

Thai News Update: 15 April 2020

1. PM pushes Asean fund for virus tests, protective gear

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

Southeast Asian nations plan to discuss forming a joint fund to combat the coronavirus pandemic with China, Japan and South Korea during a virtual summit on 14 April, according to a Thai official. The 13-nation special summit initiated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations comes as the region struggles to contain the Covid-19 outbreak even after it spread to other parts of the globe. During a morning summit between Asean leaders, Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha proposed repurposing funds to support efforts to deal with the ongoing threat, government spokeswoman Narumon Pinyosinwat said.

2. Registration of businesses goes online to cut virus risk

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

The Department of Business Development is shifting business certification and juristic person registration services online to reduce the risk of Covid-19 infection, according to its director-general, Vuttikrai Leewiraphan. "To comply with the government's work-from-home policy and to promote social distancing, the Department of Business Development has ordered most of our staff to work from home since the announcement of the emergency decree on March 26," he said.

3. Economy could lose over B1.3tr if virus crisis goes beyond Q2

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

The Thai economy is expected to lose 1.3 trillion baht, almost all of it in the tourist sector, due to the initial impact of the coronavirus pandemic, a banking association said on 14 April. "But if the outbreak cannot be controlled within the current quarter, the impact will be bigger," Predee Daochai, chairman of the Thai Bankers' Association, said in a statement. However, a government package of economic measures worth 1.9 trillion baht should help mitigate the virus impact on Southeast Asia's second-largest economy, Mr Predee said.

4. Govt creates jobs for 300 informal workers left unemployed

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

The Department of Employment (DOE) will recruit 300 informal workers who have lost their jobs due to the Covid-19 outbreak for 45 days at a daily wage of Bt300. These people will be hired as staff assistants. Suchat Pornchaiwiseskul, director-general of DOE, said on Tuesday (April 14) that those interested can submit their education documents and application form at

the Bangkok Employment Office Areas 1 to 10 as well as at Provincial Employment Offices nationwide during working hours from April 15 to 17.

5. Grocery trucks get new life from coronavirus shutdown

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

Cries of "Food, here comes the food," echoed through a Bangkok neighbourhood as Wannapa Yarnsarn's truck arrived with everything from mangoes and dried chillies to fresh pork for sale. People emerged from homes where they have been sheltering in an effort to stop the spread of the coronavirus, choosing their shopping from display racks packed with bags of produce on the back of the truck. For generations such mobile shops were common in Thai neighbourhoods but new shopping malls with their big supermarkets and convenience stores with microwave-ready meals have nearly driven them out of business.

6. Government intensifies drought mitigation operations in east Thailand

Source: Pattaya Mail ([Link](#))

Deputy Prime Minister Gen Prawit Wongsuwan, chairing the National Water Command (NWC) has assessed the latest development of drought mitigation and water management projects in the Chao Phraya River Basin and the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), including a video conference at the Office of National Water Resources (ONWR) with related agencies.

The DPM has urged related agencies to ensure timely completion and success of all water projects across the country to prevent shortages of water for consumption and farming in at-risk areas, which would worsen the impact already faced by the general public due to COVID-19 pandemic containment measures.

7. Aviation authority extends ban on flights until April 30

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

The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) on Wednesday (April 15) decided to further extend the ban on passenger flights to the Kingdom from 00.01am of April 19 to 11.59pm of April 30. The CAAT had initially prohibited all aircraft from entering Thailand from April 4 to 18. The move is to stem the Covid-19 contagion. The order, signed by CAAT director-general Chula Sukamanop, exempts state or military aircraft, emergency landings, technical landings without any passengers disembarking, humanitarian aid and medical or relief flights, repatriation flights and cargo aircraft.

8. Hospitals, police get Chinese shipment of protective equipment

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

A shipment of personal protective equipment (PPE) imported from China to relieve shortages in Thai hospitals has been given the stamp of approval by a high-ranking police officer. Gen Torsak Sukvimol, deputy commissioner of the Central Investigation Bureau, tested the consignment of medical masks and safety glasses before sending more than 1,500 sets to over 80 hospitals nationwide. The shipment is expected to fill gaps in the supply of medical equipment to deal with the Covid-19 crisis.