

Thailand situation update on 12 March 2020

1. International Situation

As of 12 March 2020, there were a total of 126,643 confirmed cases, with 5,708 patients in critical condition and 4,638 COVID-19 deaths, across more than 111 countries, two Special Administrative Regions of the People's Republic of China (Hong Kong and Macau), and on cruise ships. There have been a total of 80,796 confirmed cases in the People's Republic of China. In the Special Administrative Regions of the People's Republic of China, there have been 130 confirmed cases in Hong Kong, and 10 confirmed cases in Macau. There have been 7,869 confirmed cases in South Korea, 12,462 confirmed cases in Italy, 9,000 confirmed cases in Iran, 2,281 confirmed cases in France, 2,277 confirmed cases in Spain, 1,966 confirmed cases in Germany, 639 confirmed cases in Japan, 178 confirmed cases in Singapore, and 49 confirmed cases in Taiwan.

Notable Issues in Foreign Countries on 12 March 2020

- World Health Organization - Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 11 March 2020 and the raising up of this state involves requesting the people to double their efforts. Governments in many countries have active and emergency measures to control the situation and many countries show their potential to control the COVID-19 situation. The challenge at this time for many countries are big clusters of illness or contagion in the community. So, the government should use measures that balance health prevention, the impact for daily life and respect for human rights.
- The United States - On 12 January 2020, President Donald Trump announced he would cease travel from all European countries except the United Kingdom to control the transmission of COVID-19 pandemic; enforced on midnight on 13 March 2020 to last for 30 days. American citizens returning home from Europe will be screened. Muriel Bowser, Mayor of the District of Columbia, announced a state of emergency in Washington D.C., which includes merchandise price controlling measures, quarantine measures, and cancellation or postponement of any gatherings with more than 1,000 participants; effective until 31 March 2020. In other news, the NBA announced their decision to suspend the remainder of this basketball season after it was confirmed that a basketball player on the Utah Jazz team was infected by COVID-19. Moreover, The United States released their first COVID-19 drive-through testing center at The University of Washington Medical Center in Seattle, which can currently test up to 40 to 50 people per day and use KIRO report processing affiliate CBS. The testing is for employees and students and there is a plan to enhance this program for entertainment spots this week.
- Kuwait - Kuwait ceased all departure and arrival commercial flights enforced from 13 March 2020 until further notice. They have announced the vacation for their country from 12 to 26 March 2020 and will start to work again on 29 March 2020 but the institute that need to have the service will still perform. Moreover, the government commands to prohibit going to restaurants, coffee shops and shopping malls.
- Singapore - Due to COVID-19 confirmed cases, the Air Force released the measure to decrease the training and practicing of foreign armies. Moreover, they will change the activity to suit the situation.
 - Specialists in public and environmental health warned of the difficulty of diagnosis between Dengue Haemorrhagic fever and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 because both diseases have similar symptoms and laboratory results, as shown in the Lancet Medical

Journal. They encourage relevant sectors to use the specific COVID-19 toolkit which is reliable, ready to use, and not expensive for confirming the disease in South East Asia.

- Denmark - The prime minister commanded to close all schools and universities and send the students back to their homes within 13 March 2020 for COVID-19 epidemic control.
- People's Republic of China - The epidemiology team in the People's Republic of China found that COVID-19 can linger in the air for at least 30 minutes and travel up to 4.5 metres which is further than the safe distance advised by health authorities worldwide. Health authorities advised people to stay 1-2 metres apart. This virus can survive for a long period of time on objects which contain respiratory droplets on surfaces. This increases the risk of getting infected by touching a surface or object. Anyway, how long the virus survives will depend on a number of factors such as temperature and surface type. At 37 degrees C, the virus can survive for up to 2-3 days on glass, metal surface or paper. In addition, Chinese authorities announced the outbreak in China has ended after finding that the number of new confirmed cases were continuously decreasing and the situation of spread of disease overall is stable at a low level.
- India - India made an announcement to not allow foreigners to enter the country after the number of people with COVID-19 has reached 60 cases. The Government of India is deeply concerned about a COVID-19 epidemic situation in India.
- Germany - The Chancellor warned that up to 70% of the country's population - some 58 million people could be have COVID-19
- South Korea - Korea developed a real-time hygiene mask application that shows the stock in pharmacy shops and department stores.
- Italy - The Chancellor ordered temporarily closure of every store except restaurants and pharmacy shops during 12 - 25 March 2020
- Great Britain - Hermès officially canceled their Cruise 2021 collection in London.

