



SUMMARY OF COVID-19 POLICY RESPONSES OF SELECT ASIAN COUNTRIES
CALD Executive Committee Special Session
2 April 2020 (Thursday), 14:00 (GMT + 8)

Country	Population (in million)	COVID-19 Cases/Death (as of 31/3/20)	Policy Responses	Policy Features	Remarks
Cambodia	16	107 / 0	<p>State of Emergency is reported to be declared on April 3</p> <p>No country-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown, although schools and casinos are/will be closed</p> <p>No data on COVID-19 test capacity (see table on tests conducted per country in the second-to-the-last page of this document)</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> From March 30, all visa exemptions, visas on arrival and e-visas are suspended until April 30. All foreigners must have a medical certificate stating that they have not been tested positive for the virus and issued no more than 72 hours prior to travel date and have proof of insurance policy with minimum medical coverage of \$50,000. Neighboring countries closed their borders with Cambodia. On March 17, Prime Minister Hun Sen ordered a 30-day ban on arrivals from Italy, Germany, Spain, France, the United States, and Iran. Joint military exercises involving hundreds of Chinese soldiers proceeded as scheduled.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> Cambodia's more than 157 casinos will close starting April 1. Schools are closed. Human Rights Watch has documented the arrests of 17 people since late January 2020 for sharing information about the coronavirus in Cambodia.</p>	<p>Government arrested opposition members who questioned government COVID-19 response.</p> <p>Apart from the opposition, Cambodian Muslims are also being targeted/discriminated because of the pandemic.</p>

				<p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> As of March 30, additional fiscal resources to the health sector of around \$70 million (around 0.2 percent of 2019 GDP) are expected. On March 9, Hun Sen said the government had allocated between \$800 million to \$2 billion to address the economic impacts of COVID-19.</p>	
China	1400	82240 / 3296	<p>Massive lockdown and electronic surveillance</p> <p>Lockdown of Wuhan and nearby cities in Hubei province, which put at least 60 million people under a mandatory quarantine</p> <p>Strict control of people's movements in major cities</p> <p>Mass testing in infected provinces/cities</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> Flights, trains and other means of transportation were suspended in Hubei; and roads were blocked.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> Apart from Hubei lockdown, people in other cities were told to stay home (760 million or half of the population).</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> To date, China's central government has largely focused on tax relief and increased liquidity to try to offset the effects of the virus. It has not engaged in steep interest rate cuts (only 10 basis points) and shied away from massive stimulus spending on par with the \$570 billion it spent during the global financial crisis.</p> <p>Instead, the People's Bank of China has cut the reserve ratio requirement by 0.5 to 1%, freeing up \$78.8 billion for lending by banks nationwide with instructions that this lending be targeted to smaller businesses most hit by the COVID-19 disruptions.</p>	<p>While China appears successful in "flattening the curve", there are questions on whether it is providing the accurate data or information on COVID-19 cases.</p> <p>The country's withholding of information at the onset of the crisis is also blamed for turning the virus into a global pandemic.</p> <p>China, however, was praised for the following: 1) building a thousand bed hospital to treat those infected within two weeks; 2) mobilizing doctors and nurses from 29 provinces, besides military medics; 3) converting stadiums and convention centers into temporary hospitals,</p>

					and hotels were turned into quarantine centers.
Japan	126.5	1953 / 56	<p>No country-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown, but tested clusters where infections were prevalent</p> <p>The country has not conducted widespread testing, but it only tested those with symptoms and those connected with viral clusters</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> Travel ban on 73 countries, including the US, China, South Korea and nearly all European countries.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> No lockdown, but schools were closed on the viral cluster.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> Fiscal stimulus, monetary steps and tax breaks for companies are proposed, although the details have not yet been finalized.</p>	<p>Recent spike in cases (Tokyo and Chiba), with some government officials suggesting a possible lockdown of some cities</p> <p>Developing a promising anti-flu drug, favipirarir (Avigan), which has been used to treat COVID-19 patients</p>
Hong Kong	7.4	682 / 4	<p>No territory-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown, although schools are closed until Easter</p> <p>The territory has not conducted widespread testing, but tested aggressively both those with serious and mild symptoms, as well as those who had contact with COVID-positive cases</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> As early as 1 Feb, Hong Kong (like Taiwan and Singapore) had all proactively implemented travel restrictions on passengers coming from the mainland, contravening the World Health Organization's [WHO] insistence that travel bans were not necessary.</p> <p>Hong Kong is now requiring anyone arriving from overseas to undergo a 14-day home quarantine. New arrivals will be issued with an electronic wristband that monitors whether they violate quarantine. The band syncs to an app that maps people's apartments and alerts the government should they go outside.</p> <p>Members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.</p>	<p>Hong Kong is experiencing a second wave of cases, most of whom are 'imported' cases</p> <p>Hong Kong, like Singapore, has followed a particular path in responding to this outbreak. Both used testing aggressively to identify cases — not only testing people who are so sick that they're hospitalized but also mild cases and even suspected</p>

