

(Unofficial Translation)

Official Statement of the Office of the Prime Minister

RE : Declaration of an Emergency Situation pursuant to the Emergency Decree
on Public Administration in Emergency Situations B.E. 2548 (2005)

With reference to the Declaration made by the Prime Minister, upon the approval of the Council of Ministers in its meeting on 24 March B.E. 2563 and in accordance with recommendations of the medical and public health administrators and technical personnel, by virtue of Section 5 of the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situations B.E. 2548 (2005), regarding an emergency situation in all areas of the Kingdom of Thailand, from 26 March B.E. 2563 (2020) to 30 April B.E. 2563 (2020);

The Declaration of an Emergency Situation is in accordance with the existing law in force since B.E. 2548 (2005) and due to the present situation of the outbreak of the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), which is a pandemic that has just appeared but is rapidly spreading all over the world, and is also affecting Thailand. Presently, there is no vaccine nor effective medication. The government has correspondingly applied measures to prevent, suppress, and delay the outbreak as well as to create awareness and understanding among the public. It has made daily assessments of the situation in response to new developments, information, and medical recommendations of various experts, taking into account the impacts on the public in terms of societal well-being, standard of living, public healthcare resources of the government, and in order to prevent unnecessary panic.

At present, it is agreed by all that the situation has elevated to the point that warrants the implementation of measures to the highest level, in order for the State to enforce additional measures. As for the measures to be implemented, notifications and regulations will be announced in due course. However, at the outset, it is imperative to declare an emergency situation, which has already been done today. The consequence of this declaration is that the government shall have further channels of control and management of the situation pursuant to the law. For example, there will be a temporary transfer of a number of Ministerial powers under certain laws to the Prime Minister as far as it is necessary, for expediency and integrated management. Regulations shall be issued in the form of certain prohibitions and guidelines such as prohibitions from entering or leaving certain areas, prohibitions or limitations from entering or departing the Kingdom and the movement of large numbers of people across various areas, the control of the use of vehicles, transportation routes and the control of goods

and medical supplies. These measures, despite being in accordance with the law on public administration in emergency situations and despite the number of persons infected and the number of deaths in Thailand up until the present not being as high when compared to other countries; however, if there continues to be movement, travel or a congregation of large groups of people for group activities, contacts or proximity and the absence of awareness, understanding and sense of responsibility, as well as the refusal to follow the correct practices in accordance with internationally accepted measures to prevent the disease. With the upcoming festivities and change of seasons, COVID-19 might spread rapidly and increase the number of people infected which will affect the efficiency in providing medical services and the use of public health resources of the country, such as doctors, nurses, hospitals, medicine and other medical supplies to a point where there may be a shortage, leading to the serious immeasurable losses, as already apparent in some countries. The Government therefore had to declare an emergency situation in the avoidance of any risks thereby providing reassurance to performing officials and ease the anxiety of the public. The declaration of an emergency situation is an urgent necessity specifically at this period of time. The Government will consider the adoption of only measures that are necessary, following the medical and public health recommendations, in order to prevent and suppress the spread of the disease. The healthcare and lives of the people, the allocation of resources and medical supplies, and the sufficient provision of medical services to all Thai people are considered to be of a paramount importance. Consequently, during this period, the convenience of the people may be lessened as everyone will have to adjust their behaviours; however, the public can continue to live their lives normally without being deprived. As for remedial measures to alleviate the difficulties for those affected, they will gradually be carried out. At this hour, we are fighting a catastrophe that cannot be seen. This disease may attack us all at any place and at any time. Thus, there is a need to control the situation and to implement measures of the highest level, so as to ensure our collective survival. This emergency situation will remain for a certain period of time but not exceeding a period of three months as prescribed by law and may be extended if the situation requires. In fact, there had been the declaration of an emergency situation for many years in certain areas in the Southern Border Provinces but the grounds for declaring such an emergency there differed from the current situation.

The Government would like to ask the public to trust the country's public health system and to take care of their health because being without disease is considered a true blessing. At the same time, please cooperate with the authorities by strictly complying with measures and medical recommendations, as well as follow up on information through official channels such as radio, television and printed media indicating reliable and referable

sources, and not through fake news or news without apparent sources. If there are any inquiries, questions can be directed to the Ministry of Public Health or the COVID-19 Emergency Operation Centre, Tel. 1111. At this time, staying at home according to the motto “Stay home, Stop the Disease, for the Nation,” not joining gatherings of large groups of people, and using preventive measures for your own sake and showing social responsibility, including through the use of surgical masks and hand sanitizer gels, diligently washing hands, not being in contact nor receiving the virus through saliva droplets, practicing social distancing, and seeking medical attention when in doubt, are universally acknowledged ways to reduce risks in order to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our nation.

For accurate understanding, the Government will continue to deliver statements periodically and in due course.

Office of the Prime Minister
25 March B.E. 2563 (2020)