

Thailand situation update on 21 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 **21 February 2020**, there were a total of 76,792 confirmed cases of the **disease referred to as COVID-19** around the world in 29 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 21 February 2020

| No. | Country/Administrative Region | Confirmed cases | Additional Confirmed cases | Patients in critical condition | Deaths |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | The People's Republic of China | 75,467 | 889 | 12,017 | 2,236 |
| 2 | Diamond Princess | 634 | 13 | 27 | 2 |
| 3 | South Korea | 204 | 100 | - | 1 |
| 4 | Japan | 97 | 10 | 4 | 1 |
| 5 | Singapore | 85 | 1 | 4 | - |
| 6 | Hong Kong | 69 | 2 | 6 | 2 |
| 7 | Thailand | 35 | - | 2 | - |
| 8 | The United States | 27 | 12 | - | - |
| 9 | The Republic of China (Taiwan) | 26 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 10 | Malaysia | 22 | - | - | - |
| 11 | Australia | 17 | 2 | - | - |
| 12 | Germany | 16 | - | - | - |
| 13 | Vietnam | 16 | - | - | - |

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 Situation

by Emergency Operation Center, Department of Disease Control

| No. | Country/Administrative Region | Confirmed cases | Additional Confirmed cases | Patients in critical condition | Deaths |
|-------|---|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| 14 | France | 12 | - | - | 1 |
| 15 | The Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China | 10 | - | - | - |
| 16 | Canada | 9 | 1 | - | - |
| 17 | The United Kingdom | 9 | - | - | - |
| 18 | The United Arab Emirates | 9 | - | 1 | - |
| 19 | Italy | 6 | 3 | 3 | - |
| 20 | Iran | 5 | - | - | 2 |
| 21 | Philippines | 3 | - | - | 1 |
| 22 | India | 3 | - | - | - |
| 23 | Russia | 2 | - | - | - |
| 24 | Spain | 2 | - | - | - |
| 25 | Belgium | 1 | - | - | - |
| 26 | Cambodia | 1 | - | - | - |
| 27 | Egypt | 1 | - | - | - |
| 28 | Finland | 1 | - | - | - |
| 29 | Nepal | 1 | - | - | - |
| 30 | Sri Lanka | 1 | - | - | - |
| 31 | Sweden | 1 | - | - | - |
| Total | | 76,792 | 1,035 | 12,065 | 2,247 |

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 **634**. On 19 February 2020, 600 passengers were discharged from the quarantine after they had laboratory results that did not find the infection. The other passengers will be discharged after they get their laboratory results in about 1-2 days. People who are close contacts with those who have a positive laboratory result will be quarantined for an additional 14 days. Canada, Australia and The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China are preparing to take their citizens who were quarantined on the Diamond Princess cruise ship back to their countries and when they arrive in their countries, they will be quarantined for investigation for 14 days. On 20 February 2020, there were two deaths who were infected by 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 preparing a flight from Japan to Israel for people who have not been tested in Japan.

South Korea – South Korea announced that they will take more than 400 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 by Mongolia, North Korea, Nepal, and two administrative regions, 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

Singapore

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. On 20 February 2020, the Ministry of Labor distributed the guidelines for suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 to workplace owners in Singapore.

On 21 February, Singapore announced that Singaporeans who returned from the Diamond Princess need to quarantine themselves to prevent an outbreak.

In South Korea, Seoul has rejected receiving travelers from Hubei City, China. Moreover, the government has been strictly implementing the prevention and control measures to boost the economy which has been affected by COVID-19.

On 21 February, South Korea said that they would not allow all soldiers to leave their military bases after three cases who were infected with SARS-COV-2 were confirmed after they returned from Daegu. Currently the investigation is in progress for people in Daegu and Cheongdo . Moreover, the government banned the religious assemblies of the Shincheonji group and restricted entry to the Seoul Shopping Center Plaza, Cheonggye Plaza and Gwanghwamun Plaza. Those who violate this measure will be fined up to 3 million won (2,485 USD). Daegu and Cheongdo were designated as "Special Administrative Zones" and there are plans to send staff military doctors and to prepare temporary detention facilities for those who are detained.

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, Zhījīāng, Xinjiang, Xiantao, Enshi, Huangni, Xianning, Guangzhou, Lixuan, Tianjin, Jingzhou, Taizhou, Hangzhou and Xiaogan. 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 19 February 2020, the antiviral drug, Favilavir, secured approval from the National Medical Products Administration of China to treat COVID-19. It is to be the first official medicine to treat the COVID-19 cases in China.

On 20 February 2020, the biggest rental car service in China - Didi Co. Ltd. set up partitions in their vehicles between driver and passengers. Driver temperature screening and free mask distributions were located in 148 cities across China.

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.

The Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, on 20 February 2020, allowed casinos to reopen after the COVID-19 outbreak, as long as they follow the measures.

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.

On 20 February 2020, the U.S implemented thermal scanners and provided health recommendation cards to passengers at the airport.

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.

On 20 February 2020, the Japanese government asked for the cooperation of the citizens and industry owners to reconsider upcoming events, provide alcohol gel, or reject attendance from participants who have fever or respiratory symptoms to reduce the risk of spread.

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.

On 20 February 2020, Israel made plans to use the Shmu'el Harofe Hospital in Be'er Ya'akov as the designated isolation unit to treat COVID-19 cases and to close attractions and hotels under consideration.