				<p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> No quarantine or lockdown, but millions of people are working from home and practicing social distancing.</p> <p>Schools are closed until Easter, and the members of the public are advised to avoid social gatherings, restaurants, public transport, and even touching lift buttons.</p> <p>Hong Kong also issues detailed information each evening about every newly confirmed case. While it doesn't give out the names of those infected, health officials release each person's age, gender, street address, medical symptoms — and often the exact location of where the person works. This allows other residents to determine if they might have been in contact with the infected individual.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> Hong Kong announced a significant fiscal stimulus package as part of its 2020-2021 budget last 26 February. Among other things, it includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A \$1200 cash subsidy to all adult permanent residents • Paying one month's rent for people living in public housing • Cutting payroll, income, property, and business taxes • Low-interest, government-guaranteed loans for businesses • Extra month's worth of payments to people collecting old-age or disability benefits 	<p>cases. They've quarantined tens of thousands of people who may have been exposed to confirmed cases.</p> <p>Hong Kong's relative success has been credited to its experience in combating SARS in 2003.</p>
Indonesia	264	1414 / 122	No country-wide quarantine or lockdown, although a State of Emergency was	<u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> All visa exemptions and visa on arrival to foreigners are suspended until April 20; this does not apply to Indonesian nationals. Land borders with Timor-Leste and all sea and land ports in Papua province have been	Indonesia currently has the most number of fatalities due to COVID-19 in Southeast Asia

			<p>declared in the capital Jakarta, and regional lockdowns are being considered</p> <p>Limited testing capacity, although it may increase in the coming days/weeks</p>	<p>closed by provincial leaders. People with a Permanent Staying Permit or a Temporary Staying Permit can enter Indonesia if they have a valid health certification stating that they are fit for travel issued by local health authorities in English at least seven days prior to departure.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> The cabinet announced that it will only be considering a “civil emergency” as a last result but is planning on implementing stricter measures for social distancing. On March 27, Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Mahfud MD announced a new regulation stipulating the requirements for regional lockdowns is being drafted. A state of emergency was declared in Jakarta, meaning closure of entertainment centers, including bars, massage parlors, restaurants, and cinemas. Malls and supermarkets remain open. Offices in Jakarta suspended activities for 14 days beginning on March 23.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> On March 13, the Indonesian government issued its second emergency stimulus package worth \$8.1 billion, which includes exempting some workers in manufacturing from income tax and giving manufacturing companies a discount on corporate tax payments. A first \$725 million stimulus package announced in February 2020 provided fiscal incentives to support the country’s tourism, aviation, and property industries. The package also allocated \$324 million for low-income households.</p>	
Malaysia	31.5	2626 / 37	<p>Nation-wide lockdown</p> <p>Relatively better testing capacity</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> Malaysia <u>shut</u> its borders to travelers and restricted internal movement from March 16 until March 31.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin enacted and then extended a “movement</p>	<p>Malaysia’s sudden surge in cases was primarily due to the transmission that occurred during the continued Friday</p>

