

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 20 APRIL 2022

1. PM unveils new forum on economy

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

The government will hold a public forum to hear what the business sector has to say about how to address economic problems, Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha said on 19 April. Speaking after the weekly cabinet meeting, Gen Prayut said officials from state agencies will be sent to gather feedback which will be used to inform policy. The forum will be held at a public venue, not on the premises of a government agency, Gen Prayut said. Asked whether he would be taking part in the forum, Gen Prayut said he would only deliver a speech at the opening. However he will be kept up-to-date with information from officials in attendance. Gen Prayut also said the traditional Thai New Year -- Songkran -- marks a new beginning for moves to propel the country forward under a government economic rehabilitation plan which hopes to boost the tourism sector, exports and investment.

2. Ministry pushing soft power

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

The Commerce Ministry vows to continue supporting and promoting soft power development, especially through food, fruit, digital content, health and beauty as well products with a Thai identity or Thainess. Phusit Ratanakul Sereroengrit, director-general of the International Trade Promotion Department (DITP), reported on Tuesday the department under the Commerce Ministry has successfully promoted 1,878 entrepreneurs during the first six months of fiscal 2022 (October 2021 to March 2022) and generated exports valued 3.9 billion baht. Of the total, 2.64 billion baht stemmed from fruits and the remaining 1.25 billion baht was mainly from food, digital content, health and beauty and creative products with a Thai identity.

3. BoT maintains its monetary policy

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

The Bank of Thailand still maintains an accommodative monetary policy to support economic recovery and views that supply-side inflationary pressure will be a temporary factor. The central bank's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will balance monetary policy management prudently, weighting in economic growth, financial stability and the inflation rate amid Thailand's uneven economic recovery and global shocks. Under this scenario, the central bank would keep an accommodative monetary policy supporting an economic

rebound, said Piti Distatit, the Bank of Thailand's assistant governor, monetary policy group, during an analysts' meeting on Monday.

4. DDC wants only antigen test on arrival for foreign visitors, not RT-PCR

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

The Department of Disease Control (DDC) will ask the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) to further ease up on the Test & Go scheme for foreign arrivals by changing the mandatory RT-PCR test upon arrival to an ATK test. The CCSA had approved the Public Health Ministry's proposal to cancel the requirement of a negative RT-PCR test result taken within 72 hours before departure for new arrivals and require visitors to take a RT-PCR test upon arrival from April 1. Opas said the number of new domestic infections is much higher than imported cases, therefore easing the Test & Go scheme should not significantly affect the total daily infections in Thailand.

5. Cabinet eyes new loans to fund Khon La Khrueng subsidy scheme

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

The Cabinet is still deciding whether the government should take more loans to launch another round of the co-payment scheme, the prime minister said on Tuesday. Speaking to reporters after the weekly Cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha said the discussion about new loans and the relaunching of the co-payment scheme has not been concluded yet. "We're still discussing whether the government needs more loans or not," he said, adding that measures have been put in place in case more loans need to be taken. "[The new loans] must be adequate. We must consider how to spend the money. We must also see how much we have now and whether more is needed now that we cannot control external factors affecting the economy," Prayut said.