

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 10 JANUARY 2022

1. Bangkok preps for Omicron surge with ambulance drills, entertainment clampdown

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

Aswin Kwanmuang ordered district officials to tighten controls on the spread of Covid-19, focusing on entertainment venues, pubs, bars and karaoke outlets. District offices were also told to rehearse transport measures for patients to ensure they receive medical treatment quickly. Patients who develop mild symptoms will be treated under Home Isolation,” Bangkok Metropolitan Administration permanent-secretary Khajit Chatchavanich said on Saturday. “They will receive a thermometer, fingertip oximeter, anti-fever Fah Talai Jone pills and other drugs,” he explained. Those whose symptoms worsen will receive Favipiravir or be sent to a community isolation facility, field hospital or hospital, based on the severity of illness.

2. Tuesday opening of new sandbox provinces confirmed

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

The three southern provinces of Surat Thani, Krabi and Phangnga will start accepting people flying in from abroad under the sandbox formula on Tuesday. The date was confirmed in the announcement of the Royal Gazette published on Saturday. It said travellers can enter Koh Tao, Koh Phangan and Koh Samui in Surat Thani and the entire provinces of Krabi and Phangnga from Tuesday onwards. Visitors have to follow the same protocol as the sandbox in Phuket, which requires one RT-PCR test upon their arrival at registered hotels and another five or six days later.

3. Udon Thani ready to meet new investors

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

The Udon Thani Industrial City, the first industrial estate in the kingdom's northeastern region, is expected to welcome its first group of investors in April. Managing director Phisit Piputvilaikul said construction of the estate, covering 2,170 rai, is on schedule despite the Covid-19 outbreak. The first phase of development, covering 1,100 rai, has been completed. The first phase, with an investment of 12 billion baht, involves the construction of logistics facilities, water distribution and drainage pipes and roads. The water production system has the daily production capacity of 4,000 cubic metres (m³), while the wastewater treatment system has a capacity of 3,200m³ -- both systems will be completed in April.

4. Ministry mulls revision of EV import duties

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

The Finance Ministry is considering a revision of the import duty rates for electric vehicles (EV) to make them more affordable for consumers, says Deputy Finance Minister Santi Prompat. Mr Santi said the goal is to enable Thais to buy EVs at reasonable prices as part of the country's EV promotion policy. Thailand's EV import tax rates vary. EVs imported from China enjoy a 0% tax rate under a bilateral agreement between Thailand and China. Some EVs imported from Japan are subject to a 20% tax rate under the Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement. However, most EVs imported from Japan face an 80% rate as their Japanese content exceeds the level required to qualify for the lower rate.

5. NEW RULES: Test and Go cut-off dropped, 3 new Sandboxes, 8+18 Blue Zones

Source: The Thaiger ([Link](#))

So the new Covid-19 restrictions and regulations have been passed by the CCSA and put into effect by the Royal Thai Government now. What exactly are the rules now with Test & Go, Sandboxes, and Blue Zones? New applications for the Test & Go programme, that allowed people to enter without quarantine, requiring only a short wait while their PCR test results came back, have been suspended indefinitely since December 22. A PowerPoint slide shared during a presentation by the CCSA on Friday had the cut-off date of January 15 for those already approved to enter. Earlier the Public Health Minister and PM had mentioned an even earlier cut off date.

SANDBOXES: With the continued suspension of the Test & Go programme, the Phuket Sandbox became the easiest way to enter the country. Now the CCSA has announced that Phuket will be joined by 3 more Sandbox programmes through which people can enter the country using only a soft quarantine. From January 11th, incoming international travellers will be able to do a Sandbox programme anywhere in the provinces of Krabi and Phang Nga, as well as the 3 Surat Thani province islands of Koh Samui, Koh Pha Ngan and Koh Tao.