

Special Announcement of COVID-19 on 29 February 2020

1. The situation on 29 February 2020 at 8.00 a.m.

1. There are currently 14 confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) being treated in hospitals and 28 cases who returned to their homes which brings the total number of coronavirus infection cases detected in Thailand to 42.

2. From 3 January to 29 February 2020 at 11.00 A.M., the total number of patients under investigation (PUI) increased to 2,798 people. Of those, 86 PUI were detected from screening at all ports of entry and 2,712 people sought medical services on their own at hospitals. 1,529 cases returned to their homes and some of them are continually being monitored. Most of the PUI were infected with seasonal influenza, and 1,269 PUI are still admitted at hospitals.

3. Regarding the international situation involving 57 countries and administrative regions between 5 January to 29 February 2020 at 7.00 A.M., there were 84,144 confirmed cases and 2,876 deaths, with 78,832 cases and 2,788 deaths coming from the People's Republic of China.

2. MOPH said the COVID-19 was added as a “Dangerous communicable disease” under The Royal Thai Government Gazette. It will be enforced starting tomorrow. One more confirmed case was reported.

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) reported one additional confirmed case of COVID-19. COVID-19 was added as “Dangerous communicable disease” under The Royal Thai Government Gazette, and will be enforced and official by law tomorrow. The MOPH asks the cooperation from people who return from affected areas to self-quarantine themselves for a total of 14 days. If anyone has symptoms including fever, coughing, and sore throat, please see a medical doctor immediately and provide your travel history to health care providers.

On 29 February 2020, at the Permanent Secretary Office of the Ministry of Public Health, Mr. Anutin Charnvirakul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health and Dr. Sukhum Karnchanapimai, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Public Health stated about the COVID-19 situation news that today, the MoPH received laboratory results from the Department of Medical Sciences and Chulalongkorn Hospital that confirmed one new case in a 21 year-old Thai male salesman who had close contact with foreigners. He has been sick since 24 February 2020 and was admitted on 25 February 2020 at a private hospital. He is currently being treated at Nopparatrajathanee Hospital with fever and cough. The laboratory result was positive and currently, close contacts i.e. family members, colleagues and healthcare workers are being followed up.

There are currently 14 cases that are being admitted in hospitals, and 28 cases are recovered. The total accumulated number of confirmed cases is 42, with 28 cases coming from the surveillance system (16 Chinese cases, 12 Thai cases), and 14 cases from close contacts of those confirmed cases (9 Chinese cases, 5 Thai cases). Thailand currently has the 13th most number of COVID-19 cases in the world. The two severe cases at Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute have both tested negative for the virus causing COVID-19 from the laboratory results, and are still receiving treatment.

On Monday (2 March 2020), the Ministry of Public Health will start giving surgical masks to the public (3 pieces per person) which will be beneficial for disease prevention, help in reducing the burden and procurement of protective equipment.

Today, COVID-19 was published in the Royal Thai Government Gazette as the nation's 14th dangerous communicable disease and tomorrow is the effective date (1 March 2020). This announcement is beneficial for the surveillance, prevention and control of dangerous communicable disease. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or pneumonia symptoms. In severe cases, patients may develop respiratory failure and even death.

After the announcement comes into effect, measures will be issued for the use of power under the law in order to delay the current situation from escalating to the third phase of the spread of the disease as long as possible.

For the public concern about what to do after returning from affected areas, people are recommended to implement self-quarantine to observe symptoms at home/ residence for 14 days, avoid visiting public or crowded places, wear a mask when making contact with other people, not share personal stuff with others, frequently wash hands, eat cooked food, use a serving spoon, and keep the toilet, clothes and door knobs clean with soap or detergent. If anyone develops symptoms including fever, coughing and sneezing, please seek medical treatment at the hospital and inform the travel history to the doctor.

If anyone meets the criteria of PUI, they can check their health condition and be diagnosed for COVID – 19 at their registered hospital (free of charge). If they do not meet the PUI criteria or there are no symptoms, we do not recommend you to request laboratory testing by yourself (but if you insist on a laboratory diagnosis, you need to shoulder the cost by yourself). However, if travelers who return from affected areas do not develop suspected symptoms and are negative for COVID-19 after a first diagnosis, they are recommended to implement the self-quarantine at home for 14 days.

3. Recommendations to the Public

3.1 If anyone has symptoms including fever, sore throat, respiratory tract infection symptoms such as runny nose, cough, reproductive cough, tachypnea or dyspnea within 14 days after departing from a risk or affected area, they should wear a hygienic mask, wash their hands and seek medical care at a nearby hospital or meet the public health officers immediately, and inform the healthcare workers of their travel history to reduce the risk of complications from pneumonia progressing to severe or fatal outcomes.

3.2 A person with an underlying disease should avoid traveling outbound, where there is an ongoing outbreak. If this is unavoidable, people should avoid making contact with patients who have respiratory symptoms, avoid visiting markets selling live animals and avoid close contact with animals, especially with sick or dead animals.

3.3 For the general public, please take care of yourself during seasonal changes and comply with the recommendations “eat cooked food, use serving spoons, wash hands,” and wear masks while coughing, sneezing, and avoid making contact with patients who have respiratory symptoms.