			(target is 16,000/day)	<p>control order” until April 14; this includes prohibition of religious, sports, and cultural congregations. Places of worship and businesses must close except for essential services and stores</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus</u>: On March 27, Malaysia announced its second “more people oriented” relief package worth \$53 billion. The package includes \$23.1 billion for businesses and \$2.3 billion in direct cash payments for 4 million low-income households. A previous \$4.8 billion stimulus package was launched on February 27 to cushion the blow of COVID-19 on tourism and other industries, including nationwide electricity discounts of 2 percent for industrial, commercial, and domestic users, as well as a monetary assistance scheme for employees.</p>	<p>prayers, which were attended by around 16,000 people from late February until March.</p> <p>Malaysia’s worsening situation is also driven by the recent political turmoil. The prime minister and health minister are both recently elected, and the cabinet is comprised of several first-time ministers.</p>
Mongolia	3.1	12 / 0	<p>Heightened awareness containment strategy</p> <p>No country-wide quarantine or lockdown, although the capital Ulaanbaatar and provincial centers were locked down on 10-16 March when the first case of COVID in the country was detected</p> <p>No data on COVID-19 test capacity</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans</u>: Mongolia closed its borders with China and Russia, and banned international flights from other hotspots like South Korea.</p> <p>All new arrivals were also mandated to undergo a 14-day quarantine.</p> <p>It mobilized a COVID-19 task force of 832 individuals monitoring 336 checkpoints around the country as early as 23 February.</p> <p>It also cancelled the national holiday Tsagaan Sar, the Mongolian lunar new year, the country was able to slow travel between Ulaanbaatar and provinces outside the capital.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown</u>: No country-wide quarantine or lockdown (there were area-specific lockdowns on 10-16 March); schools and social activities are suspended until 30 April</p>	

				<p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> MNT12 billion (0.03 percent of GDP) of additional health spending has been approved and allocated to epidemic prevention and control, acquisition of medical supply and medical staff overtime salaries. This measure is financed by a Government Reserve Fund withdrawal. Additional fiscal measures have been announced and are pending parliamentary approval in early April, including: (i) tax exemptions on several imported food items; (ii) tax exemptions on rent income of taxpayers who have reduced rents for retail businesses, including supermarkets, shopping centers and service centers; (iii) tax penalty exemptions or deferred payments during the state of high alert, and; (iv) soft loans from the development bank to cashmere producers.</p>	
Myanmar	6.9	14 / 1	<p>No country-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown, although public gatherings have been banned</p> <p>No data on COVID-19 test capacity</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> All northern checkpoint borders with China are closed except for goods and crew. All visas on arrival are suspended until the end of April. All international flights are suspended starting March 30.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> All public gatherings have been banned as a precautionary measure.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> Fund of nearly \$70 million have been established at the Myanmar Economic Bank to provide soft loans to affected business (particularly the priority garment and tourism sectors and small- and medium-sized enterprises).</p>	The crisis appears to present the military as more responsive compared to the civilian government.
Philippines	104.9	2084 / 88	Enhanced Community Quarantine (essentially a lockdown) Luzon, comparable	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> Domestic and international flights have been canceled until April 14. Foreigners are banned from entry except for overseas Filipino workers, repatriating Filipinos, their foreign spouses and children (provided that the foreign spouse and children are travelling with the Filipino national), and foreign government and</p>	Philippines has the second biggest number of fatalities due to COVID-19 in Southeast Asia, next only to Indonesia

