

Thailand situation update on 18 February 2020

1. International Situation

On **31 December 2019**, there were 27 patients confirmed with pneumonia caused by the **novel coronavirus 2019** in the People's Republic of China. On **18 February 2020**, there were a total of 73,424 confirmed cases of the **disease referred to as COVID-19** around the world in 27 countries and two Special Administrative Regions of the People's Republic of China. The details are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: International Cases Confirmed for Infection by coronavirus disease starting in 2019 (COVID-19) on 18 February 2020

No.	Country/Administrative Region	Confirmed cases	Additional Confirmed cases	Patients in critical condition	Death
1	The People's Republic of China	72,438	1,885	11,741	1,869
2	Japan	66	1	-	-
3	Hong Kong	61	3	7	1
4	The Republic of China (Taiwan)	22	1	-	1
5	France	12	-	-	1
6	Philippines	3	-	-	1
7	Singapore	77	2	4	-
8	Thailand	35	-	2	-
9	South Korea	31	1	-	-
10	Malaysia	22	-	-	-
11	Vietnam	16	-	-	-
12	Germany	16	-	-	-
13	Australia	15	-	-	-
14	The United States	15	-	-	-
15	The Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China	10	-	-	-
16	The United Kingdom	9	-	-	-

No.	Country/Administrative Region	Confirmed cases	Additional Confirmed cases	Patients in critical condition	Death
17	The United Arab Emirates	9	1	1	-
18	Canada	8	-	-	-
19	India	3	-	-	-
20	Italy	3	-	2	-
21	Russia	2	-	-	-
22	Spain	2	-	-	-
23	Sri Lanka	1	-	-	-
24	Cambodia	1	-	-	-
25	Finland	1	-	-	-
26	Nepal	1	-	-	-
27	Sweden	1	-	-	-
28	Belgium	1	-	-	-
29	Egypt	1	-	-	-
30	International Conveyance	542	88	-	-
Total		73,424	1,983	11,795	1,874

Reference: <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

On 15 February 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that the name of disease is "COVID-19" (pronounced: co-vid-nineteen) deriving from "Coronavirus disease 2019."

From passenger screening on the Japanese cruise ship, Diamond Princess, 3,700 passengers and crew members are temporarily quarantined off the port of Yokohama for 14 days. The total number of patients with COVID-19 on the cruise ship is **542**. On 14 February 2020, there was an announcement that the quarantine of the passengers on board the cruise ship will cease on 19 February 2020. **On 18 February 2020, the Government of Japan stated that the passengers and crew members on the cruise ship that were quarantined outside Japan have been tested for the virus that causes COVID-19. Because many countries will move their citizens from the cruise ship. It was stated on 18 February 2020, that passengers with negative laboratory results will be allowed to disembark the cruise ship on 19 February 2020. People who are close contacts with those who have a positive laboratory result will be quarantined for an additional 14 days.** Canada is

preparing a charter plane to take Canadian citizens, who were quarantined on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, back to Canada. They will be screened for symptoms before they go back to Canada. If someone has symptoms, they will not be allowed to board the airplane. If they do not have symptoms, when they arrive in Canada they will be quarantined for investigation for 14 days. Canadian consular officers are following the situation on the Diamond Princess cruise ship and contacting impacted families. The consular officers are working closely with Japanese officers to respond to individual needs of Canadian passengers and crew members. **On 18 February 2020, there were 256 Canadians on the cruise ship and 32 Canadians have been tested for the virus that causes COVID-19.**

Australia - Scott John Morrison, Prime Minister of Australia confirmed that on 19 February 2020, Australia made preparations for a plane to take more than 200 Australians on the cruise ship from Japan to Australia.

Israel – Israel is considering to prepare a flight from Japan to Israel for people who have been tested in Japan

South Korea – South Korea announced that they will take more than 200 of their citizens from the Diamond Princess cruise ship who have been tested in Japan.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China – Hong Kong will take their citizens to move out from the Diamond Princess cruise ship.

The United States – The U.S. will take more than 300 of their citizens to move out from the Diamond Princess cruise ship and everyone will be quarantined for 14 days

Cambodia screened the passengers who came with the Westerdam cruise ship that docked at the port of Sihanoukville. They found 20 passengers with symptoms and laboratory results did not find people who were infected by the virus that causes COVID-19. On 17 February 2020, 1,277 passengers and crew members have started to return to their countries. Currently, 980 passengers and crew members still remain on the Westerdam cruise ship.

Malaysia reported one passenger who came with the Westerdam cruise ship was infected by the virus that causes COVID-19. She is an 83 year-old American woman who traveled to Malaysia with 144 passengers and crew members.

Thailand increased the screening measures for travelers who have a history with the Westerdam cruise ship. They found two Thai people who traveled back to Thailand by airplane who do not have symptoms and laboratory results have not found the virus that causes COVID-19. The first one is a worker on the cruise ship and currently, the worker is under home quarantine. The other one is a traveler and currently, she is traveling to Germany with her husband. Most of the other approximately 20 Thai people who were on the cruise ship are workers and will travel to Thailand when their employment contracts run out between 28 and 31 March 2020. They plan to travel to Thailand by airplane.

