

Thailand situation update on 4 March 2020

1. International Situation

As of 4 March 2020, there were a total of 93,574 confirmed cases, 6772 patients were in critical condition and there were 3,204 deaths from COVID-19 around the world in 77 countries, two Special Administrative Regions of the People's Republic of China and on the Diamond Princess cruise ship. There have been 80,393 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), 5,621 confirmed cases in South Korea, 2,502 confirmed cases in Italy, 2,336 confirmed cases in Iran, 299 confirmed cases in Japan, 240 confirmed cases in Germany, 212 confirmed cases in France, 110 confirmed cases in Singapore and 42 confirmed cases in Taiwan.

Notable Issues in Foreign Countries on 4 March 2020

- The United States The National Basketball Association (NBA) informed their recommendations for players and staff to decrease the risk of COVID-19 and avoid touching hands with fans, avoid signing objects from fans, wash hands frequently for more than 20 seconds, close their mouths while coughing, and practice self-prevention techniques i.e. avoid people who have symptoms, stay at home when feeling sick, clean and sterilize frequently-touched equipment and surfaces.
- The United Kingdom A professor at the University of Southampton recommends frequently cleaning the screens of smartphones because germs can remain there for several weeks. The infection can spread if people touch their screens and then touch their faces.
- South Korea The Minister of Economy and Finance announced to increase the budget to support management of the COVID-19 epidemic to provide medical supplies, sickbeds, and facilities to support the patients. Moreover, public health officers are preparing the laboratory process for checking people in Daegu among those who are not involved in the activities of the religious group, because of concern over an epidemic in the community.
- The Islamic Republic of Iran Iran temporarily released prisoners to prevent the transmission of the virus causing COVID-19 in prisons. Some 54,000 prisoners were allowed to be released from prison if their laboratory results are negative and if they have bail money. However, the prisoners who are sentenced for more than 5 years are not allowed to be released.
- World Bank The World Bank has an emergency fund of \$12 billion to support all countries that are impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic i.e. developing countries and poor countries, to improve public health services for prevention and to deal with the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic. This includes supporting government operations and cooperating with the private sector in local areas to decrease the economic impact.

2. The Disease Situation in Thailand

2.1 Surveillance Protocol for COVID-19

The accumulated data from 3 January to 3 March 2020, showed that among 22,445 flights, there were a total of 3,272,785 passengers screened. Among those, 126 people met the case definition criteria of PUI. For the screening protocol outside the airports, 107,175 people from 562 ships were screened at sea ports between 1 January and 3 March 2020. There were two PUI among that group. There were 727,595 people screened at ground ports from 1 February to 3 March 2020. A total of 79,390 people renewing their passports at the Government Complex Commemorating His Translated by Office of International Cooperation, DDC Thailand

Majesty at Chaengwattana Road were also screened from 30 January to 4 March 2020. The total number of PUI from all ports is 128 people.

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

On 4 March 2020 at 18.00, Thailand announced that 215 additional people met the criteria for patients under investigation, raising the total to 3,895 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)	3,895
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detected from the airport screening (Suvarnabhumi: 67, Don Mueang: 26, Phuket: 8, Chiang Mai: 1) 	126
<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) 	3,716
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notified by hotel residences, the Erawan Medical Center, local universities, tour groups and U-Tapao 	51
Total number of people who met the criteria of patients under investigation (PUI)	3,895
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergoing treatment (Private hospitals: 874 cases, Government hospitals: 671 cases) 	1,577
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovered from illnesses and discharged from the hospitals 	2,269
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of symptoms at OPD/PUI's home 	50
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 3,852 PUI showed 2,237 negative results to the virus causing COVID-19 and results are pending for

1,615 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

- The government of Thailand has prepared measures for Thai workers returning from South Korea who passed the screening process. Upon arrival of the Thai workers returning from South Korea, they need to pass the screening procedures and need to be quarantined for 14 days at designated areas, i.e. military bases, local hospitals, hospitals in their hometown. Medical providers will be in charge of the detainees during the said period.
- The Ministry of Public Health warned that surgical masks are not intended to be used more than once and never reuse them as they can be contaminated by germs during use and can cause the spread of infection. If people want to buy surgical masks, they are recommended to buy standardized surgical masks produced from factories and to wear masks when conditions are needed.
- Siriraj Hospital has appealed people in good health for donations of Types A, B, and O blood, as its stock is inadequate
- The National Health Security Committee has agreed upon the introduction of COVID-19 into the National Health Care System (Gold Card) which covers a wide range of health care services including diseases prevention, health promotion, diagnosis, treatment and medical rehabilitation, and has also agreed in principle for using Gold Card funds to disburse the cost of COVID-19 treatment.
- The Ministry of Commerce has accelerated the production of 38 million surgical masks per month and controlled distribution of face masks for adequate supplies during the COVID-19 outbreak. Moreover, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Health recommends using cloth masks which can block droplets from other people's sneezes and coughs in order to help alleviate shortage.

The MOPH asked the public for their cooperation if they find a supplier who sells face masks with no price tag or where the price tag does not match, the customer can submit a complaint to the authorities right away.

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.