

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 22 AUGUST 2022

1. New visa plan aimed at Europe's wealthy digital nomads

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

Thailand will soon welcome applications for its 10-year "golden visa" scheme aimed at wealthy foreigners, primarily those employed in tech sectors and digital nomads — or "work-from-Thailand professionals" as the Thai government puts it. The plan is expected to bring in the equivalent of around €26 billion for the local economy over the coming decade. Narit Therdsteerasukdi, deputy secretary general of the Thailand Board of Investment (BoI), told DW that he estimates that at least 50% of the applicants for the Long-Term Residence (LTR) visa programme will be from Europe. EU countries are the second-largest investor in Thailand, after Japan, with €19.8 billion worth of outward stocks in Thailand as of the end of 2020. Outward stock measures Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in enterprises located in foreign economies.

2. New ways to tackle 'little ghosts'

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

South Korea is still a popular destination among Thais seeking overseas employment due to high wages driven by labour shortages in the East Asian country. Based on Labour Ministry figures, about 25,000 Thai nationals are legally employed in South Korea under the Employment Permit System (EPS), which requires workers to meet qualification requirements, including passing a Korean language proficiency test. However, the number of Thais working illegally is estimated to be about 140,000, with a spike in illegal job seekers entering the country as tourists. Of the 280 who were allowed in for a three-day visit, 55 disappeared, forcing immigration officials to track them down.

3. PM purrs as Thailand's retreats ranked best in world for pampering

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

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha has hailed a report ranking Thailand as the world's top country for wellness retreats. Thai wellness resorts came top in international rankings based on research into Tripadvisor reviews by leisure website Slingo. Published last Monday, the research focused on which countries have the best resort hotels, wellness and spa activities. Thailand ranked No 1 with an overall wellness retreat score of 9.5/10. "Often referred to as the spa capital of Asia, Thailand is home to some of the most therapeutic and luxurious

retreats in the world. Thailand tops our list, with better reviews for wellness activities and resorts than any other destination we looked at,” Slingo said. Indonesia ranked second with an overall wellness retreat score of 8.5/10 while Maldives was third with a score of 8.5/10.

4. Apec meet to find 'balance' in post-Covid recovery

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

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha expects the upcoming 12th Apec High- Level Meeting on Health and the Economy to serve as a global forum to discuss medical innovations and measures to strike a balance between public health security and economic recovery. Running from tomorrow until Friday, and also known as Thailand's first Apec Health Week, the meeting will be attended by more than 150 health ministers and high-level health officials from Apec countries, said government spokesman Anucha Burapachaisri on 21 August. Gen Prayut believes the meeting will be fruitful and its outcome will benefit Thailand's ambition to become a regional medical hub, he said. The meeting, held during a time of global challenges, will serve as a forum for presenting new ideas steering global medicine and the public health sector, with the help of new technology and innovation, he said. Meanwhile, the 11th Apec Tourism Ministerial Meeting wrapped up on Friday without a joint statement being issued as some countries were not able to agree on a single paragraph in the draft closing statement, which dealt with "peace and stability", according to a source.

5. Thailand's bold e-commerce sector eyes metaverse as next frontier

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

Thailand's future e-commerce growth will be driven by expansion into the virtual world, experts said during the “Metaverse Expo Thailand” in Bangkok on 21 August. Hanawat Malabuppha, CEO and co-founder of shopping search engine Priceza, said Thai e-commerce had grown exponentially over the past 17 years, thanks to the internet and Covid-19 crisis. Its success was due to its ability to satisfy consumers’ needs for convenience, diversity and promotions, he added. "Even though Central continued expanding its branches, consumers prefer the internet rather than department stores as it meets their demand for convenience," he said. Under the government’s e-commerce development plan, Thailand is targeting e-commerce revenue of 5.35 trillion baht this year rising to 7.1 trillion baht by 2027.