			<p>measures in other parts of the country</p> <p>State of National Emergency, Special Powers given to the Philippine President</p> <p>Limited testing capacity, although it may increase in the coming days/weeks</p>	<p>international organization officials accredited to the Philippines. Stopped issuing visas to foreigners worldwide.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> On March 16, President Duterte announced he would be placing the country's main island of Luzon—home to about 60 million people--, including Manila, under lockdown until April 14, meaning that only essential services and store will remain open during the lockdown period. These services are asked to employ a reduced workforce and observe strict physical distancing.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> On March 16, President Duterte announced a \$531 million stimulus, including wage subsidies, support for the tourism industry, and social security. On March 17, the Philippines government announced the entire country will be placed under a “state of calamity” for a period of six months. The declaration will enable national and local governments to quickly access relief funds to curb the spread of the disease. The Congress of the Philippines is crafting a bill for approximately \$4 billion. The response package will provide \$100 to \$150 monthly aid for two months to poor families, \$2,000 for every health worker who contracted COVID-19, and \$20,000 for every health worker who died from the disease. On March 24, Congress granted President Duterte “special temporary power” to manage the pandemic, placing the Philippines under a state of emergency. Although he failed to get approval to take over private companies and utilities, President Duterte can now tap into private hospital and ships, reapportion the executive department's budget, and punish those disobeying quarantine orders and spreading false information. While the decree is scheduled to last for three months, it can be extended by Congress. President Duterte will also have access to \$5.36</p>	
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				<p>billion from various government agencies to mitigate the potential economic fallout.</p>	
Singapore	5.6	879 / 3	<p>No country-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown; even schools are open</p> <p>The country has not conducted widespread testing, but tested aggressively both those with serious and mild symptoms, as well as those who had contact with COVID-positive cases</p>	<p><u>Border closure:</u> On March 22, the city-state barred all short-term visitors from entering Singapore, saying that from 11:59 p.m. on Monday, the only non-nationals allowed in would be work permit holders in "essential sectors" such as healthcare. Malaysians with a Singapore work permit will continue to be allowed to work in Singapore.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> Singapore has avoided major lockdowns, curfews, and business closures with strict social distancing rules. Violators are imposed a \$7,000 fine and jail time for up to 6 months.</p> <p>The country established a website and an online application TraceTogether to enhance the transparency of the outbreak situation and to guarantee those under home-based quarantine comply with the quarantine policy. These online platforms list the places and times of potential Coronavirus carriers and use Bluetooth to detect those who have been within two meters of a confirmed Coronavirus patient for at least 30 minutes.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> On March 26, Singapore unveiled an unprecedented stimulus plan, the "Resilience Budget," worth <u>\$33 billion</u>. This is the largest, most aggressive stimulus package in Asia so far. The package is designed to assist hard-hit sectors (e.g., food services, aviation, tourism), self-employed individuals, and cash payouts depending on income. The government offers self-employed people <u>\$100 Singapore dollars (\$73) per day</u>, while employers are prohibited from</p>	<p>Singapore, like Hong Kong, is experiencing a second wave of cases</p> <p>Singapore's relative success has been credited to its experience in combating SARS in 2003.</p> <p>Singapore's health authorities decided early on to test all influenza-like and pneumonia cases. They have also spared no pains in hunting down every possible contact of those infected. The process, which operates 24/7, starts with patient interviews, and has also involved police, flight manifests and a locally developed a test for antibodies, which linger even after an infection clears.</p> <p>There are allegations that the Singaporean</p>

				<p>detracting quarantine days from staffers' annual leave.</p> <p>This is only the second time that Singapore has dipped into its reserves—the first time being in 2009 during the global financial crisis (about \$1 trillion). Singapore had first announced <u>\$4.4 billion of relief funding</u> for workers and businesses through co-funding of business costs and tax relief on February 18. The total fiscal boost now stands at about 11 percent of the city-state's GDP.</p> <p>The Monetary Authority of Singapore <u>eased</u> monetary policy as expected on March 30.</p>	<p>government is 'politicizing' COVID-19 response so it can gain advantage in the upcoming general elections.</p>
South Korea	51.6	9786 / 162	<p>No country-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown</p> <p>Transparency, Robust Screening and Quarantine, Universally Acceptable, Strict Control and Treatment (TRUST), or "Trace, Test and Treat"</p> <p>The country has one of the most aggressive mass testing (19,000/day)</p>	<p><u>Border closure and entry bans:</u> Effective at midnight on April 1, The Republic of Korea Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) will impose a mandatory 14-day quarantine for ALL inbound passengers. <u>Most</u> foreign travelers on short-term travel will be required to quarantine at a government-designated facility at their own expense for 14 days . The facility will cost approximately 100 U.S. dollars per night. Travelers who are long-term or residential will be required to self-quarantine at their own residences. All passengers who exhibit symptoms will be required to undergo COVID-19 testing on arrival at the airport.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> No country-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown.</p> <p>South Korea tested widely for the virus using locally manufactured kits, isolated cases and quarantined suspected cases. It used data from surveillance cameras, cellphones and credit card transactions to map the social connections of suspected cases.</p>	<p>South Korea's relative success has been credited to its experience in combating MERS in 2015.</p> <p>South Korean response has caught the attention of other countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 17 countries have asked for the test kits through government channels - 30 countries directly asked the South Korean companies manufacturing the kits