2. International Precaution

Common Measures

The World Health Organization (WHO) conducted an Emergency Committee meeting and officially announced COVID-19 to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) after the dramatic spread in many countries, for protection and to stop further outbound spread. The virus has become a burden on many public health systems. Meanwhile, WHO did not declare any restrictions on trade or travel to China.

Flights which depart and return to China were canceled in many countries and administrative regions including The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's

Republic of China, The Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, Republic of China (Taiwan), Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Maldives, United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and most of the countries in EU, Africa, and the Middle East.

Some countries announced the closure of areas bordering China, including Russia who announced the closure of the China-Russia border checkpoint. Followed with Mongolia, North Korea, Nepal, and Two administrative states Macau and Hong Kong.

Many countries and administrative regions including Hong Kong, South Korea, New Zealand, Bangladesh, France, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia recommend their citizens to avoid visits to China, and violators will not be allowed to return to their country.

Restrictions of Chinese travelers from Wuhan, Hubei, and mainland of China were made on travel to Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, Iraq, Australia New Zealand, Indonesia, and Maldives, while Papua New Guinea has set restrictions for all travelers from Asia.

The Philippines, Czech Republic, Indonesia, South Korea, India, and Myanmar have restrained visa approval for Chinese tourists.

Countries and administrative regions including The Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, Macau and Thailand require travelers from China to show medical certification upon arrival that shows they are not infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. In addition, a medical certificate is required to obtain a visa approval for travel in Bangladesh.

Travelers from China, Hong Kong and Macau must be quarantined in the Republic of China, Singapore and Philippines.

Russia and Vietnam have stopped accepting Chinese laborers.

Specific Measures in countries

China is still closing cities to reduce the spread of novel coronavirus and stopping public transportation services such as buses, underground trains, ships, trains and airplanes in 17 cities including Wuhan, Huanggang, Chibi, Èzhōu, Zhījiāng, Xinjiang, Xiantao, Enshi, Huangni, Xianning, Guangzhou, Lixuan, Tianjin, Jingzhou, Taizhou, Hangzhou and Xiaogan. The Wuhan government has temporarily converted the Hongsan Gym, International Convention Center, and Wuhan Cultural Center into a 3,400-bed hospital overnight to support the dramatic increase of patients. Temporary screening stations were established in many areas for vehicles departing from Hubei. Moreover, China released the COVID-19 prevention measures for travelers who are staying in China in six languages including English, Russian, French, German, Japanese, and Korean.

On 15 February 2020, increases cleaning measures in the financial sector by using ultraviolet light and heat to kill germs that may be on banknotes then will be preserved for 7-14 days before use. Moreover, there is increased use of paper pads to cover elevator buttons and campaigns for public bus drivers to clean their own cars everyday.

On 17 February 2020, the Hubei government announced that their people should not leave their households or rooms on weekends if not necessary. An online education platform was launched and broadcasted at the primary class-level to substitute classroom education.

On 18 February 2020, public health officers encouraged recovered COVID-19 patients to donate their blood to extract plasma to treat the severe cases. Moreover, China has cancelled athletic competitions. Some buildings in Shanghai were renovated to produce hygienic and surgical masks to support stock during the crisis. They can produce around 250,000 masks per day.

On 11 February 2020, **The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China** asked the cooperation from their people to remain in their households as long as the COVID-19 outbreak lasts to prevent contact with the disease. On 13 February 2020, They postponed the opening of the academic semester to mid-March 2020. Recently, on 16 February, the government brought Hong Kong citizens back to their homeland and have set 14 days for quarantine at a designated place.

Singapore is implementing temperature screening at work places and cleaning frequently touched areas. The Department of Land Transport has provided hygienic masks to 1) people who have symptoms, do not have masks, and who visit their doctors, and 2) taxi drivers, rental car drivers. Moreover, screening stations were established and provide daily stickers to make sure people have been screened. On 16 February, SG Clean was produced to raise awareness and improve sanitation and health services. On 17 February, a 14 day quarantine measure was officially announced by the Singapore government for Singaporeans who are returning from China. These measurements will be enforced on 18 February 2020.

On 18 February 2020, random calls were made and checkpoints were set up for Singaporeans and non-resident long stay visa-holders, after the announcement of the measures for travelers to quarantine themselves within 14 days of return from China. The effective date is 18 February 2020, 11:59 p.m. Foreign immigrants who violate this policy will have their visas suspended. Singaporeans who violate this will be prosecuted according to the Infectious Disease Act and must pay a fine of not more than \$ 10,000 or imprisonment of not more than 6 months or both.

The Republic of China (Taiwan) has required that people report disease events. If people violate this policy, they will be fined NTD 150,000 (about 150,000 baht).

The Philippines have postponed the ASEAN Para Games (APG) from 20-28 March 2020 to May or June 2020.

On 12 February 2020, **North Korea** stopped flights and trains in border countries and announced the quarantine measure for Chinese travelers to be 30 days.

