BioSpectrum the business of Bio & Health Sciences ASIA EDITION

Ebola crisis: North Korea to ban foreign tourists

October 29, 2014 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

Ebola crisis: North Korea to ban foreign tourists

Singapore: With Ebola fears exacerbating, North Korea is planning to shut its doors to all foreign tourists, a move to prevent the entry of the virus into the country's borders.

The deadliest Ebola outbreak wading West Africa has so far claimed at least 4,877 people and recorded 10,000 cases as per WHO's recent estimates.

Mr Gareth Johnson of Young Pioneer Tours, a travel company based in China, that runs tours in North Korea, said, "We have just received official news from our partners in the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) that, as of tomorrow, tourists from any country, regardless of where they have recently visited, will not be permitted to enter."

However, the North Korean state media have still not confirmed the tourist ban. The agency said that the country was only stepping up measures to enhance Ebola surveillance. Many travel and tour operators have confirmed the news stating that the news came through official channels in Pyongyang and Beijing.

In the past, North Korea had sealed its borders preventing foreign entry over health concerns. Mr Bonner, Koryo Tours, said, "In 2003, the country closed its borders due to the threat of SARS, despite not a single case being reported there."