

## Thai News Update: 24 March 2020

### **1. Finance Ministry to propose financial support of 2000 baht a month per Thai person who is directly impacted by the Covid-19 Coronavirus**

**Source: The Pattaya News ([Link](#))**

The Finance Ministry Permanent Secretary, Prasoong Poontaneat, told the press earlier this evening he plans to bring a proposal at a Thai Cabinet meeting on 24 March which would give 2000 baht a month, for two months total, to each Thai person who is directly laid off or affected by the Covid-19 Coronavirus, for a grand total of 4000 baht (About 120 dollars US). The Finance Ministry will cover those who are not covered by social security under this proposal, he added. He believes that roughly five million people are currently affected by business closures in Thailand, especially in the entertainment and tourism industries. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Political Affairs states they are looking for additional support and assistance for the Thai People.

### **2. Commerce Ministry relaunches 200 mobile grocers**

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

The Commerce Ministry is scheduled to relaunch 200 mobile grocery stores on Tuesday, selling essential consumer goods in Greater Bangkok as part of the government's efforts to lower people's cost of living and curb the spread of Covid-19. The ministry has also established two ad-hoc committees to supervise consumer goods prices at both the national and provincial level to prevent hoarding and profiteering by traders. Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit said after Greater Bangkok, the ministry plans to introduce 400-500 mobile grocery stores in provincial areas.

### **3. Bank of Thailand expands liquidity support to more fund types**

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

Thailand's central bank said it has expanded the scope of a facility set up to provide liquidity to mutual funds and it will now encompass all types of money market funds as well as daily fixed income funds. The central bank is ready to consider additional measures to ensure financial markets function well and the country's financial system is stable, Bank of Thailand Governor Veerathai Santiprabhob said in a statement. The facility is among steps announced on Sunday to help mitigate the impact of the coronavirus outbreak.

### **4. THAI Smile grounds international flights**

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

THAI Smile has suspended all international routes amid worldwide air travel restrictions in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak. The cancellation of its international flights started on Monday, the airline said, adding that its domestic routes continue normally. Passengers holding international tickets can receive a full refund without any charges, the airline said. THAI Smile has joined other Thai airlines, including Thai AirAsia, Bangkok Airways, Thai Lion Air and Vietjet, in suspending international services after the pandemic led to a sharp decline in the numbers of air travellers.

### **5. First Covid-19 field hospital opens Wednesday**

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

Thammasat University Hospital will on 25 March open Thailand's first field hospital for non-critical coronavirus patients at the university's Rangsit campus. The Dluxx dormitory in the Asean Games zone of the campus has been modified into the 308-bed facility, said Prof Suraphol Nitikraipot, chairman of the executive board of the hospital. The project is a collaboration of five teaching hospitals — Siriraj, Ramathibodi, Chulalongkorn, Vajira and Thammasat — to alleviate congestions at existing facilities after a recent jump in the number of patients.

### **6. THAI slashing up to 58 per cent of flights until October**

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

Thai Airways International Plc (THAI) plans a drastic reduction of its flights from January-October 2020 due to the decreasing number of passengers because of the new coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, a source revealed. The plan aimed to cancel up to 22,948 flights or an average 39.2 per cent of the total 58,513 flights that were previously scheduled. According to the source, in January 28 flights, or 0.4 per cent, of total flights per month were cancelled while in February 454 flights (7.5 per cent) were cancelled. In March 2,115 flights (33.3 per cent) will be cancelled.