

Thai News Update: 26 October 2020

1. Government to draw up list of Covid-19 low-risk countries to consider easing restrictions

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

The Public Health Ministry will make a list of low-risk countries for the Covid-19 pandemic, which will be submitted to the Interior Ministry to draw up criteria for further easing restrictions on entry of foreigners into the country. Government Spokesman Anuchai Burapachaisri said that the list would also be used to consider reduction of the quarantine period from the current mandatory 14 days. Danucha Pichayanan, secretary-general of the National Economic and Social Development Council, said that it was important to set up clear criteria to grant foreigners entry.

2. Border trade resuming in Mae Sot

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

Cross-border cargo trade resumed over the second Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge in Mae Sot on 26 October morning after Covid-19 restrictions were eased. The lockdown imposed on two communities in the district will be lifted on Tuesday morning. Movement of cargo between Thailand and Myanmar over the bridge, at Ban Wang Ta Khian in tambon Tha Sai Luat, was suspended and two Mae Sot communities, Masjid Madihah and Ban Thung Thong, placed under lockdown after several coronavirus cases were found in Mae Sot district.

3. The UK-Asean connection

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

The United Kingdom has maintained strong and warm ties with Asean ever since the regional bloc was formed in 1967. This longstanding economic partnership has allowed bilateral trade in goods and services to reach approximately £42 billion today. In light of the huge impact the coronavirus pandemic has had on the world, the UK and Asean have agreed on the importance of economic cooperation and unity to mitigate the economic consequences of the pandemic. Britain is now seeking to become one of Asean's trusted dialogue partners, which will allow its representatives to appear at Asean ministerial meetings and summits. Its participation would further enhance economic and social collaboration.

4. Green light sought for Phuket deal

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

The Federation of Thai Industries (FTI) is preparing to ask the government next month to approve a multi-billion-baht project, jointly proposed by treasury and health officials, to develop world-class medical tourism in Phuket. The officials want to turn 141 rai of land on the resort island into a medical and wellness tourist destination. "The FTI will ask the government to green-light the project during the scheduled mobile cabinet meeting on the island on Nov 3," said Kitkong Tantijaraswarodom, chairman of the FTI's southern chapter. He believes medical tourism could boost the southern economy as Thailand continues to deal with the economic impact of the pandemic.

5. Deputy PM outlines govt strategies to revive Thai economy in wake of Covid-19 outbreak

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

Deputy Prime Minister Supattanapong Punmeechaow, who is also energy minister, has outlined strategies to boost national revenue next year in a bid to reinvigorate the economy in the fallout of Covid-19. He said the government will continue wooing targeted foreign investors to the much-touted Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). The EEC has already made progress in launching mega infrastructure projects, including the development of a high-speed railway linking the country's three main international airports and the development of the U-Tapao International Airport and the Eastern Airport City.

6. Gold Card expansion on Nov 1

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

Subscribers to the state's universal health care programme, or the "gold card" scheme, will be able to access treatment with much less red tape at a wider range of medical clinics, after Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha ordered the government to make the scheme more accessible to the general public. The announcement was made by government spokesman, Anucha Burapachaisri, who said that starting from Nov 1, gold card scheme subscribers will be able to access medical care at any clinic within their healthcare zones, under a pilot programme launched by the government. At present, subscribers are limited to accessing treatments at one clinic within their zones.

7. Toyobo and Indorama Polyester to build new plant for automobile airbag yarns

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

Toyobo Co Ltd has joined hands with Indorama Polyester Industries Pcl (IPI) to set up a joint venture firm for the manufacture of yarns for automobile airbags. IPI is a part of Indorama

Ventures Pcl, the world's largest polyethylene terephthalate producer. The joint venture company plans to build a new plant on the IPI factory site in Rayong province, and start operations in the first quarter of 2022.