

Daily Thai News Summary: 12 April 2016

1. Songkran to draw 2.1 M visitors

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

A number of 2.1 million foreign visitors are expected to arrive in Thailand during April 13-17, when the Kingdom celebrates the traditional Thai New Year or Songkran. According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), the number represented a 2.1 per cent increase from last year. Chinese tourists will constitute the largest chunk of arrivals. The tourist spending during the period is expected to increase by 3.5 per cent from last year to Bt6.9 billion.

2. Surge in registration of new companies

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

New Company registrations set a two-year high last month, which the Commerce Ministry attributed to the government's investment promotion measures and strong tourism growth. New business registrations reached 6,176 in March - up 8 per cent year on year and 10 per cent from February. Pongpun Gearaviriyapun, director-general of the Business Development Department, said yesterday that new enterprises were encouraged to set up by the government's measures to promote investment, the special economic zones and healthy tourism growth.

The department's measures to facilitate start-ups have also supported business formation. The expectation that gross domestic product could expand by 3.3 per cent this year has also spurred the establishment of more companies, she claimed. The department expects about 60,000-65,000 companies to be born this year.

3. Mega lifesciences marks 20th year in Myanmar

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

Mega Lifesciences, a Thai pharmaceutical firm, celebrated 20 years of operations and US\$100 million (Bt3.5 billion) of business the company and its partners have secured since its inception in Myanmar. *"From starting on a very small scale in 1995, to now having 1,400 staff, eight offices and presence in 50 towns and cities in Myanmar, we are grateful to celebrate two decades here,"* Vivek Dhawan, CEO and chief coach, said yesterday. Mega derived 32.3 per cent of its sales from Myanmar last year. The pharma has become a successful case study for international corporations doing business in that country. *"This growing market represents our*

top country by revenue of all the 31 countries where Mega Lifesciences is found. We are proud to be able to help local people with their health and wellness and we thank Myanmar for its support," he said. The large pharma distributes pharmaceuticals, vitamins and consumer products in the neighbouring country.

4. Chinese tyre maker to grow in Thailand

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

Shandong Linglong Tire Co, one of the top five tyre producers in China, plans to expand its investment in the Thai rubber industry, focusing on a tyre-testing centre and rubber-compound manufacturing. The decision followed the success of its subsidiary Linglong International Tire (Thailand). LLIT set up a US\$700-million (Bt24.5 billion) tyre factory in Rayong province in November 2012. The Chinese company committed to the investment expansion plan under a letter of intent signed on Friday on the sidelines of a "Rubber City" seminar held by the Thai Industry Ministry during a roadshow in Qingdao, Shandong province, to woo Chinese rubber investors.

Under the agreement, LLIT in its third phase expects to produce some rubber compound. This is a midstream industry that can consume a large amount of natural rubber, Industry Minister Atchaka Sibunruang said after the meeting. The company's rubber-compound output is for export. The compound contains chemicals that result in a product of higher quality than general block rubber to produce tyres for use in the auto industry. Shandong Linglong Tire president Wang Feng said in a presentation to Atchaka and other officials that the company's investment in Thailand was part of its "3+3 strategy" under which it would develop its three plants based in China - in Zhaoyuan, Dezhou and Liuzhou - and three overseas factories in parallel. The plant in Thailand is seen as the starting point of the company's globalisation strategy to form three overseas manufacturing bases, he said, adding that LLIT's first two phases had hired more than 2,000 Thais.

5. NCPO expected to order NBTC to hold 900 Mhz auction on May 27

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

The National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) will likely order the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) to hold a new auction for the 900-megahertz licence on May 27 and extend the switch-off date of the existing second-generation service on that spectrum from April 14 to June 30, according to a NBTC source. The orders are being issued under the special powers granted by Article 44 of the interim charter imposed by the junta after it took over in 2014. The minimum starting bid will be Bt75.654 billion, the price for which Jas Mobile Broadband won licence at the previous auction in December but defaulted last month by failing to pay the first instalment of the upfront licence fee. All existing mobile operators, including True Corp, which won a licence at the last auction, will be allowed to bid. Jas will not. The NCPO was expected to make the formal announcement late yesterday. NBTC secretary-general Takorn Tantasith said there were two parts to the NCPO order - the holding of the auction, and a memorandum of understanding between Advanced Info Service and True Corp. According to the NBTC source, under the MoU, AIS can roam some of its 900MHz users with True Move H Communication Universal Service (TUC) during the extension period of the 2G-900MHz service. TUC's own 2G service will be officially launched on Friday.

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