

Thailand situation update on 24 April 2020

1. International Situation

As of 24 April 2020, there were a total of 2,733,599 confirmed cases with 58,712 patients in critical condition and 191,185 COVID-19 deaths across more than 207 countries, two Special Administrative Regions of the People's Republic of China (Hong Kong and Macau), and on cruise ships. The ten countries with the most confirmed COVID-19 cases include: the United States (886,709), Spain (213,024), Italy (189,973), France (158,183), Germany (153,129), England (138,078), Turkey (101,790), Iran (87,026) the People's Republic of China (83,885 cases, as well as 1,036 and 45 cases in the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau, respectively) and Russia (68,622).

2. The Disease Situation in Thailand

2.1 Surveillance Protocol for COVID-19

The accumulated data from 3 January to 23 April 2020 showed that among 37,612 flights, there were a total of 4,406,734 passengers screened. Among those, 789 people met the case definition criteria of patients under investigation (PUI). Outside of the airports, 137,747 people from 1,850 ships were screened at seaports between 1 January and 23 April 2020, and two people met the PUI criteria. There were 1,834,097 people screened at ground ports between 1 February to 23 April 2020. Between 30 January to 24 April 2020, a total of 162,623 people who were renewing their passports were screened at the Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty at Chaengwattana Road. The total number of PUI from all ports is currently 791 people.

2.2 Situation of Patients with Suspected Symptoms of COVID-19 in Thailand.

On 24 April 2020 at 18:00, Thailand announced that 2,604 additional people met the criteria for PUI, raising the total to 50,390 PUI, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of screening implementation to detect patients with suspected symptoms of COVID-19

Situation	Total number of PUI
Total number of people who met the criteria of patients under investigation (PUI)	50,390
• Detected from the airport screening	789
• Detected from seaports	2
• Sought medical services on their own at hospitals	49,511
• Notified by hotel residences, the Erawan Medical Center, local universities, tour groups and U-Tapao	88
Confirmed cases	2,854

Situation	Total number of PUI
• Recovered and discharged from hospitals	2,547
• Undergoing Treatment	257
• Deaths	50
Characteristics of Infection in Confirmed cases	2,854
• Local Transmission	2,362
• Imported Case	492
- Designated Quarantine Places*	71

Notice: *The quarantine measures for travelers from aboard have been in effect as of 3 April 2020

In Thailand, there have been 2,854 confirmed COVID-19 cases. Among the confirmed cases, 2,547 patients have recovered and returned home, and 50 patients have died.

A 14-day State Quarantine measure has been implemented by the government for travelers entering Thailand from abroad. On 24 April 2020, no additional cases were reported, and the total number of cases at designated quarantine areas remained at 71 cases. There are 62 cases among Thai people returning from Indonesia, seven cases from America, and two cases from England. All Thai people returning from abroad are required to comply with State Quarantine measures, meaning they have to quarantine in specific provinces; in total there are 5 cases quarantined in Narathiwat, 12 cases in Pattani, 8 cases in Yala, 18 cases in Songkhla, 19 cases in Satun, 3 cases in Krabi, 3 cases on Chonburi, and 3 cases in Bangkok.

The median age of the confirmed cases is 36 years old (ranging from 1 months to 91 years old). 1,474 cases are male, and 1,297 cases are female (ratio of male to female: 1.14:1). Gender data is not available for 83 cases.

In terms of nationality, 2,496 cases are Thai, 33 are Chinese, 24 are French, 23 are British, 17 are Burmese, 12 are Russian, 11 are Japanese, 10 are American, eight are Canadian, eight are Italian, seven are Indian, six are German, six are Swedish, five are Danish, five are Belgian, five are Swiss, five are Singaporean, four are Pakistani, four are Australian, four are Filipino, three are South Korean, three are Indonesian, two are Portuguese, two are Spanish, two are Malaysian, two are Albanian, two are Kazakh, two are Laos, two are New Zealander (one case is Maori), two are Cambodian, one is Uzbek, one is Iranian, one is Finnish, one is Ukrainian, one is Taiwanese, one is Serbian, one is Liberian, one is Vietnamese, one is Hungarian, one is Mexican, one is Tunisian, one is Thai-Indian, one is Dutch, one is Brazilian, one is Israeli, one is Palestinian, one is Mali, and data is not available for the remaining 123 cases.

