

Thailand Report on January 23, 2020

1. International Situation

January 5, 2020 - The People's Republic of China reported the total number of pneumonia cases under investigation for infection by novel coronavirus 2019 (2019-nCoV) to be 59, including 41 confirmed cases. On January 22, 2020, there were 258 confirmed cases including 15 confirmed cases of medical personnel and 9 deaths. Most of them are 25 – 89 years old with symptoms including fever, chest tightness and shortness of breath. Some patients have a history of going to the South China Seafood Wholesale Market and some people have said they did not visit the market. In addition, The People's Republic of China stated that novel coronavirus 2019 (2019-nCoV) is capable of spreading from person to person. On January 23, 2020 there were 571 confirmed cases, including 371 cases in Wuhan and 200 cases across cities in the People's Republic of China (Guangdong, Beijing, Shanghai, Zhejiang, Chongqing, Tianjin, Sichuan, Jiangxi, Henan, Shandong, Yunnan and Hunan). 95 cases are in critical condition, 17 have died and 5,897 close contacts are being monitored.

In addition, there are six confirmed cases outside of The People's Republic of China in the United States, Macao, Taiwan, South Korean, Japan and Hong Kong along with suspected cases as follows:

January 21, 2020 - January 21, 2020 – The United States found one pneumonia case confirmed for infection with 2019-nCoV. This patient had travel history to Wuhan.

January 21, 2020 – Hong Kong identified 118 travelers from Wuhan who met the criteria for investigation. 81 people had viral infections other than the novel coronavirus as confirmed by laboratory examination. On January 23, 2020 a 56 year-old patient was identified as a confirmed case. This patient had travel history to Wuhan and still remains in the hospital.

January 21, 2020 – Macao identified one pneumonia case confirmed for infection with 2019-nCoV. This 52 year-old woman had travel history to Wuhan.

January 21, 2020 – Singapore identified seven pneumonia cases suspected with infection of the novel coronavirus. Six patients were not positive for novel coronavirus as confirmed by laboratory examination.

January 21, 2020 - Taiwan identified eight patients who met the criteria for investigation and one confirmed case.

January 20, 2020 - The Republic of Korea found one pneumonia case who was confirmed with infection of the novel coronavirus. This patient had travel history to Wuhan.

January 19, 2020 - The Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal found one pneumonia case suspected of infection with the novel coronavirus. Also, 29 close contacts were followed up and are waiting for laboratory results.

January 16, 2020 – Vietnam reported two pneumonia cases suspected of infection with the novel coronavirus. Currently, the patients are being observed in the hospital and close contacts are being followed-up.

January 15, 2020 – Japan confirmed one pneumonia case of 2019-nCoV in a 30 year-old man. He became ill on January 3, 2020 and was admitted to the hospital on January 10, 2020, one week after returning to Japan with fever and cough symptoms. He has since improved and was discharged from the hospital. There was a reported infection among his family members but there were no reported infections among medical personnel.

2. International Precaution

The People's Republic of China reported the genome of Novel Coronavirus 2019 or nCoV 2019 in GenBank® on January 11, 2020. On January 21, 2020, the Wuhan City Health Committee began implementing the screening protocol at the airport, train stations, and the harbor. On January 23, 2020, the government closed the city, cancelled flights and public transportation from Wuhan City to other areas, and urged the public to wear a mask if living in the city while warning outsiders not to go to Wuhan City.

Countries and administrative regions such as the U.S., Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, South Korea, and the Philippines have taken surveillance measures by screening travelers who depart from Wuhan, China for fever and respiratory symptoms. Moreover, they have notified all passengers to take precautions and protect themselves from infection.

On January 15, 2020, the Republic of China (Taiwan) announced that 2019-nCoV is a Communicable Disease Type 5 along with Yellow Fever, SARS, Influenza, MERS, and Marburg Virus Disease. Moreover, they have notified prevention precautions to the public.

On January 16, 2020, Japan asked for all hospitals to cooperate by sending all patient information of those who departed from Wuhan, China. Furthermore, they urged health providers to follow the treatment guidelines and monitor close contacts.

