

## Thai News Update: 13 May 2020

### **1. Zero new Covid-19 cases, for the first time in months**

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

There were no new cases of Covid-19 over a 24-hour period, or any deaths, Dr Taweessin Visanuyothin, spokesman of the government's Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration, said on Wednesday (May 13), marking one of the best days for Thailand since the outbreak of the pandemic. "This is the first time that there have been no new cases since we started the daily Covid-19 reports," he said. It is the best result, thanks to cooperation from the people, but we should not get complacent; we still have to be vigilant," he warned.

### **2. Cabinet okays transfer of B88.45bn from ministries**

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

The cabinet on 12 May approved a bill to transfer a combined 88.45 billion baht siphoned from the fiscal 2020 budgets of each ministry to be allocated to a central fund to fight the pandemic and rehabilitate the economy. The available amount to be transferred is far below the previous estimate of 100.4 billion baht. On April 21, the cabinet approved siphoning 10% of the fiscal 2020 budgets of each ministry to be allocated to a central fund to fight the pandemic and rehabilitate the economy. Most of the funds have yet to be disbursed by each ministry and are not tied-over budget. The plan is part of the third round of government measures to stem the impact of the outbreak. These measures will focus on people living in rural areas and on stabilising the financial and capital markets.

### **3. PM says THAI plan not yet on cabinet agenda**

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

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha says the rehabilitation plan of the loss-ridden Thai Airways International Plc (THAI) has yet to be completed and forwarded to the cabinet. The future of THAI is widely watched after reports the flagship carrier would need as much as 134 billion baht from the government to stay afloat. Gen Prayut's comments came after some news outlets reported on Tuesday the cabinet had discussed THAI's future at the meeting and all but two cabinet ministers were of the opinion it should be allowed to go under. The pair who believed it should be bailed out were Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak and Finance Minister Uttama Savanayana.

#### **4. FTI cooking up reopening plans**

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

The group will propose a plan to the government on how best to reopen the economy after the next phase of lockdown easing, said FTI chairman Supant Mongkolsuthree. "The FTI expects to finalise a plan as soon as possible," Mr Supant said. "Members mostly want the government to stimulate domestic purchasing power after the second phase of easing lockdown measures." The federation expects the government to further ease lockdown measures this month as coronavirus cases continue to decline in order to boost the domestic economy and employment.

#### **5. Food, medicine production may soon get automated**

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

The manufacturing of food and medicines may soon be automated to allay fears of contamination in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak. Kampanart Tanpithaksidh, director of Robot System Co Ltd, said that even though the sale of automated systems had dropped 30 to 40 percent due to the pandemic, the robotics industry is likely to expand. Apart from worries over contamination, robotic systems can work under extreme conditions and carry out tasks that require a lot of strength such as carrying heavy loads. Also, since the price of automated systems is getting more affordable every year, there is a high possibility that many industries that require high manpower, especially in the food and medicine sectors, will invest in robotics.

#### **6. Thailand partners with UN agency to cut CO2 emissions**

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

The Cabinet on Tuesday (May 12) approved a multibillion-baht project with the United Nations to tackle Thailand's notorious air pollution problem. The Industry Ministry's Department of Industrial Works was given the green light to partner with the UN Industrial Development Organisation (Unido) in a five-year programme to cut emissions of industrial greenhouse gas. The project will apply principles of mutual benefit by using environmentally friendly chemical products or by-products from certain industries to benefit other industries or nearby communities, explained deputy government spokesperson Traisulee Traisoranakul.

#### **7. Central Pattana reaffirms 'Hygiene & Safety' masterplan**

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

New 'Touchless Elevator' experience at CentralFestival EastVille and free space support to farmers and SMEs nationwide to stimulate local economies Central Pattana Plc., the operator and developer of Thailand's leading shopping centres under the brands of Central World, CentralPlaza, CentralFestival, Central Phuket, and Central Village, is laying emphasis on its

“Central’s Hygiene and Safety” masterplan announced in April covering five core criteria comprising over 75 measures. ‘Touchless Elevator’ is the prototype of its latest innovation experience at CentralFestival EastVille in line with the ‘New Normal’ consumer behaviours. Moreover, the company is offering 40,000 sq.m. of free space throughout its 33 shopping centers nationwide to farmers and SMEs to sell their products.

#### **8. NSC set to mull lifting emergency in 2 weeks**

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

The National Security Council (NSC) will decide whether to prolong the country's state of emergency in two weeks' time, secretary-general Somsak Roongsita said on 11 May. Gen Somsak told the Bangkok Post that whether to extend the executive decree depends on the number of people who are reported to have contracted Covid-19 over the coming days and weeks. "We will have a look at the matter in another two weeks," he said when asked about media reports that the NSC is considering revoking the decree on May 31. The NSC chief did not elaborate further but said the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) will consider various aspects from health and safety to security and the economy.