Vietnam closed Son Loi City, north of Hanoi to quarantine and stop the transmission after finding six cases in that community. (Son Loi is a first city outside China that has been closed)

On 13 February 2020, the EU planned a border country surveillance and risk analysis in response to finding confirmed cases in European countries.

The U.S. CDC will use the Influenza Like Illness (ILI) protocol to find patients under investigation (PUI) of COVID-19. Furthermore, the U.S. Government announced to evacuate U.S. citizens in China back home.

Japan has screened more than 100 citizens who are close contacts with taxi drivers. On 17 February, the emperor's birthday event was cancelled.

On February 18, 2020, plans were made to test the use of HIV drugs to treat patients with coronary virus infection due to the increasing number of patients. The Tokyo Marathon event on 1 March 2020 was cancelled. The Japanese government alerted their citizens who are traveling in China to protect themselves with measures on level 1 and 2, but in Hubei on level 3.

Israel officially announced a 14 day home quarantine is required for travelers from China, Thailand, Singapore, Singapore and Macao. This policy has been enforced since 16 February 2020.

3. The Disease Situation in Thailand

3.1 Surveillance protocol for COVID-2019

From 3-23 January 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. On 24 January, the screening protocol began to be implemented at Chiang Rai Airport. The screening protocol has expanded to cover all arrival and departure flights at Suvarnabhumi airport since 29 January 2020. The accumulated data, until 17 February 2020, showed 1,236 flights and 113,201 passengers and air crew members from China were screened for the disease. For the screening protocol outside the airports, there were 7,329 people from 345 ships arriving from affected areas that were screened at five sea ports (Bangkok, Laem Chabang, Chiang Saen, Phuket and Samui) from 1 January 1 to 17 February 2020.

The screening implementation at Suvarnabhumi Airport has also been applied among arrival travelers from all countries for both arrival and departure flights. From 29 January to 17 February 2020, an accumulated number of screening people was 1,907,923 and found 12 of those people met a case definition criteria of PUI. There were 76,158 people screened at five seaports. Since February 1, 2020, there were 511,441 people that were screened at 34 ground ports. A total of 44,165 people renewing their passports at the Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty at Chaengwattana Road were also screened from 30 January to 17 February 2020.

Among 138 Thai people traveling back from Wuhan, China since 4 February 2020, there were four PUI and all of them were referred for treatment at Queen Sirikit Naval Hospital. The laboratory testing of all PUI showed negative results for the virus causing COVID-19. All four PUI were in good health conditions on 16 February 2020. One person got sick during the quarantine period and the laboratory results showed positive results for the virus causing COVID-19 and the patient is being treated at Chonburi Hospital. This patient is still in good health. However, the virus causing COVID-19 was still detected from the laboratory testing on 17 February 2020 and the sample was collected to repeat the laboratory testing on 18 February 2020.

3.2 Situation of patients with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 in Thailand.

On 18 February, 2020 at 18.00, 75 additional people met the criteria for patients under investigation and an accumulated number of 10 PUIs in Bangkok (between January 27 to February 12, 2020) raising the 85 additional PUI for today as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: 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)	957
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detected from the airport screening (Suvarnabhumi : 40, Don Mueang: 10, Phuket: 6, Chiang Mai: 1, U-Tapao: 1) 	58

Situation	Total number of PUI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sought medical services on their own at hospitals (Private hospitals: 479 cases, Government hospitals: 410 cases) 	889
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notified by hotel residences, the Erawan Medical Center, local universities and tour groups 	10
Total number of people who met the criteria of patients under investigation (PUI)	957
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under treatment (Private hospitals: 34 cases, Government hospitals: 66 cases) 	100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovered from their illnesses and discharged from the hospitals 	856
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of symptoms at OPD/PUI's home 	1
Confirmed cases	35
Recovered and discharged from hospitals	17
Being treatment	18
Severe cases	2
Deaths	0

4. Thailand Precautions

On 22 January 2020, The Department of Disease Control (DDC), Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), Thailand 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, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Interior, and security agencies. The MOPH also coordinates with WHO and ASEAN member states to exchange information and measures. Thailand has shared experiences in surveillance to neighboring countries to demonstrate how Thailand can efficiently implement prevention and control of emerging communicable diseases with the highest standards.

On 23 January 2020, The Travel Alert for the coronavirus outbreak was raised to Level 3. The MOPH recommends that travelers avoid all non-essential travel to outbreak areas. Furthermore, the English situation reports and related information sheets were disseminated through the DDC Viral Pneumonia 2019 website (<https://ddc.moph.go.th/viralpneumonia/intro.php>).

On 3 February 2020 a meeting of the National Committee for Emerging Infectious Disease Preparedness, Prevention and Response was convened by the Thai Prime Minister. He has instructed all relevant agencies and all provinces to take all comprehensive measures to prevent COVID-19 in every part of the country. All provinces in Thailand were requested to regularly report the results of their work.

5. Risk Communication to the Public

- The novel coronavirus COVID-19 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 should avoid travel to China, affected areas, local transmission area, and 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.