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Nickel production at Indonesia's Morowali park unaffected by virus



* No cases of coronavirus at Indonesia Morowali Park -spokesman

* Production “as per normal”

* Impact may be felt soon due to travel restrictions- source

JAKARTA/ SINGAPORE, Feb 3 (Reuters) - Indonesia’s largest nickel industrial park said on Monday that its Chinese workers are clear of the coronavirus epidemic and that production is as “per normal”.

PT Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park, where Chinese giant Tsingshan operates, employs more than 5,000 employees from China but has been unaffected by the virus, a spokesman told Reuters.

The epidemic has infected thousands of people in China, killing 361.

“The number of employees (we have) from China at this moment is as many as in the 5000s and thank God, we have not one coronavirus suspect,” the spokesman, Dedy Kurniawan, told Reuters in a text message.

“Production is as per normal,” Kurniawan said.

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A source at Tsingshan however told Reuters that while production is broadly unaffected, the impact from the virus may be felt soon.

“The production side is still is OK, but some raw materials coming from China will be affected,” the source said.

“Construction will also be affected by equipment and personnel from China,” the source added.

Kurniawan said that there had been no new or returning workers from China since Jan 25.

“We will stop absorbing any labour from China until the authorities say that it’s safe from the corona epidemic,” Kurniawan said, adding that workers must get “written permission” from the company’s management if they want to leave the area.

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He also said that employees must also go through extensive medical check ups.

These new measures however, have “absolutely” no effect on production, Kurniawan added.

Indonesia will temporarily stop flights to and from mainland China starting Wednesday and bar visitors who have been in China for 14 days from entering or transiting in the Southeast Asian country. It has also asked Indonesians not to travel to China. (Reporting by Wilda Asmarini in Jakarta and Mai Nguyen in Singapore; Writing by Fathin Ungku; Editing by Raju Gopalakrishnan)

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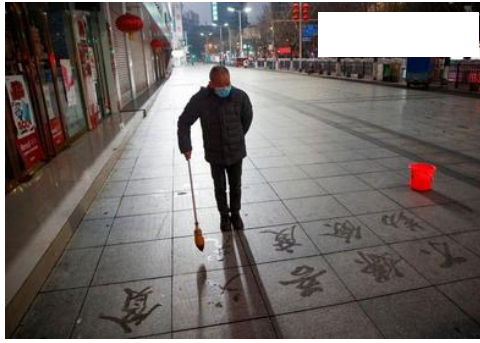
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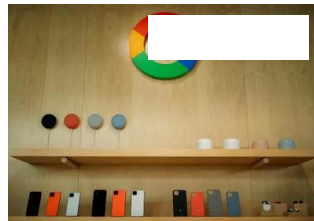
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