				<p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> Measures for firms: loans and guarantees for business operation, and support of wages and rent for small merchants. Measures for local communities: local gift certificates and local government grants for costs of responding. Revenue measures: consumption tax cut for auto purchases; tax cuts for landlords who reduce rent for commercial tenants; VAT reduction for the self-employed; and tax payment deferral covering a broad range of taxes for small businesses and the self-employed in medical, tourism, performance, hospitality, and other affected sectors.</p>	
Taiwan	23.7	306 / 5	<p>No country-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown</p> <p>The country has not conducted widespread testing, but tested aggressively both those with serious and mild symptoms, as well as those who had contact with COVID-positive cases</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> Taiwan bars foreign nationals whose flights depart after 00:00 Taipei Standard Time (GMT+8) on March 19 from entering the country in accordance with measures announced by the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC). Exemptions are to be granted to Alien Resident Certificate holders, personnel on diplomatic or official business, persons who can prove they are fulfilling commercial and contractual obligations, and persons requiring special permission.</p> <p>In accordance with CECC regulations, the exempted foreign nationals listed in the previous paragraph must observe a 14-day home quarantine upon arrival. Relevant government agencies shall be responsible for any necessary arrangements regarding their lodging, movements, and work venues in Taiwan.</p> <p>Automatic 30-day extension for foreigners entering Taiwan on or before March 21 with visa waiver, visitor visa, or landing visa (no application is required) (overstayers excepted).</p>	Taiwan's relative success has been credited to its experience in combating SARS in 2003.

