

# Thai News Update: 24 April 2020

## **1. Two airlines to resume domestic flights**

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

Thai AirAsia and Thai Lion Air will likely be the first to resume domestic flights, starting May 1, according to aviation authorities. The routes will hinge on the decision of each province to ease its lockdown. The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand had a meeting with representatives from 20 airlines on 23 April. CAAT director Chula Sukmanop said after the meeting Thai AirAsia would resume domestic services on May 1 while Thai Lion Air would rather wait to see whether the state of emergency would be extended from April 30.

## **2. China opens 2 more border points to allow transport of Thai fruits**

**Source: The Thaiger ([Link](#))**

The director-general of the Department of Agriculture announced today that China has opened two more points at its Vietnam border to allow the transportation of Thai fruits during the Covid-19 crisis. The move comes after the existing Youyi Guan checkpoint was overwhelmed with 15 kilometre queues of Thai and Vietnamese goods vehicles. The Department of Agriculture together with National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards raised the border traffic problem with the China's General Administration of Customs

## **3. More quarantine sites sought as returnees isolated**

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

The authorities are putting the 1,206 returnees under 14-day quarantine to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Anek Mungaomklang, director of the Institution for Urban Disease Control, said on Thursday (April 23) that the government is seeking more quarantine sites in Bangkok and other provinces. The capital currently has 10 sites for quarantine, while the provinces of Chonburi and Nakhon Pathom have four each. So far, 1,478 people are under quarantine in Bangkok and 1,192 in provinces. Of them, nine are infected with Covid-19.

## **4. Baht strengthens as foreign investors buy bonds**

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

The baht opened at 32.36 to the US dollar on Thursday morning (April 23), strengthening from 22 April's close. The baht is expected to move between 32.30 and 32.50 per US dollar, said Jitipol Puksamatanan, SCB Securities senior market strategist. On 23 April night, the S&P 500

recovered by 2.3 per cent while Euro Stoxx 600 rose by 1.8 per cent, after the WTI crude oil price moved up to \$14.30 per barrel. The price of gold also increased, to \$1,715 per ounce.

### **5. Domestic flights may resume on May 1, but under strict conditions**

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

If provinces where tourist destinations are located start lifting their restrictions next month, then airlines will be allowed to resume domestic flight services but only under strict conditions. Chula Sukmanop, director-general of the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT), said on Thursday (April 23) that he has met with representatives of both local and international airlines to discuss the option of allowing domestic flights to start operating from May 1.

### **6. Food exporters urged to think smaller**

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

Thailand's food exporters have been warned of a sea change in consumer consumption and the retail market structure, bending towards supermarkets and away from catering services. Visit Limlurcha, president of the Thai Food Processors Association, said food exports are expected to change from big volume in bulky packaging to small portions in tiny packaging. "The spread of Covid-19 has caused consumers to change their behaviour, opting to stock food and stay at home to curb a possible contagion," said Mr Visit. "Demand for food at supermarkets is higher than catering following worldwide lockdown measures."

### **7. EMPG acquires Kaidee in Asean expansion**

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

Emerging Markets Property Group (EMPG), a Dubai-based bespoke online classified solutions provider, has taken over Kaidee, one of Thailand's major marketplaces, as part of its strategy to expand its footprint in Asean. "We were wholly acquired by Dubai-based EMPG in February after one year of discussion," Tiwa York, head coach and chief executive of Kaidee, told the Bangkok Post. He declined to divulge the transaction's value. EMPG owns top property portal Zameen.com in Pakistan, Bproperty.com in Bangladesh, Mubawab in Morocco and Tunisia as well as Bayut.com in the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. The group, which usually focuses on the Middle East and emerging markets, is now expanding its reach to Asean.

### **8. Hand sanitiser new daily essential**

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

Ethanol, alcohol and sanitiser makers expect hand sanitiser products will be a part of daily life going forward as the public has been educated about disease prevention and hygiene. Alcohol-based hand sanitiser has become essential in the fight to slow down the Covid-19 outbreak. In

a short time, such sanitiser should be available nationwide after a month-long shortage thanks to efforts by the government and private sector to step up production. At the end of March, policymakers ended the strict controls on alcohol to allow ethanol to be converted into consumer-grade alcohol sanitiser, allowing it to be produced quickly and cheaper.