

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 18 JUNE 2021

1. Bangkok ready to provide over 350,000 doses of Astra Zeneca vaccine

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

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) reported on 17 June that it had been allocated 35,000 vials of AstraZeneca vaccine by the government to be provided to people in a priority group and to general public whose jabs had been delayed. The priority group includes people who have severe chronic respiratory diseases, cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease in stage 5 and above, cerebrovascular disease, all cancers during chemotherapy, radiotherapy and immunotherapy, diabetes and obesity with weight more than 100kg or body mass index greater than 35kg/m², and elders over 60 years of age. “The allotted vaccine is equal to 350,000 to 420,000 doses, as a single vial can provide 10-12 jabs,” said the BMA. “We will prioritise inoculating those who had registered via Mor Prom and Thai Ruam Jai platforms since earlier this month but got delayed. Around 25,000 vials will go to the priority group while the balance 10,000 will be used for the general public.”

2. Thailand up one spot in world competitiveness

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

Thailand has climbed one spot to 28th in the 2021 world competitiveness rankings conducted by the Institute for Management Development (IMD), supported by improvements in employment and public finances. However, its neighbours Malaysia and Indonesia saw bigger increases. The former rose two places to 25th while the latter advanced three spots to 37th. IMD, a Switzerland-based academic institution, ranks 64 economies and assesses the extent to which a country promotes the prosperity of its people by measuring economic well-being through hard data and survey responses from executives. This year the rankings show the economic impact of pandemic across the globe.

3. KTB expects total of 1m EVs by 2028

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

The number of electric vehicles (EVs) in Thailand is expected to reach 1 million in 2028 -- an increase of 24% per year -- with Japanese-made plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) to drive the next generation of cars, says Krungthai Compass, a research house under Krungthai Bank (KTB). Automakers from Japan continue to focus on PHEVs, while demand for battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) is growing slowly. Mana Nimitvanich, first vice-president of KTB, expects demand for PHEVs to grow and eventually

command a 93% market share of total EV sales. "Thailand saw registrations of EVs increase to 190,000 or around 1% of total cars in 2020," he said.

4. Siamese Asset upbeat on rise in hotel, condo demand

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

SET-listed developer Siamese Asset (SA) expects the country's reopening in October and an increase in foreign ownership quotas for condos to help boost the hotel and property business in the second half. Acting chief financial officer Suphon Chongchintaraksa said its hotel business has been preparing for reopening since last year, even before the third wave of the pandemic hit in April. "We adjusted our strategy from daily to monthly rents, which has seen good feedback from expats," he said. "One of our projects on Sukhumvit Soi 42 already has 40-50 units rented out, with the longest contract of two years." Moreover, an increase in foreign ownership quotas for condos from 49% to 70-80%, which the government is considering, would benefit the company's unsold condo inventory, said Mr Suphon. These ready-to-transfer projects already reached the ceiling for their foreign quota.

5. Imported fish, seafood to undergo strict quality check in bid to boost consumption

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

In a bid to build consumer confidence, the Department of Fisheries has instructed its officials to check all imported fish and seafood products, check final processing steps and block illegal imports. Mesak Pakdeekong, the department's director-general, said due to Covid-19, people are not consuming much fish or seafood, which has brought down the prices. "However, export of processed fish and seafood products is likely to pick up, so this is an opportunity for farmers to improve their processing system," he said. In a bid to gain confidence among people, he said the department has appointed the Fish Quarantine and Fishing Vessels Inspection Division and Fish Inspection and Quality Control Division to check imported fish and seafood products. The departments are also tasked with ensuring all processing procedures are done in line with the department's standards.