

Special Announcement of COVID-19 On 12 March 2020

1. The situation on 12 March 2020 at 8.00 a.m.

1. There are currently 34 confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) being actively treated in hospitals, 35 cases have recovered and have been sent home, and there has been one death, which brings the total number of COVID-19 cases detected in Thailand thus far to 70.

2. From 3 January to 12 March 2020 at 10.00 A.M., the total number of patients under investigation (PUI) was 5,232 people. Of those, 219 PUI were detected from screening at ports of entry, and 5,013 people sought medical services on their own at hospitals. 3,865 cases have recovered and returned home, but a few of these cases who have been sent home and are being continually monitored. Most of the PUI were infected with seasonal influenza, and 1,367 PUI are still being admitted to hospitals for further testing.

3. As of 7:00 a.m. on 12 March 2020, since 5 January 2020 the international situation involves 121 countries, two special administrative regions of China, and one cruise ship, there were 121,996 confirmed cases and 4,390 deaths. 80,790 of these confirmed cases and 3,158 of these deaths are from the People's Republic of China.

2. MOPH reported a COVID-19 cluster outbreak, leading to 11 new cases.

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) reported a cluster outbreak of 11 new cases of COVID-19. The patients are Thai and are between 25-38 years old. The outbreak was found after DDC adjusted the criteria of PUI and defined the outbreak as a cluster of respiratory events. Currently, Thailand has a total of 34 confirmed cases that remain in the hospital with 1 in critical condition, 35 cases have recovered and have been sent home, and there has been one death, which brings the total number of COVID-19 cases detected in Thailand thus far to 70.

Dr. Sukhum Karnchanapimai (Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Public Health), Dr. Suwannachai Wattanayingcharoenchai (Director General of Department of Disease Control), Dr. Kiattibhoom Vongrachit (Director General of Department of Mental Health), and Dr. Sapon Iamsirithawon (Director of Division of Communicable Diseases in the Department of Disease Control) reviewed the COVID-19 situation in Thailand today. There is one confirmed case, a 62 year-old woman, who was discharged from the Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute. 11 confirmed cases, all of which are Thai people, defined as a "cluster outbreak," were found by the expanded screening in clusters of respiratory symptoms. Currently, Thailand has a total of 34 confirmed cases that remain in the hospital with 1 in critical condition, 35 cases have recovered and have been sent home, and there has been one death, which brings the total number of COVID-19 cases detected in Thailand thus far to 70. The case in critical condition is being monitored closely and is being treated at the Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute.

MOPH received information from the private hospital located in Bangkok revealing that on 21 February 2020, there was a patient who spent time with her friend visiting Thailand from Hong Kong. Over a 4-day period, starting on 25 February 2020, this patient developed a fever, chills, headache, and a cough. She went out twice with this friend and invited a group of her other friends along, both on 27 and 29 February 2020. During both occasions, this group of 15 friends (including this patient) shared the same glass of alcohol and the same cigarettes. By 4 March, 2020, seven people in her group of friends developed a fever, and were admitted to the hospital. 11 of 15 people, including the

patient, were tested positive for COVID - 19 (5 male, 6 female; 25-38 years old). The remaining four people reportedly did not join in drinking or smoking with their friends, and were not found with a fever, and tested negative for COVID-19. In addition, MOPH followed up with 70 people, all close contacts of this group of friends, including family members and other friends who did not join the party. The first COVID-19 laboratory result returned. These investigative laboratory results allow us to define this case as a cluster outbreak, rather than “super spreading” since transmission remained within the boundaries of the friend group at the party.

This cluster outbreak of 11 new COVID-cases is an important learning opportunity for Thai people. This cluster outbreak example draws emphasis on the importance of 1) self quarantining: if you are ill, you must self-quarantine, otherwise you will be putting those in close contact with you at risk, such as family members and friends, 2) do not share personal items: follow the campaign practices to “Eat cooked food, use a serving spoon, and always wash your hands.” To delay the situation in Thailand from escalating to phase 3, 3) we strongly encourage those who have developed any illness to take the highest precautions at this time to keep themselves and those around you safe by staying at home to reduce the risk of transmission to others and society. . Everyone needs to work together; this is a disease that involves all of us; safety and health of the public is our top priority. In addition, if you develop or if you notice anyone else who has developed flu-like symptoms during the same period of one or two weeks, please notify the public health officers. Encourage others to see a doctor. For additional information, call the Department of Disease Control hotline, 1422.

3. Advice for the general public

Request for people to manage their health by doing the following:

1. Avoid going to crowded places
2. Avoid staying close to people who have respiratory disease symptoms
3. Take measures to eat cooked food, use serving spoons, wash hands and wear cloth masks to prevent the disease.

Please follow the news from the Ministry of Public Health. If there are any questions, ask at the Department of Disease Control Hotline 1422 for 24 hours per day or website: <https://ddc.moph.go.th/viralpneumonia/>, Twitter, Facebook, Line official, Tik Tok “ไทยรู้สู้โควิด” and Line official ChatBot 1422 “Kor-Ror-OK”, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health. People can check for scams at the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society. www.antifakenewscenter.com