				<p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u></p> <p>Taiwan did not impose a country-wide or area-specific quarantine or lockdown.</p> <p>However, it implemented 124 safety protocols on (a) border control, travel restrictions and case finding; resource allocation; communication and politics.</p> <p>Also, it screened passengers from Wuhan as early as the first week of January. It is also the first country to ban flights from Wuhan on January 26.</p> <p>By late January, it established the Central Epidemic Command Centre.</p> <p>By late February, Taiwan had distributed nearly 6.5 million masks to primary and secondary schools, as well as after-school institutions, plus 84,000 liters of hand sanitizer and 25,000 forehead thermometers.</p> <p>It required television and radio stations to broadcast hourly public-service announcements about the coronavirus, including how it spreads and how people should prevent infection.</p> <p>In essence, Taiwan took advantage of its public infrastructure, data analytics, affordable healthcare and extensive educational outreach in its COVID-19 response.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> The government expenditure earmarked a total of NT\$100 billion, targeting mainly the worst-hit businesses such. The funding will be used to provide credit loans to businesses to help them through current difficulties and ensure subsidies are available to their workers.</p>	
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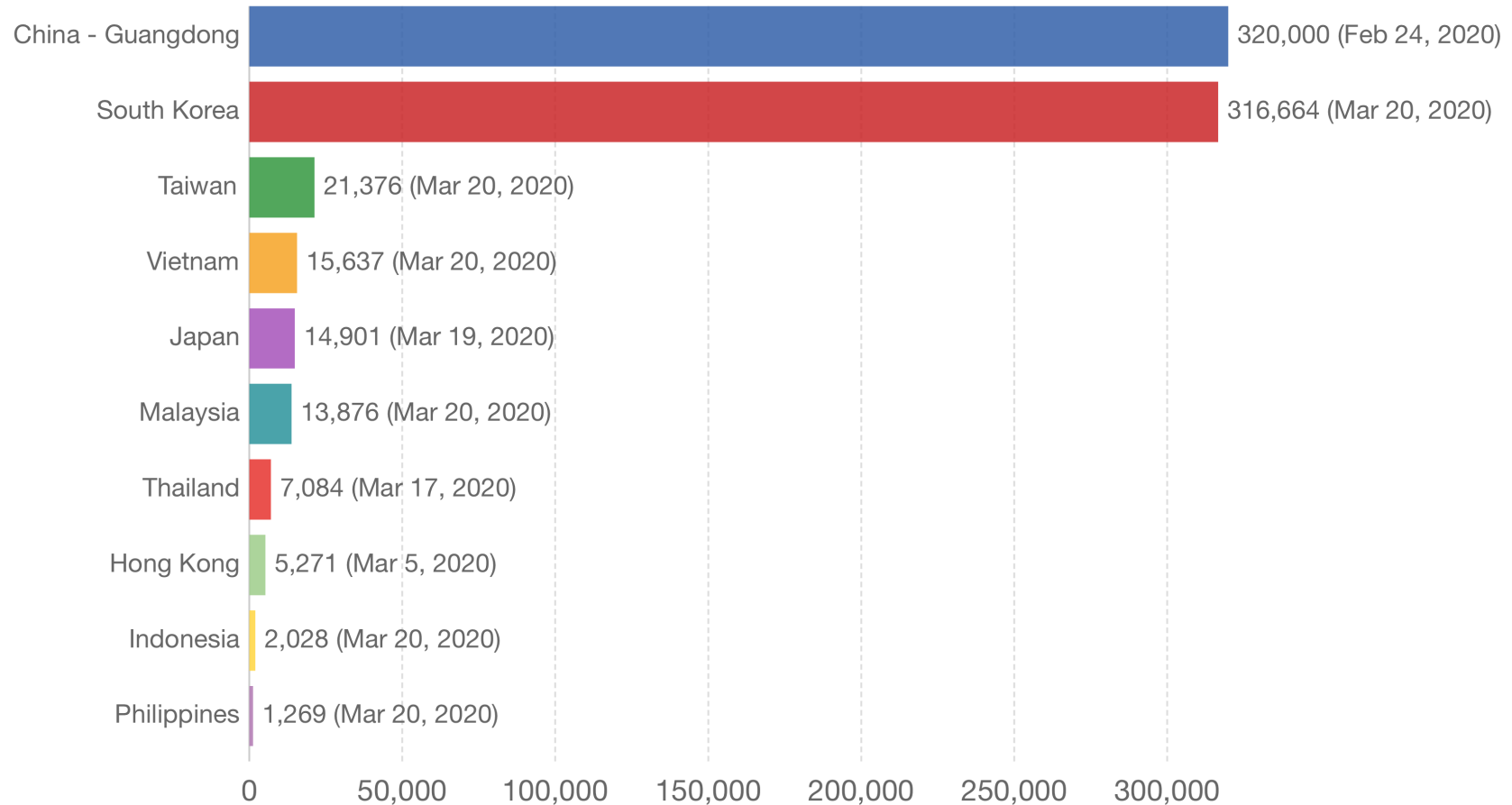
Thailand	69.4	1651 / 10	<p>State of Emergency, non-essential businesses are shut, inter-provincial travel is discouraged, Phuket, Narathiwat and Pattani on lockdown</p> <p>Limited testing capacity, although it may increase in the coming days/weeks</p>	<p><u>Border closures and entry bans:</u> Borders are closed to foreign visitors.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> Social gatherings will be banned, domestic travel restricted, and all but essential shops shut until the end of April.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> As of March 30, the Thai government is planning an estimated \$15.3 billion stimulus package; “it should be bigger than earlier two packages” combined,” said Finance Minister Apisak Tantivorawong. This comes after the Thai government approved a stimulus package expected to inject \$12.7 billion into the economy on March 10, including includes cash transfers, soft loans, and tax benefits.</p>	
Vietnam	95.5	204 / 0	<p>Quarantine, Contact Tracing of Confirmed Cases</p> <p>The country has not conducted widespread testing, but tested aggressively both those with serious and mild symptoms, as well as those who had contact with COVID-positive cases</p>	<p><u>Border closure and entry bans:</u> There is a ban on foreign visitors, including all overseas Vietnamese and their non-citizen spouses and children; foreigners with sought after skilled labor might be considered for an exemption.</p> <p><u>Quarantine or lockdown:</u> On March 30, Prime Minister Phuc asked major cities to prepare for possible lockdown. Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City have been mentioned as lockdown locations. In addition to quarantining all incoming travelers, Vietnam will use a contact-tracing program to curb the coronavirus spread.</p> <p><u>Economic stimulus:</u> On March 9, Phuc announced a \$1.3 billion fiscal package for health spending from the central contingency budget, including tax breaks, delayed tax payments, and government spending on infrastructure in an effort to maintain a 6.8 percent growth target, according to state media.</p>	<p>Vietnam is hailed for its approach to contain COVID-19, despite not having the resources of Singapore or South Korea.</p> <p>Essentially, the country isolates those who are infected and tracks down people they have been in contact with, up to “second to third hand contacts”</p>

COVID-19 data as of 20 March: Total tests performed by country



Data collected by Our World in Data from official country reports.

For some countries the number of tests corresponds to the number of individuals who have been tested, rather than the number of samples.



Source: Our World in Data

Note: Data for the United States corresponds to estimates from the COVID-Tracking Project.

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Sources:

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