The United Kingdom released health recommendations to prevent COVID-19 among students, officers, and parents and released prevention measure guidelines for case investigations and surveillance in suspected and confirmed cases. Moreover, they provided important recommendations

for travelers who departed from affected areas with local transmission, and surveillance for countries mostly in the Asia Pacific. Thailand was included as one of the countries in the list. Some hotels nearby Heathrow Airport were designated as quarantine areas for suspected passengers.

Russia temporarily rejected all Chinese people, effective as of 20 February 2020.

Germany sent 8.7 tons of equipment including PPE, medicine, and medical supplies to China, valued at around \$162,000.

Mongolia expects to open the academic semester at the end of March 2020. They have stopped sending coal to China until 2 March 2020 after they found a confirmed case near the Mongolia-China border crossing area.

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 accumulated data, until 20 February 2020, showed 1,369 flights and 176,745 passengers and air crew members from China were screened for the disease. For the screening protocol outside the airports, there were 7,672 people from 397 ships arriving from affected areas that were screened at six sea ports (Bangkok, Laem Chabang, Chiang Saen, Phuket, Samui and Krabi) between January 1 and February 20, 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 20 February 2020, an accumulated number of screening people was 2,146,851 and found 58 of those people met a case definition criteria of PUI. There were 81,818 people screened at six seaports. Since February 1, 2020, there were 548,994 people that were screened at 34 ground ports. A total of 50,202 people renewing their passports at the Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty at Chaengwattana Road were also screened from 30 January to 20 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 and the virus causing COVID-19 was not detected from the laboratory testing on 21 February 2020. The patient is going to be discharged from the hospital and return home on 22 February 2020.

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

On 21 February, 2020 at 18.00, 101 additional people met the criteria for patients under investigation raising the total 1,252 PUI 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) | 1,252 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detected from the airport screening (Suvarnabhumi : 40, Don Mueang: 12, Phuket: 6, Chiang Mai: 1, U-Tapao: 1) | 60 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sought medical services on their own at hospitals (Private hospitals: 647 cases, Government hospitals: 534 cases) | 1,181 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notified by hotel residences, the Erawan Medical Center, local universities and tour groups | 11 |
| Total number of people who met the criteria of patients under investigation (PUI) | 1,252 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under treatment (Private hospitals: 109 cases, Government hospitals: 137 cases) | 246 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovered from their illnesses and discharged from the hospitals | 1,004 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of symptoms at OPD/PUI's home | 2 |
| Confirmed cases | 35 |
| Recovered and discharged from hospitals | 20 |
| Being treatment | 15 |
| 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.

On 20 February 2020 the Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University notified guidelines for personnel to refrain from traveling to China, Macao Special Administrative Region, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, of the People's Republic of China, Republic of China (Taiwan), and the Republic of Singapore. If travel to these areas is necessary, upon return they are recommended to stop working and self-quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, travel to Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Australia and Germany should be avoided and those who traveled to these countries, upon return, should self-quarantine for 14 days.

Chulalongkorn University has announced the list of countries and administrative districts at risk of COVID-19: the Republic of Korea, Republic of China (Taiwan), People's Republic of China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, Japan, Malaysia, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Republic of Singapore. Chulalongkorn University also announced preventive measures against COVID-19 including not allowing travel to countries at risk of COVID-19. If travel to high-risk areas is necessary, when returning they have to go through screening at King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital and if they were suspected

for COVID-19, they have to take 14 days off for quarantine. Inviting foreign personnel to participate in any activity from 20 February 19 April 2020 was prohibited.

The Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University has made its first announcement regarding travel safety during the COVID-19 outbreak. Personnel who return from foreign countries, must inform their superiors and pass screening at Siriraj Hospital and avoid nonessential travel (announced on 20 February, 2020).

The Department of Consular Affairs requested Thai people in China (except Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China) to consider leaving China while there are flights available. Also, Thai people should refrain from traveling to China, if not essential. Thai people living in China should monitor the ongoing situation and strictly follow the guidance of the Chinese government to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The Royal Thai Embassy, Seoul announced a pneumonia outbreak caused by the novel strain of coronavirus in the Republic of Korea (South Korea) warning all Thai people in the Republic of Korea to avoid travel to areas where many people have been infected. For those who live in Korea, they should avoid traveling to high-risk areas or mass gatherings. Be careful and maintain good health. For those who show symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, fever, or respiratory illness or who have family members suspected of being infected, seek a medical provider for diagnosis. People are encouraged to wear surgical masks that cover their mouth and nose and closely monitor the situation. People can contact the Department of Disease Control, Republic of Korea, at the telephone number 1339 or the Immigration Bureau of the Republic of Korea (announced 21 February 2020).

The Thai Red Cross Society has announced protective measures against the spread of COVID-19 for Thai Red Cross Society personnel. People who show symptoms have to wear hygienic masks and frequently wash their hands. Personnel without symptoms are urged to clean their hands regularly and they are not allowed to take days off for travelling or transit to countries or administrative district at risk of COVID-19: Republic of Korea (South Korea), the People's Republic of China, Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, , Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, Japan, Republic of China (Taiwan), Malaysia, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Republic of Singapore. In case of personnel who have approval or permission for days off to travel to risky countries or areas that were mentioned earlier, before the announcement was made, should refrain or postpone the trip.

5. Risk Communication to the Public

- The novel coronavirus disease (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 travelling to China and countries with local transmission, 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.