

Special Announcement of COVID-19 on 3 March 2020

1. The situation on 3 March 2020 at 8.00 a.m.

1. There are currently 11 confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) being treated in hospitals, 31 cases who returned to their homes and 1 death, which brings the total number of coronavirus infection cases detected in Thailand to 43.

2. From 3 January to 3 March 2020, the total number of patients under investigation (PUI) increased to 3,519 people. Of those, 95 PUI were detected from screening at all ports of entry and 3,394 people sought medical services on their own at hospitals. 2,099 cases returned to their homes and some of them are being continually monitored. Most of the PUI were infected with seasonal influenza, and 1,420 PUI are still admitted at hospitals.

3. Regarding the international situation involving 73 countries and two administrative regions between 5 January to 3 March 2020 at 7.00 A.M., there were 90,216 confirmed cases and 3,080 deaths, with 80,026 cases and 2,912 deaths coming from the People's Republic of China.

2. The MOPH revealed that Thailand has the 15th most COVID-19 cases in the world and is preparing the protocol for receiving undocumented Thai workers from South Korea

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) revealed that Thailand has the 15th most COVID-19 cases in the world. They are preparing the integrated joint plan for receiving undocumented Thai workers from South Korea with relevant partners.

Dr. Opas Karnkawinpong, Director General of the Department of Medical Sciences stated about the COVID-19 situation today that 11 confirmed cases still being treated in hospitals, 31 cases fully recovered and returned home, there has been one death, one severe case and the total number of confirmed cases is 43. Thailand has the 15th most cases in the world. The cooperation from the public can slow down Thailand from entering a widespread epidemic. This disease can be prevented by eating cooked food, using serving spoons, washing hands, and wearing masks. The public should prepare to be responsible for themselves and society by self-protection and infection prevention. If someone is at risk, they should reduce the risk of spreading the virus to other people. MoPH advises people to believe the information only from reliable channels and follow their recommendations. Fight COVID-19 together and join hands with each other. Do not put the blame on anyone else because COVID-19 involves all of us.

Regarding the undocumented Thai workers in South Korea, the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand is coordinating with relevant organizations such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Transport, Immigration Bureau and Security Department for **joint planning efforts**. The integration among government sectors is required for **tackling any** situation arising out of the COVID-19 outbreak. **The Ministry of Public Health will act to prevent the spread of COVID-19, carry out all duties, and will be ready to proceed with further instructions.**

The Ministry of Public Health declared COVID-19 as a disease that must be controlled under Section 18 of the Pathogens and Animal Toxins Act, B.E. 2558. It was designated as a Group 3 disease that poses a high risk or high hazard. Any person who intends to produce, import, export, sell, transit or possess the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 must ask for permission in order to comply with the Pathogens and Animal Toxins Act, B.E.2558.

Regarding public concern about not implementing quarantine in travelers arriving in Thailand, MoPH would like to clarify as follows:

1. The people who shall be quarantined or observed for clinical symptoms in accordance with the Communicable Diseases Act include:

- The group of PUI that develop suspected symptoms and have a travel history to outbreak areas. This group shall be strictly quarantined at the hospital.
- The group that does not develop symptoms but is at risk for getting COVID-19, patients or suspected COVID-19 patients (high risk close contacts) are members of the family, working colleagues, classmates and passengers getting on the same vehicle with COVID-19 patients. This group is recommended to strictly implement self quarantine at home for 14 days and avoid traveling, avoid attending classes, avoid working and avoid sharing personal stuff with others. If anyone develops symptoms including fever, cough and sore throat, the health officer will enter them into the system of medical treatment and surveillance.

2. Unexposed groups including both Thai people and foreigners with travel history from affected areas, but who did not have exposure to patients and who are not exhibiting suspected symptoms are requested to reduce social activities, wear a mask when leaving their accommodations, wash hands frequently, not go to crowded areas, and observe your symptoms at home for 14 days. If you have a fever, cough, or sore throat, see a doctor immediately and report your travel history.

3. The general public and people in the same community as patients are asked to follow the recommendations of the Ministry of Public Health: eat cooked food, use serving spoons, wash hands, and wear a mask when visiting crowded places.

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.