2. The Disease Situation in Thailand

2.1 Surveillance Protocol for COVID-19

The accumulated data from 3 January to 12 March 2020 showed that among 34,243 flights, there were a total of 3,635,930 passengers screened. Among those, 224 people met the case definition criteria of patients under investigation (PUI). For the screening protocol outside the airports, 118,388 people from 771 ships were screened at sea ports between 1 January and 12 March 2020 and two people met the PUI criteria. There were 1,274,478 people screened at ground ports between 1 February to 12 March 2020. Between 30 January to 11 March 2020, a total of 101,347 people who were renewing their passports were screened at the Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty at Chaengwattana Road. The total number of PUI from all ports is currently 226 people.

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

On 11 March 2020 at 18:00, Thailand announced that 264 additional people met the criteria for PUI, raising the total to 5,496 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)	5,496
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detected from the airport screening (Suvarnabhumi: 160, Don Mueang: 41, Phuket: 8, Chiang Mai: 3) 	224
<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: 2,196 cases, Government hospitals: 2,221 cases) 	5,219
<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)	5,496
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergoing treatment (Private hospitals: 1,006 cases, Government hospitals: 832 cases) 	1,504
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovered from illnesses and discharged from the hospitals 	3,872
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of symptoms at OPD/PUI's home 	120
Confirmed cases	70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovered and discharged from hospitals 	34
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being Treatment 	35
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deaths 	1
Severe cases (including in being treatment)	1

In Thailand, there are 70 confirmed COVID-19 cases. Among the confirmed cases, 35 patients have recovered and returned home. One patient has died, and one is in critical condition. Of the 5,173 PUI cases, laboratory results revealed that 3,490 cases returned negative for the COVID-19 virus, and results are pending for remaining 1,683 PUI.

The median age of the confirmed cases is 35 years old (ranging from 3 to 74 years old). 40 cases were male, and 30 cases were female (ratio of male to female: 1.3:1). In terms of nationality, 26 cases are Chinese, 41 are Thai, one is Italian, one is British and one is Singaporean.

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 osteoporosis (1 case). There were 62 cases reported without any underlying disease. Four cases were

detected from the screening protocol at airports, 37 cases sought medical treatment by themselves, 18 cases were tracked via case investigation and defined as close contacts, and one case was found within the group of Thai workers returning from Wuhan.

3. Thailand Precautions

- Dr. Sopon Iamsrithaworn, Director of Division of Communicable Diseases, Department of Disease Control gave clarification that

(1) For people who traveled from a territory outside the Kingdom of Thailand defined as Disease Infected Zones of the dangerous communicable disease, the traveler must implement self-quarantine at his/her accommodations for a period of not less than 14 days without leaving (emergency cases shall be approved by a disease control officer) until the end of the infectious period or the reason for suspicion. Throughout the period of quarantine, the aforementioned traveler must record his/her own symptoms in the reporting system and monitor his/her symptoms strictly required by the MOPH. There will be a surveillance officer to closely monitor the traveler's symptoms. They also have to keep distance from others.

(2) Travelers arriving from an area with ongoing local transmission as announced by the MOPH (which are currently the following 6 countries: Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Germany, The French Republic, and Spain), have to avoid mass gathering events, crowded places, and must be under observation (meaning supervision without quarantine) in order to ensure self-monitoring for 14 days or until the end of the infectious period or the reason for suspicion. Travelers from areas with ongoing local transmission must record his/her own symptoms in the reporting system and strictly monitor his/her symptoms as required by the MOPH, see 4.2.1 statement. These travelers must fully disclose information about all recent travel history to a disease control officer so that they can closely monitor traveler movement and keep track of any human contacts. Spain was added to a list of destinations that should be avoided by travellers, if they get sick, they have to seek medical care and notify their travel history.

