

Special Announcement of COVID-19 on 5 March 2020

1. The situation on 5 March 2020 at 8.00 a.m.

1. There are currently 15 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 47.

2. From 3 January to 5 March 2020 at 11.00 A.M., the total number of patients under investigation (PUI) increased to 3,895 people. Of those, 128 PUI were detected from screening at all ports of entry and 3,767 people sought medical services on their own at hospitals. 2,319 cases returned to their homes and some of them are being continually monitored. Most of the PUI were infected with seasonal influenza, and 1,576 PUI are still admitted at hospitals.

3. Regarding the international situation involving 80 countries, two administrative regions and one cruise ship between 5 January to 5 March 2020 at 7.00 A.M., there were 94,380 confirmed cases and 3,221 deaths, with 80,282 cases and 2,981 deaths coming from the People's Republic of China.

2. MOPH reported 4 additional imported cases of COVID-19 from Italy and Iran.

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) reported 4 new confirmed cases of COVID-19. Two cases were from people traveling from Italy and two were from Iran. The public was asked to be aware and to not panic. The situation can improve by cooperation from every sector and individuals honoring their social responsibility.

Dr. Suwannachai Wattanayingcharoenchai, Director General of the Department of Disease Control and his team stated that today, Thailand has 4 more confirmed cases of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The first case, a 29 year-old Italian man who departed from Italy on 1 March 2020, sought medical treatment at a private hospital on 2 March 2020 with symptoms of fever and cough. He was referred to Chonburi Hospital. The second case is a 42 year-old male Thai officer who returned from Italy on 2 March 2020. He visited a private hospital for medical treatment in Chonburi province on 3 March 2020 with symptoms of fever, cough and sore throat. Those two cases are not related.

The third case is a 22 year-old Chinese man, a student who traveled from Iran to transit in Thailand on 1 March 2020. The officer at the international communicable diseases control checkpoint of Suvarnabhumi Airport checked and found this man had a fever, cough and a runny nose. The student was admitted to Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute. The fourth case is a 20 year-old Thai man, a student who traveled from Iran to Thailand on 27 February 2020 and was admitted at a hospital in Nakhon Si Thammarat province on 2 March 2020 with a fever and a runny nose.

As of today, 31 cases have recovered, while 15 others remain at hospitals, and there has been one death. The total number of confirmed cases is 47. One severe case is being treated at Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute. He has tested negative for the virus causing COVID-19 and is under close supervision of the medical team.

His Excellency the Prime Minister has instructed the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Ministry of Defence, Office of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and related agencies to 1) jointly consider the 'areas for containing diseases' for passengers who travel from disease infected areas of COVID-19. Those who travel from disease infected areas need to be placed under control of the government and 2) prepare operation teams for areas that were designated for containing diseases.

The MOPH determined the criteria for preparing quarantine places or areas for containing the disease in order to support the Prime Minister and His Excellency's orders. These criteria, used as a

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guideline for relevant sectors, comprise of setting arrangements, security systems, kitchens, nursing rooms, waste management systems, other necessary facilities, and staff for providing services.

The MOPH requested the cooperation from passengers departing from the disease infected areas to strictly comply with the MOPH recommendations including implementing self-quarantine at home or their residence for 14 days, refraining to join social activities and avoiding visits to crowded places. If it is necessary to go outside, they should honor the social responsibility for preventing the spread of the disease by wearing a mask and frequently washing their hands with water and soap or alcohol gel.

For the general public, do not stigmatize patients or people traveling from outbreak areas. This disease can be prevented by eating cooked food, using serving spoons, washing hands frequently and wearing a mask if you need to go to a crowded place. Please maintain awareness and do not panic.

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.