

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 23 JULY 2021

1. Thai Army gives up space to set up screening centres nationwide

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

The Army has offered its club in Bangkok to be used as a screening site for Covid-19 patients in the capital and surrounding areas. The site will be able to accommodate 300 to 400 patients. The Army said it has joined hands with provincial health agencies to set up 19 such screening sites nationwide. These centres will receive patients before transferring them to proper medical facilities if their symptoms worsen. So far, 3,323 beds are available at these centres nationwide.

2. New Phuket rule passes

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

Foreign visitors participating in the Phuket sandbox scheme will be allowed to visit other tourist spots after seven days starting from Aug 1. Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana, spokesman for the Centre for Economic Situation Administration (CESA), said the centre approved the move on 22 July. The other tourist spots are: Koh Samui, Koh Phangan and Koh Tao in Surat Thani; Koh Phi Phi, Koh Ngai and Railay Bay in Krabi; and Khao Lak, Koh Yao Yai and Koh Yao Noi in Phangnga. According to Mr Thanakorn, the governors of the three provinces are required to work with the private sector and civil services to seek cooperation from people living in those areas. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is expected to propose additional tourism spots to be reopened later for international tourists, he said.

3. GPSC bags 41.6% stake in Avaada

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

Global Power Synergy Plc (GPSC), a power generation arm of national oil and gas conglomerate PTT Group, has acquired a 41.6% share -- worth 14.82 billion baht -- in Indian solar power developer Avaada Energy Private Co (Avaada) as part of its move towards sustainability and clean energy development. PTT president and chief executive, Auttapol Rerkpiboon, said the investment shows PTT's commitment to joining the global campaign of net-zero emissions and striking a balance between greenhouse gas emissions and absorption. The share purchase, which was made through GPSC's subsidiary Global Renewable Synergy Co (GRSC), will also support the Indian government's policy to promote renewable energy development in the country of over 1.3 billion people.

4. Phuket economy gets THB400 million boost from tourism sandbox programme

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

The tourism sandbox program has generated an estimated THB400 million income directly and indirectly for Phuket within a month. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT)'s Phuket Office on 21 July reported that since the launch of the sandbox program on July 1, the province has welcomed 9,358 foreign tourists. "The top five countries with most tourists visiting Phuket in the past 20 days are United States, United Kingdom, Israel, Germany and France," added the office.

5. Six more islands to join Phuket Sandbox on Aug 1

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

Six more islands are set to open for foreign tourists on August 1 under the Phuket Sandbox scheme for quarantine-free travel. Given the green light on 22 July were Koh Phi Phi, Koh Ngai and Koh Railay in Krabi province and Khao Lak, Koh Yao Noi and Koh Yao Yai in Phang Nga province. The proposal to open the islands under a "7+7" format was granted in principle by a Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) meeting chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha. The CCSA said it will review the proposal before making an official announcement. According to the proposal, foreign tourists who stay on Phuket for seven days and test negative for Covid-19 will be free to go island hopping for seven days. Other areas proposed for the Phuket Sandbox were rejected as only about 30 per cent of their local have been vaccinated.

6. Ministry launches vaccine drive for elderly foreigners

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

The Disease Control Department, the Central Vaccination Centre, and the Foreign Affairs Ministry have launched Covid-19 vaccination services for elderly foreigners residing in Thailand. The ministry's Consular Affairs Department opened mass vaccination services for foreigners living in Thailand from Monday at Bang Sue Grand Station in Bangkok. According to the departments, foreigners over 75 who have not received a jab can walk in for vaccinations from 9am–4pm at Gates 2, 3 and 4. They must present their passport and proof of residence, such as a visa or a work permit.