

## Thailand situation update on 5 March 2020

### 1. International Situation

As of 5 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 5 March 2020

- Italy - There was an announcement to close down schools from 5 -15 March 2020 after the COVID-19 outbreak pattern was analyzed. Schools and universities were instructed to use video conference platforms for teaching.
- The United States - A 71 year-old man with underlying conditions who was infected with SARS-CoV-2 has died and was the first COVID-19 death in the state of California. The Grand Princess cruise owner announced to stop services and immediately return to San Francisco. Moreover, the crew also recommended prevention measures and advised passengers to seek medical attention when they have symptoms. Before the passengers return to their homes, a COVID-19 test by a health care provider is required. The United States Congress approved 6.3 Million US Dollars to be allocated to COVID-19 testing tool kits for hospitals, especially in ongoing outbreak areas.
- Special Administrative Region Hong Kong - The results confirmed that a dog was infected with SARS-CoV-2 from its owner after detecting a mild virus in the dog's body. This is considered the first case that was transmitted from human to animals. However, there is no clear evidence that an infection of a pet, like a dog, can spread the disease to humans. Staff also suggest that hygienic care of the pet can help prevent the occurrence of disease.
- The People's Republic of China - A research team found that a more aggressive type of the new coronavirus had accounted for roughly 70% of the analyzed strains, while 30% had been linked to a less aggressive type. Their results indicate the development of new variations of the spike in COVID-19 cases was likely caused by mutations and natural selection rather than recombination.
- Taiwan - A man was fined 1 million TWD after his behavior of deliberately fleeing and refusing to take detention measures after returning from China as ordered by the government. This includes violating the communicable disease control law causing harm to the general public.
- Damo Academy Alibaba - The institute is developing AI systems to trap the SARS-CoV-2 virus in the body of humans. AI systems can work through CT scan machines, with 96% accuracy and the process just takes a few seconds.
- The Islamic Republic of Iran - 8% of members of parliament in Iran were infected by SARS-CoV-2. Therefore, parliament meetings were ceased, and there is no schedule for the next meeting. Parliament members are temporarily prohibited from meeting the public. Moreover, schools and universities have been closed, cultural and sports events have ceased, there is a decrease in working hours, and people who wrongly stocked up on hygiene masks and medical supplies face punishment.

## 2. The Disease Situation in Thailand

### 2.1 Surveillance Protocol for COVID-19

The accumulated data from 3 January to 4 March 2020, showed that among 23,527 flights, there were a total of 3,338,710 passengers screened. Among those, 141 people met the case definition criteria of PUI. For the screening protocol outside the airports, 107,616 people from 579 ships were screened at sea ports between 1 January and 4 March 2020. There were two PUI among that group. There were 749,187 people screened at ground ports from 1 February to 4 March 2020. A total of 83,672 people renewing their passports at the Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty at Chaengwattana Road were also screened from 30 January to 5 March 2020. The total number of PUI from all ports is 143 people.

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

On 5 March 2020 at 18.00, Thailand announced that 128 additional people met the criteria for patients under investigation, raising the total to 4,023 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
<b>Total number of people who met the criteria of patients under investigation (PUI)</b>	4,023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detected from the airport screening (Suvarnabhumi: 102, Don Mueang: 28, Phuket: 8, Chiang Mai: 3)</li> </ul>	141
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detected from seaports</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sought medical services on their own at hospitals (Private hospitals: 1,957 cases, Government hospitals: 1,872 cases)</li> </ul>	3,829
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notified by hotel residences, the Erawan Medical Center, local universities, tour groups and U-Tapao</li> </ul>	51
<b>Total number of people who met the criteria of patients under investigation (PUI)</b>	4,023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undergoing treatment (Private hospitals: 894 cases, Government hospitals: 737 cases)</li> </ul>	1,631
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recovered from illnesses and discharged from the hospitals</li> </ul>	2,352
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of symptoms at OPD/PUI's home</li> </ul>	40
<b>Confirmed cases</b>	47

Situation	Total number of PUI
Recovered and discharged from hospitals	31
Undergoing treatment	15
Severe case	1
Death	1

