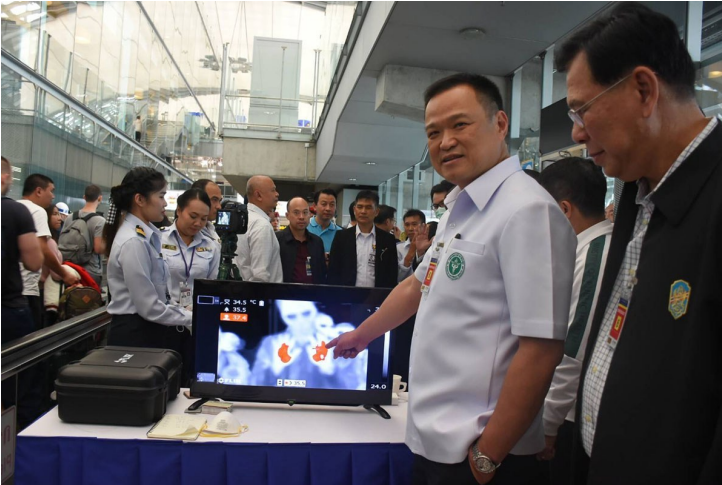


Thailand rapidly screens out pneumonia cases from China

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The Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, has set up four infrared thermo scan units at 4 different airports for a round-the-clock screening of all passengers, especially from China



Health surveillance systems have been rapidly deployed at four of Thailand's most important international airports to screen out any visitors afflicted by pneumonia in the wake of a reported outbreak in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.

The Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, has set up four infrared thermo scan units at Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Chiang Mai and Phuket airports for round-the-clock screening of all passengers, especially from China.

According to Dr. Suwanchai Wattanayingcharoenchai, Director-General of the Department of Disease Control, 44 cases of viral pneumonia have been found in Wuhan city. Chinese medical authorities are closely monitoring the situation to identify the cause and prevent a spread. Preliminary examinations have shown that it is not a common influenza virus, avian flu, adenovirus or any of the other common respiratory diseases.

Mr. Anutin Charnvirakul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health said, "So far, no cases have been reported. Thailand has an effective surveillance and screening system for disease control, thanks to extensive experience in dealing with medical conditions; such as, SARS, MERS, avian flu and others. If any suspected cases are identified, they will be immediately quarantined and subjected to further tests.

Suvarnabhumi Airport has three daily flights from potential risk areas carrying about 500 passengers a day.

Mr. Yuthasak Supasorn, Governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand said, "We are gratified by the rapid response of the Thai medical fraternity in cooperation with their counterparts in China and the World Health Organisation. Chinese comprise Thailand's largest source of visitor arrivals and will soon be entering the peak travel periods of Chinese New Year and the Songkran Festival. Taking preventive medical measures will ensure a safe and healthy holiday for everyone.

For more information, please contact the Department of Disease Control hotline 1422."