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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Emergency Assistance to counter with nCoV in Vietnam - Providing testing reagents to the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology (NIHE) –

Hanoi, February 7, 2020- As a countermeasure against the new coronavirus (nCoV) in Vietnam, responding to an urgent request from the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology (NIHE), JICA had decided to provide testing reagents (equivalent to 14 million yen in total) which is used to test for the rapid detection of the new coronavirus. Today, at NIHE, we had handed over first batch of the reagents (equivalent to 2.3 million yen).

As of February 7, Vietnam had confirmed 12 infected cases, while 77 other suspected cases are being isolated. The Vietnamese government is on highest alert.

NIHE has been designated by the Ministry of Health of Vietnam as the leading institution to perform definite diagnosis of suspected cases in the Northern Region.

Vietnam has been exposed to a variety of emerging infectious diseases, including severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003 and highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1) in 2004. Since 2006, through Japan's government development assistance (ODA), JICA have been supporting the installation and strengthening of biosafety level three (BSL-3) laboratories that enable safe handling of these high-risk pathogens.

In the ongoing "Project for Capacity Development for Medical Laboratory Network on Biosafety and Examination of Highly Hazardous infectious Pathogens", two long-term experts are dispatched to strengthen the capabilities and collaboration of major inspection agencies in Vietnam, such as NIHE and the Ho Chi Minh Pasteur Institute. This support is a part of the project.

In addition, the first detected nCoV patient was admitted on January 23 at Cho Ray Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City. A Japanese doctor (JICA expert) who works at the hospital had provided reference materials to the hospital's infection control department and supported to enhance the preparedness through series of joint learning sections with colleagues of the hospital.

JICA, under a leadership of the Government of Japan, will continue to support the Government of Vietnam to combat with nCoV.



Mr. Konaka Tetsuo, Chief Representative of JICA Vietnam Office handed over the testing reagents to Prof. Dang Duc Anh, Director of NIHE with the presence of representatives of MOH, NIHE and JICA.

For further information, please contact:

JICA Vietnam Office, 11th Floor, CornerStone Building, 16 Phan Chu Trinh Street,
Hoan Kiem, Hanoi

Tel: 024 3831 5005 (ext. 125) – Ms. Le Quynh Anh (PR Officer)