There are 47 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 3,976 PUI showed 2,320 negative results to the virus causing COVID-19 and results are pending for 1,656 PUI. The median age of the confirmed cases is 35 years old (ranging from 3 to 74 years old). Twenty six cases were male and 21 cases were female (ratio of male to female: 1.1:1). There were 26 Chinese cases, 20 Thai cases and one Italian case. 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. Four cases were detected from the screening protocol at airports, 29 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 Ministry of Public Health has issued the Notification of the Ministry of Public Health: Territories outside the Kingdom of Thailand defined as Disease Infected Zones of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak B.E. 2563 (2020) on March 5, 2020 include 1) The Republic of Korea 2) The People's Republic of China, including special territories Macau and Hong Kong 3) The Italian Republic and 4) The Islamic Republic of Iran. This notification shall be in effect after publication in the Royal Government Gazette.
- Vajira Hospital has stated that during the past week the use of surgical masks have tripled and the demand for protective masks has gone up dramatically. This has caused the shortage of face masks and difficulties to afford procurement of surgical face masks in the future. The hospital has decided to change its practices by giving out medical masks individually for health care workers who have to work in various departments, if the mask becomes contaminated with respiratory secretions or feces. In addition, the hospital has instructed how to make face masks made of fabric which can be inserted in surgical masks as inner filters for personnel who have low-risk of getting infection for the safety of all personnel.
- A Thai barbecue restaurant in Chiang Rai Province showed its social responsibility by closing for disinfection after a group of Thai workers who returned from South Korea went to eat Thai barbecue with their family without putting themselves into voluntary self-quarantine for 14 days in accordance with the measures that the government announced.

- MK Restaurant, Central Pinklao branch has temporarily suspended service at restaurants from 15.30 on 5 March 2020 for cleaning and disinfection due to customers who traveled from high-risk countries and not monitoring their symptoms for 14 days. The restaurant will reopen as usual on 6 March 2020.
- The Ministry of Finance is preparing to propose measures for minimizing the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak. The measures will be proposed at the cabinet meeting. The measures are cash giveaways of about 1,000-2,000 baht for low-income earners, farmers and independent/freelance laborers to help with the cost of living. For those with moderate incomes, the measure will help reduce current credit card debt.
- Saen Suk Municipality has announced the suspension of the Thailand Songkran Festival 2020 between 16-17 April 2020 in order to avoid the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19. People were also urged to refrain from water-splashing during Songkran Festival as the virus may be spread.
- Khon Kaen Municipality has decided to halt Khao Niao Road activity during the Songkran Festival including the Miss Songkran Beauty Pageant. The local and traditional Thai cultural activities during Songkran Day in Thailand and family day in Thailand will not be canceled. These activities include making merit by putting food in the bowl of monks, carrying sand into the temple or monastery, traditional Thai Games that are not boisterous or not big activities, activities of pouring scented water on the hands of revered elders and asking for blessings in the community in order to prevent the spread of the virus.
- The Thailand Post implemented measures for preventing the spread of COVID-19 in order to assure the safety of their services. The Thailand Post has provided alcohol gel and cleaned their facilities every 30 minutes, especially door knobs, the queue ticket machines, chairs and service counters. For staff in the Thailand Post, they have been provided masks and have been prohibited from traveling to risky countries. The recommendations on how to prevent oneself from the disease by wearing a mask, washing hands and not sharing personal stuff with others were also introduced. If any staff develops the suspected symptoms, they should seek medical treatment immediately.
- Mr. Jurin Laksanawisit, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Commerce clarified the Cabinet Resolution and the Order of the Committee on Prices of Goods and Services that all surgical masks will be administered by the mask distribution center under the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Commerce. The focal points of this matter comprise of the Deputy Secretary - General of Food and Drug Administration, the Government Pharmaceutical Organization, and the representatives of hospitals in the country. In addition, the Cabinet agreed upon the price of masks at 2.50 baht per piece and the government will shoulder the differential cost. The 700,000 surgical masks will be distributed to the Ministry of Public Health in order to maintain stock for all medical centers in the country while 500,000 masks will be allocated to high-risk groups and people.

#### 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.

# The Coronavirus Disease 2019 Situation

by Emergency Operations Center, Department of Disease Control

- 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.