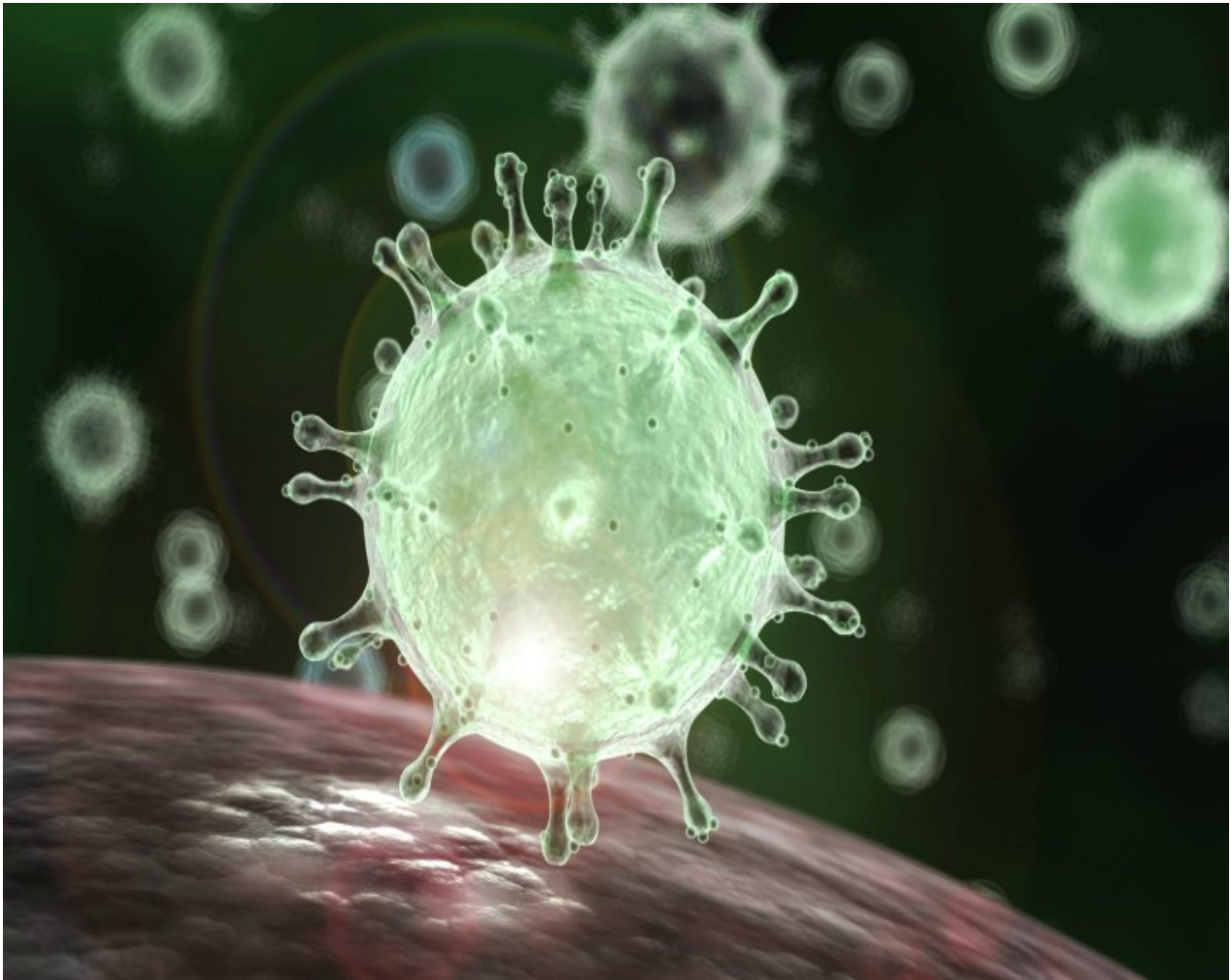


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Following Rumor, Barbados Government Reaffirms: No Cases of Coronavirus in Barbados

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BARBADOS — The Barbados Ministry of Health and Wellness has stated categorically that there were no cases of coronavirus in Barbados as of Thursday.

No business has been closed in connection with the coronavirus, the ministry said.

The statement follows rumors circulating in the country that the deadly virus had arrived on the island, and the government wanted to clear the air before it got out of hand.

For Caribbean islands dependent on tourism, news of the coronavirus affecting locals could be devastating to the industry and, in turn, the broader economy.

Barbados Acting Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Arthur Phillips, on Wednesday cautioned Barbadians against spreading rumors which had the potential to create unnecessary panic in the society. He reiterated that the ministry had instituted very strong surveillance measures at the island's ports of entry which had so far proven very effective.

Any person entering Barbados from the affected regions who show no symptoms of illness are quarantined for 14 days. In the event that travelers exhibit symptoms, they will be immediately isolated, Dr. Phillips said.

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