Underlying diseases were found in some of these cases, including hypertension (25 cases), hypotension (1 case), allergies (17 cases), diabetes (10 cases), other NCDs (13 cases), asthma (8 cases), dyslipidemia (3 cases), thyroid disease (3 cases), psoriasis (2 case), salivary gland cancer (1 case), paranasal sinus disease (1 case), COPD (1 case), multiple underlying diseases (26 cases), stroke (1 case), epilepsy (2 case), thrombocytopenia (1 case), myasthenia gravis (1 case), valvular heart disease (1 case), HIV (2 case), depression (2 cases), anemia (1 case), migraine (1 case), liver cirrhosis (1 case), breast cancer (1 case), Hepatitis B virus (1 case), and rheumatoid arthritis (1 case).

There were 2,745 cases reported without any underlying disease. 41 cases were detected from the screening protocol at airports (one case was found within the group of Thai workers returning from Wuhan). 1,809 cases sought medical treatment by themselves, 997 cases were tracked via case investigation and defined as “close contacts”. On 24 April 2020, 7 confirmed cases were found from the Active case finding measure including 3 cases in Phuket province, and 4 cases in Yala.

3. Thailand Precautions

- The Sheikhul Islam Office of Thailand has issued an announcement on determining the 1st day of Ramadan AH 1441 which coincides with April 24, 2020. People were asked to have Islamic religious activities at home and follow the Department of Disease Control's recommendations as follows:
 - 1) avoid salam (Muslims greeting) of shaking hands, hugging, kissing on the cheek. It is recommended to greet by raising both hands (wai)
 - 2) refraining from joining Friday prayer (salat al-jumu'ah) and strictly follow the Sheikhul Islam Office of Thailand's announcement on protective measures against the spread of COVID-19. People are also advised to conduct religious activities at home.
 - 3) Avoid sharing meals together, if necessary, maintain 1-2 meters apart from others and refrain from serving food in buffet-style. People were suggested to use single dishes, use their own utensils and glasses and wash hands thoroughly before eating.
 - 4) Avoid going to crowded places, if necessary, stay at least 1-2 meters apart from one another, wear cloth or hygienic masks all the time and frequently wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - 5) If it is necessary to carry out religious activities in the mosque. It is recommended to open windows and curtains to increase ventilation and avoid using air conditioners. Screening checkpoints should be provided to everyone before entering the mosque. Anyone with fever (a temperature of 37.5 degrees Celsius or higher), cough, sore throat, even if they show only mild symptoms will be restricted from attending the activities and recommend to observe symptoms at home.
 - 6) If there is personal contact or travel to areas at risk of infection, when arriving home, it is suggested to immediately clean their body, take a shower, shampoo their hair and change clothes.
 - 7) Choose healthy food and regularly drink clean water after eating. These practices would not only help for the right fasting guidelines but also help to prevent dehydration during hot weather. Elderly people or people with chronic disease were recommended not to go outside for religious activities. They were advised to perform religious practice at home to reduce the risk of infection from the external environment as they may develop severe conditions if they get infected and it may even lead to death.
- The Prime Minister is the chair of the ceremony to provide life insurance to medical and public health staff including providing the funding support to village health volunteers. These kinds of provisions including life insurance for medical doctors and nurses in the amount of 50 million Baht, life insurance for assistant nurses and medical technicians in the amount of 10 million Baht, and funds for village health volunteers in the amount of 10 million Baht, which have been

bolstered by the Ministry of Public Health in collaboration with BTS Group Holding PCL with the main objectives to repay the favor to 400,000 Public Health staff and 1.04 million village health volunteers who are frontline workers to cope with the COVID-19.

