

Health authorities isolated the bus in Lyon Perrache station early Monday and ordered the passengers to remain onboard for tests.

The LyonMag news site reported that a driver, who is Italian, was taken to hospital for tests because he had a bad cough.

"A bus is undergoing an inspection. Our teams are at the scene and an assessment is underway," a spokeswoman for the regional health agency told AFP.

Low-cost operator FlixBus said the bus, destined for the central city of Clermont-Ferrand, had stopped off in the Italian city of Turin and Grenoble in France on the way to Lyon.

A couple that boarded the bus in Lyon told AFP they were kept inside for over two hours before being allowed disembark after they were checked by doctors.

They said they were told they would be contacted again if the driver, who was taken to hospital for tests, turned out to be carrying the virus.

By around 1:00 pm (1200 GMT), all passengers—who were issued with face masks—had been allowed off the bus, an AFP reporter at the scene said.

Milan is the capital of the Lombardy region at the centre of Europe's biggest outbreak of the coronavirus that has killed nearly 2,600 people worldwide.

Five people have died from the disease in Italy,

where several northern villages are under lockdown.

In a sign of the nervousness triggered by the global spread of the virus, a Paris police station was closed to the public for several hours Monday after a Chinese woman became unwell on the premises.

The station in the 13th district, home to the French capital's Asian quarter, reopened after the woman tested negative for the COVID-19 virus, a police source told AFP.

In France, one person—an elderly Chinese tourist—has died from the virus.

Eleven have been hospitalised, of whom 10 have recovered.

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