- The government has organized a training program (Kru Gor) to teach people how to make cloth masks to increase production and distribution of masks. So far, about 274,923 cloth masks have been produced and gradually distributed to the public. The goal is to make 50 million masks so that they can thoroughly be distributed for free to all communities all over the country.
- PTT Public Company Limited handed over 15,000 liters of high quality grade alcohol to the Government Pharmaceutical Organization (GPO) for producing disinfectant in order to support medical and related departments in controlling outbreak and providing health care to the public.
- The Department of Medical Sciences test results show that muslin cotton fabric has better performance when used to create a double-layered face mask in comparison to other types of fabric. Key properties of cloth masks made from muslin cotton fabric include its ability to protect against respiratory droplets, and spray of fluids. Its fibers are able to hold particles better than other types of fabric. Additionally, these masks can be used multiple times.
- Major Cineplex everywhere will now be taking customers' body temperature before they can enter the cinema, to ensure confidence and surveillance against COVID-19 transmission.

- Mahidol University has announced technological methods they will use to continue teaching students during this time that school is closed for COVID-19 precautions. Teaching activities in the university can be arranged by using the distance learning via the university's internet to provide lectures, or live demonstrations using the Webex program. Teachers are using Mahidol University Extension (MUx) or Learning Management System (LMS) to continue education.
- Central World is proactively fighting the spread of COVID-19 by using disinfectant spray and conducting "Big Cleaning" throughout the Groove Zone.
- The Bangkok Bank issued measures for employees who have come into close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 to work from home and self-monitor for 14 days. The Bangkok Bank is also strongly encouraging staff to maintain good health and good hygiene by eating hot food, using a serving spoon, washing hands regularly, and wearing a mask when going into public spaces or community events. They have also been cleaning their entire workplace using standard disinfectant as used in the hospital.
- The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) was informed by the coordinator of Circle Living Prototype Condominium that a case of the COVID-19 was found in the residence. Now, all TAT staff and employees residing in that condominium are requested to implement self-monitoring at their residence for 14 days and shall strictly comply with the rules. For the people not working at TAT but living in the mentioned condominium are requested to refrain from using the service in the TAT building for 14 days. The conversation was recorded to be an evidence for disease surveillance.
- Mr. Amnat Wichayanuwat, Secretary General, Office of the Basic Education Commission, issued the new measure for preventing the transmission of COVID -19 and requested all educational institutes to comply with the said measures together with the MoPH measure. In addition, the government officers are not allowed to attend the international meeting and the person departing from the risk countries prior to the MoPH announcement shall implement the self quarantine for 14 days. In the meantime, the Office of the Basic Education Commission in collaboration with the MoPH has established the COVID-19 Center in order to check information and follow up the situation of outbreak closely. If the situation of outbreak is deteriorated, the opening of the first semester (2020) in school starting in May should be postponed or the online course may be introduced. For the students in remote areas, it is recommended to open the class outside the school.
- Mr. Saksayam Chidchob, the Minister of the Transport drafted a plan to facilitate the people during the Songkran festival (9 – 19 April 2020) and developed the measures to prevent COVID-19. All relevant sectors were ordered to clean the service areas, provide the alcohol gel at the service points and continually screen the passengers.

4. Risk Communication to the Public

- The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) can be prevented using basic respiratory disease prevention measures: washing hands, wearing masks, and avoiding contact with patients who have respiratory disease.
- People should avoid traveling to China and countries within the Disease Infected

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 Situation

by Emergency Operations Center, Department of Disease Control

Zones, or Ongoing Local Transmission Areas. Avoid visiting crowded places and avoid being in contact with people who have respiratory symptoms. For uncontrollable scenarios, it is highly recommended that a mask is worn to protect yourself and others.

- Travelers flying from Italy, Iran, the Republic of Korea, and China (including Macau and Hong Kong), are required to self-quarantine at designated areas or at their own residence. Travelers from areas with Ongoing Local Transmission (Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Germany, France) are recommended to implement self-monitoring at residences and check their body temperature for 14 days.
- Avoid visiting public or crowded places. Maintain at least 1 meter of distance between yourself and another person when interacting 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.
- 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. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands.
- 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.
- Avoid eating raw food.