- Nakhon Ratchasima started to relax the following disease control measures:
 1. reducing the number of curfew checkpoints from 53 points to 25 points after there have been no reported new cases for 16 days. This relaxation (in effect on 23 April) will allow people who have an approved letter for travelling at nighttime to travel more conveniently.
 2. Reducing the number of disease screening checkpoints from 5 points to 2 points (located at the areas of Pak Chong District and Wang Nam Khiao District).
 3. Reducing the number of checkpoints in the communities so that Sub-district Headman and Village Headman can focus on quarantining people who depart from other areas. These implementations are just the primary relaxation of measures. For the other ones, there is a need to wait for the order announced by the Central level.
- Nan province announced the reopening of department stores, shopping centers, and large retail stores to open the sale of electrical appliances because the electrical appliances are used to facilitate people's lives. However, the shopping centers, the large retail stores and the stores selling the electrical goods must strictly follow disease prevention measures as specified by the government, including
 1. Cleaning by wiping the surfaces and waste disposal every day
 2. Staff, operators, employees, including customers must wear surgical masks or cloth masks
 3. Those persons under item 2 must check their body temperature and wash hands with soap, alcohol gel, or antiseptic before entering the stores. In which the department stores, the shopping centers, the large retailers must arrange places for hand washing, soap, alcohol gel, or antiseptic for such persons as well and
 4. Control the number of customers so as not to be crowded from 24 April 2020 onwards.
- The Ministry of Commerce with the private sector will embark on a campaign for "Commercial projects to reduce the price of rice for helping the people" by reducing the price of rice consisting of 7 types of rice and 18 brands for a total of 104 items. The highest discount will be reduced up to 50%. The reduced prices start from today until at least June 30, 2020. Also, the five department stores that are distributors of rice bags with reduced prices, are 1. Big C Supercenter 2. Siam Makro 3. Tesco Lotus 4. Tops Market and 5. The Mall. Soon, there will be other consumer products coming for sale. This measure is to help people's lives during the epidemic crisis and reduce the cost of living of the people.
- The Financial Consumer Protection Center, Bank of Thailand released the “ทางด่วนแก้หนี้” channel to service the people and businesses which would like to restructure bank loans. If they need more help, they can inform their needs to the bank. This channel is an additional channel for the people who can not contact banks or go to the bank during social distancing measures or people who can contact and request to restructure loan bank but whose minimum rate of is not enough.

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives prepared to offer the measure which helps the farmers to the Ministry of Finance. According to the plan, 9 million farmers who registered will receive 5,000 Baht per month during three months or 15,000 Baht per farmer registration.
- The Governor of Phitsanulok, Abbot of Watchantawantok Temple, District Chief of Mueang Phitsanulok District and the Mayor of Phitsanulok City Municipality help their people to redeem the tool supplies that were pawned at pawn-shops of the Phitsanulok Municipality 1 (no more than 1,000 Baht) to use in their households and professions. Next, Phitsanulok province helps the people who are trishaw drivers. The next measure is helping the barbers, hairdressers, traditional massage therapists, people who have low incomes and people who are eligible for help that were decided by the district chief.
- The Village. Health Volunteers or “AOR-SOR-MOR” and the Tung-na-oak Promoting Hospital, Yasothon province set up a medicine delivery operation via “grab Drug” campaign to service for patients and reduce the crowds of people in the hospital and prevent COVID-19 outbreak.
- The Ministry of Public Health, Department of Disease Control together with the Department of Medical Sciences and Bamrasnaradura Infectious Diseases Institute (BIDI) developed a COVID-19 test kit to test the saliva of high and low risk people in close contact groups. This test kit can accelerate the investigation of COVID-19 cases in the community from active case finding and for asymptomatic cases to receive early treatment. These are implemented in communities, especially in crowded communities and entry/exit ports of Thailand. The patient under investigation (PUI) criteria are fever, respiratory symptoms. Ramathibodi Hospital has conducted a research and found that the results are accurate for the throat and nasal swab method of sample collection for testing people that come to receive treatment in a medical facility. It is as effective as the throat and nasal swab methods of RT-PCR, in many countries. The advantages of detecting the virus this way is that it is 1) cheaper, 2) people can collect samples by themselves and 3) there is no need to use PPE.

4. Risk Communication to the Public

- The measures including disease screening, isolation, quarantine or quarantine for observation to control and prevent the disease are implemented among passengers departing from areas or countries affected by COVID-19.
- In cases where it is necessary to make contact with other people, please wear a mask and maintain a distance of at least 1 meter between yourself and the other person when interacting with others. It is also recommended to only make contact with people for a short period.
- Regularly wash hands with water and soap or use alcohol gel. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands.
- Do not use or share personal stuff with others (i.e. handkerchiefs, glasses, and towels) since pathogens causing respiratory disease can be transmitted to other people through secretions.
- Avoid eating raw food.