

## Special Announcement of COVID-19

on 20 February 2020

### 1. The situation on 20 February 2020

1. There are currently 18 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) being treated in hospitals and 17 cases who returned to their homes, which brings the total number of novel coronavirus infection cases detected in Thailand to 35.

2. From 3 January to 20 February 2020 at 1.00 P.M., the total number of patients under investigation (PUI) increased to 1,052 people. Of those, 58 PUI were detected from the airport screening and 994 people sought medical services on their own at hospitals. 861 cases returned to their homes. Most of the PUI were infected with seasonal influenza, and 191 PUI are admitted at hospitals.

3. Regarding the international situation involving 28 countries and two administrative regions between 5 January to 20 February 2020 at 9.00 A.M., there were 75,725 confirmed cases and 2,126 deaths, with 74,577 cases and 2,118 deaths coming from the People's Republic of China.

### 2. The Ministry of Public Health reported that the people who traveled back from the COVID-19 transmission area and who do not have symptoms, can go back home

The Ministry of Public Health reported that the people who traveled back from the COVID-19 transmission area have some concerns so for those people who do not have a fever, cough and runny nose or symptoms that meet the criteria, they do not need to be admitted to the hospital but it is recommended that they observe their symptoms by themselves. If they are sick, they should seek care from a medical practitioner and inform them of their travel history.

Dr. Sapon Iamsirithaworn, Director of Division of Communicable Disease along with Dr. Rungrueng Kitphati, Advisor to the Deputy Minister of Public Health, senior expert in prevention medicine and MOPH spokesman, have reported on the situation of COVID-19 that the MOPH has not made any announcements or policies imposing restraints on travel to outbreak areas of COVID-19. If it is necessary to visit areas affected by COVID-19, MOPH suggested to be careful, always wash hands with soap or alcohol-based hand gel and encourages people to wear surgical masks in crowded places.

For matters regarding people who wish to return to Thailand, all passengers will be screened at the airports. People who do not have fever and have not met the criteria for PUI can return home and return to their normal lives. Nonetheless, they are recommended to observe their health condition, if they have fever, cough, or runny nose, seek medical care right away and inform them of their travel history. People who have fever, cough, runny nose or meet the criteria for PUI at the port of entry health control office, will be sent for further diagnosis at the hospital. The MOPH has been continuing to intensively screen both inbound and outbound passengers at the port of entry health control office.

There are currently 35 COVID-19 confirmed cases in Thailand. 17 cases were discharged from the hospital. 18 cases are admitted at hospitals (including two severe cases at Bamrasnaradura Hospital). One of the severe cases is being treated with ECMP. Today the patient is in good health with consciousness, and the laboratory testing showed negative results. The other



# Novel Coronavirus 2019 Pneumonia News release

by Emergency Operation Center, Department of Disease Control

severe case who has a TB co-infection, is in stable condition. Both cases have already received the Favipiravir drug for 5 days.

At today's meeting, Prime Minister General Prayuth Chan-ocha, Chair of the National Committee for Emerging Infectious Disease Preparedness, Prevention and Response confirmed that Thailand did not conceal or distort the numbers of infected people in Thailand. The general public can be confident in the effective measures of disease prevention and control that have been acknowledged by other countries. Thailand was the first country to start the screening protocol at all airports and provide health beware cards for tourists, tour guides and at other places that provide services. Most importantly, to confront the current situation, Thailand has high capacities among medical personnel and volunteers who are able to dedicate and sacrifice for the health of the population. Please be confident, give them encouragement and be willing to cooperate with Thailand as well.

### **3. The daily recommendations for preventing COVID-19**

It is recommended to frequently wash hands with water and soap or alcohol gel, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth if not necessary, strictly comply with the recommendations "eat cooked food, use serving spoons and wash hands," and wear clean, cloth hygienic masks when in crowded areas. The patients or people who have symptoms of coughing or sneezing should wear surgical masks to prevent the spread of infection. Staff and healthcare workers who have close contact with patients should wear an N95 mask.