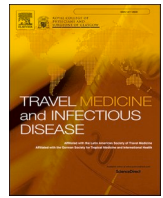




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Positive impact of lockdown on COVID-19 outbreak in Thailand

To the Editor,

In Southeast Asian countries, Thailand is the first country that reported a case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outside of China. The first confirmed case of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) infection in Thailand was announced on January 17, 2020 [1]. The diagnosis and contact tracing this disease were tested by using real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction.

As of May 02, Thailand has reported 2966 cases of laboratory-confirmed coronavirus 2019, 2732 recovered cases, and 54 deaths from COVID-19 in 68 of 77 provinces. Bangkok has the highest number of cases (1538 cases) followed by Phuket (220 cases), and Nonthaburi (157 cases), respectively [2]. The average age of COVID-19 patients was 40 years (range, 1 month to 97 years) and 1621 of the 2966 patients (54.65%) were men [1].

The highest number of confirmed cases in Thailand was reported on March 22. There were 188 new cases of tested positive for COVID-19 who related boxing stadium and drinking venue [3]. An immediate nationwide lockdown was instituted in Thailand, which protected Thailand citizens from COVID-19. The government of Thailand has

announced a nationwide curfew on April 3, 2020. The government requests that people must wear a face mask, practice social distancing, and remain inside their residents from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m [4].

After the curfew has been in place, the figure for new COVID-19 cases was continued to fall when compared with the cases report in March as shown in Fig. 1 [5]. According to the curfew and quarantine or isolation situation, the positive rate among persons under investigation is 1.9%, which seems to be decreased from mid-January to April 6, 2020.

Even though the number of new cases showed a downward trend, the COVID-19 national curfew and emergency decree for Thailand has been extended to June 15, 2020 to curb the spread of this virus. However, the restrictions will be gradually eased to prevent a second wave of infections. Furthermore, there were no new deaths reported for 5 days in a row and there were no new cases of healthcare workers. A significant decrease in the daily number of new COVID-19 cases could be likely attributed to the rigorous Thai government lockdown measures. Accordingly, stringent containment of people in heavily affected areas seems to have a great potential to prevent or slow down the spread of COVID-19.

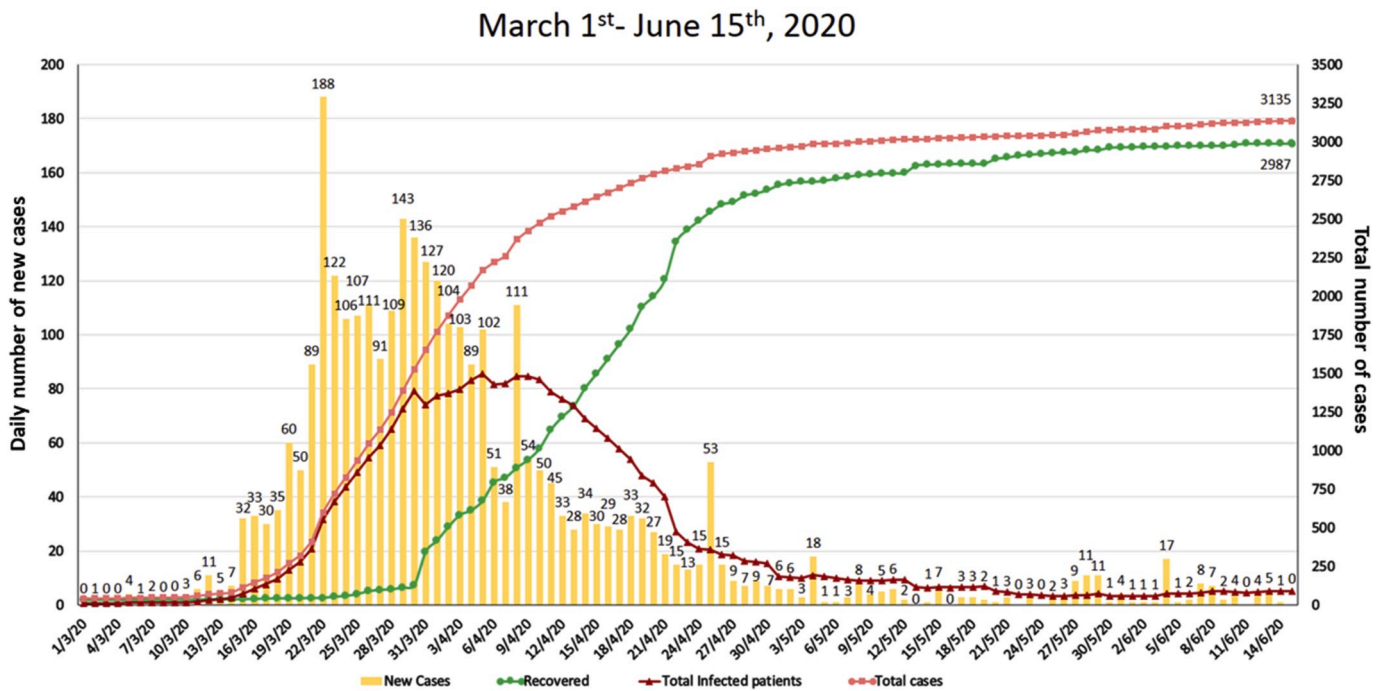


Fig. 1. Epidemic curves of reported cases with COVID-19 in Thailand.

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Ethical approval

This article does not require any human/animal subjects to acquire such approval.

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Declaration of competing interest

All authors report no conflicts of interest relevant to this article.

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Not applicable.

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