

Thailand situation update on 3 March 2020

1. International Situation

On 3 March 2020, there were a total of 91,333 confirmed cases, 7,098 patients were in critical condition and there were 3,120 deaths from COVID-19 around the world in 73 countries, two Special Administrative Regions of the People's Republic of China and on the Diamond Princess cruise ship. There have been 80,262 confirmed cases in the People's Republic of China (including the Hong Kong and the Macao Special Administrative Regions of People's Republic of China), 5,186 confirmed cases in South Korea, 2,036 confirmed cases in Italy, 1,501 confirmed cases in Iran, 274 confirmed cases in Japan, 108 confirmed cases in Singapore, 191 confirmed cases in France, 165 confirmed cases in Germany and 41 confirmed cases in Taiwan.

Notable Issues in Foreign Countries on 3 March 2020

- The People's Republic of China - The first temporary hospital that was built in response to the COVID-19 outbreak was closed after the last group of patients (34 people) recovered and returned to their homes.
- The French Republic - After the French government announced that they entered Phase 2 of the COVID-19 outbreak, they scaled up measures including temporarily closing schools in outbreak areas until 14 March 2020. People are asked to stay in their homes, not gather in large groups, and check their body temperatures twice per day. There are still no measures to close cities or prohibit people from entering and exiting. Moreover, the public should refrain from greeting each other by shaking or holding hands. Finally, buying a mask requires a doctor's prescription to prevent masks from being out of stock.
- The United States - 3M Co. Ltd. in Aberdeen, South Dakota is filling the surge in demand for N95 masks by hiring employees to work overtime and increasing work to 7 days per week in order to speed up the production.
- Republic of Korea - South Korea set up COVID-19 screening stations for suspected cases in many cities such as Seoul, Incheon, and Sejong City and plans to set up stations in other cities to decrease the chance of spreading the pathogen.
- Republic of Indonesia - Indonesia is planning to build a hospital to treat COVID-19 cases following the news of its first confirmed cases.

2. The Disease Situation in Thailand

2.1 Surveillance Protocol for COVID-19

The accumulated data from 3 January to 2 March 2020, showed that among 21,217 flights, there were a total of 3,169,194 passengers screened. Among those, 102 people met the case definition criteria of PUI. For the screening protocol outside the airports, 103,186 people from 541 ships were screened at sea ports between 1 January and 2 March 2020. There were two PUI among that group. There were 720,770 people screened at ground ports from 1 February to 2 March 2020. A total of 75,697 people renewing their passports at the Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty at Chaengwattana Road were also screened from 30 January to 3 March 2020.

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

On 3 March 2020 at 18.00, Thailand announced that 161 additional people met the criteria for patients under investigation, raising the total to 3,680 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)	3,680
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detected from the airport screening (Suvarnabhumi: 67, Don Mueang: 26, Phuket: 8, Chiang Mai: 1) 	102
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detected from seaports 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sought medical services on their own at hospitals (Private hospitals: 1,843 cases, Government hospitals: 1,703 cases) 	3,546
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notified by hotel residences, the Erawan Medical Center, local universities, tour groups and U-Tapao 	30
Total number of people who met the criteria of patients under investigation (PUI)	3,680
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergoing treatment (Private hospitals: 874 cases, Government hospitals: 671 cases) 	1,545
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovered from illnesses and discharged from the hospitals 	2,071
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of symptoms at OPD/PUI's home 	64
Confirmed cases	43
Recovered and discharged from hospitals	31
Undergoing treatment	11
Severe case	1
Death	1

There are 43 confirmed cases with the virus causing COVID-19. Among the confirmed cases, 31 cases recovered and returned home and there has been one death. Laboratory results of the other 3,637 PUI showed 2,039 negative results to the virus causing COVID-19 and results are pending for 1,598 PUI. The median age of the confirmed cases is 39 years old (ranging from 3 to 74 years old). Twenty two cases were male and 21 cases were female (ratio of male to female: 1.1:1). There were 25 Chinese cases and 18 Thai cases. Underlying diseases were found in some of those cases

including hypertension (4 cases), hypertension with cardiovascular disease (1 case), stroke (1 case), hepatitis B viral infection (1 case), and hearing loss and osteoporosis (1 case). There were 35 cases reported without any underlying disease. Three cases were detected from the screening protocol at airports, 26 cases sought medical treatment by themselves, 13 cases were tracked from case investigation and defined as close contacts and one case was detected from the group of Thai people who returned from Wuhan.

3. Thailand Precautions

- Thailand's Ministry of Finance has issued a letter about reimbursement **approval** for official travel in case of any cancellation or postponement of official travel, training programs, and meetings as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. This letter has been circulated to the provincial governors and related government agencies.
- Temperature checkpoints were set up in government buildings in Bangkok as government officers and people enter the buildings. All 437 government schools were ordered to finish **final examinations** and to end the semester by 6 March 2020. Moreover, for mass gathering events that cannot be canceled, more intense screening for prevention and control of transmission will be implemented
- The Ministry of Education has scaled up the standard of prevention and control measures for COVID-19 and coordinated with agencies under the Ministry of Education by 1) delaying scout camp for students and university students until the situation returns to normal 2) notifying personnel to follow guidelines of obtaining permission to go to countries or areas at risk for COVID-19 3) ending the semester and other activities for schools that already had final exams 4) using electronic channels/online systems for receiving/distributing grades and informing Education Area District Offices to communicate with related agencies such as provincial public health agencies and local government organizations to disinfect facilities for COVID-19 and 5) issuing letters for preventive measures of COVID-19 to private schools and instructing the schools to strictly follow the measures.

4. 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 traveling 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.
- Travelers who departed from China (including Macau and Hong Kong) and countries with ongoing local transmission (e.g. Republic of Korea, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Italy, Iran, etc) are recommended to implement self-quarantine and check their body temperature for 14 days. It is also recommended to avoid visiting public or crowded places, not share personal stuff with others and keep at least 1 meter away when making contact with others. In addition, if anyone has symptoms including coughing, sneezing, sore throat, shortness of breath and runny nose, please wear a mask and seek medical care at the hospital immediately and inform the doctor regarding your travel history.
- 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. handkerchiefs, glasses, and towels) since pathogens causing respiratory disease can be transmitted to other people through secretions.
- It is recommended to avoid eating uncooked food.