On January 18, 2020, researcher from the Imperial College London approximated the number of people who leave China from Wuhan to be around 3,300 people per day. Furthermore, the researcher estimated that there is one nCoV case out of every 600 Wuhan people who leave the country.

On January 21, 2020, the U.S. increased its implementation of fever and respiratory symptom screening in passengers who depart from Wuhan, China in five airports including San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, and adding Atlanta and Chicago. The situation has been scaled up to be an Immediate Health Risk and the Emergency Response System has been set up to develop disease management and diagnosis guidelines to detect the virus.

3. The Disease Situation in Thailand

From January 3-23, 2020, the Department of Disease Control has been implementing its surveillance protocol by fever screening of travelers from all direct flights from Wuhan, China to the Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Chiang Mai, Phuket and Krabi airports, with the screening protocol starting at Krabi Airport started on January 17, 2020. Among 136 flights, 21,374 passengers and aircrew members were screened for respiratory symptoms and febrile illness. On January 23, 2020 they found seven passengers who met the criteria of patients under investigation (PUI), raising the total number of PUI to 53 people. Of those, 22 PUI were detected from the airport screening. Twenty persons sought medical services on their own at private hospitals, eight at government hospitals and three at Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute. Twenty PUIs are admitted at hospitals, including 10 at government hospitals (Nakhon Pathom, Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Chonburi, Phuket and Songkhla), eight at Bamrasnaradura Infectious Diseases Institute and two at a private hospital. None of them had any severe complications. 33 cases recovered from their illnesses and returned to their homes. A laboratory result identified the novel coronavirus 2019 in four cases. The etiologic agents for the other cases were identified in the final diagnoses as Influenza A virus (9 cases), Influenza B virus (9 cases), Influenza C virus (1 case), Adenovirus (1 case), Coronavirus OC43 (1 case), Streptococcus pneumoniae (1 case), Bronchitis (3 cases), Pharyngitis (2 cases), common cold (1 case) and RSV infection (1 case). There are 20 cases in which laboratory results are pending.

4. Thailand Precaution

The Department of Disease Control (DDC), Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), Thailand has scaled up the Emergency Operations Center to Level 3 to closely monitor the ongoing situation both at the national and international levels. The MOPH has also strengthened the surveillance system by screening travelers from Wuhan for viral pneumonia by strictly thermal scanning passengers for detecting fever and respiratory symptoms at Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Chiang Mai, Krabi, and Phuket international airports. Moreover, surveillance and preparedness to respond to emerging infectious diseases have been enhanced in the government and private hospitals, and areas of tourist attractions. There is ongoing cooperation between the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism and Sport, the Royal Thai Police, and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation. Furthermore, the English situation reports and related information sheets were disseminated through the DDC Viral pneumonia 2019 website (<https://ddc.moph.go.th/viralpneumonia/eng/index.html>). The Travel Alert for the coronavirus outbreak has now been raised to level 3. MOPH recommend travelers to avoid all nonessential travel to outbreak areas.

5. Risk Communication to the Public

- The novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) can be prevented using the principles for respiratory disease prevention, i.e. washing hands, wearing masks and avoiding contact with patients who have a respiratory disease.
- People can still travel to China, however, it is recommended to avoid visiting crowded places and making contact with patients who have respiratory symptoms. If this is unavoidable, people should wear a mask.
- If anyone has symptoms including coughing, sneezing, panting or runny nose within 14 days after departing from Wuhan, China, please seek medical care at the hospital immediately and inform the doctor regarding the history of recent travel to China
- It is recommended to avoid visiting markets selling carcasses or live animals. If touching or handling live animals, people should wear gloves.
- Regularly wash hands with water and soap or use alcohol gel. It is also recommended to avoid using your hands to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Do not use or share personal stuff with others (i.e. handkerchief, glasses, and towels) since pathogens causing respiratory disease can be transmitted to other people through secretions.
- It is recommended to avoid eating uncooked food.