

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 2 MARCH 2022

1. Cabinet approves special perks for EEC

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

The cabinet approved yesterday special incentives for seven economic zones in the government's flagship Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), a move to strengthen Thailand's investment competitiveness. According to deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek, the seven economic zones comprise the Eastern Economic Corridor for aviation (EECa); Eastern Economic Corridor for innovation (EECi); Eastern Economic Corridor for digital (EECd); Eastern Economic Corridor for the medical hub (EECmd); Eastern Economic Corridor of genomics (EECg); Eastern Economic Corridor of high-speed rail (EECh); and Digital and High Technology Centre, Ban Chang, Rayong.

2. India bubble gets all-clear

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

The cabinet has approved an air travel bubble with India which is expected to commence later this month, deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek said on 1 March. Ms Rachada said the bubble proposed by the Transport Ministry was submitted to the cabinet for consideration after the agreement with Delhi was concluded. The proposed bubble came after commercial flights between the two countries were suspended due to an upsurge of Covid-19 infections in India in late March. Afterwards, authorities in India asked Thailand to look at the possibility of resuming air links through a bubble arrangement. Under the agreement, only Thai, Indian, Nepali and Bhutanese nationals and other nationalities originating from either Thailand or India who hold a valid visa to enter either country will be eligible to fly.

3. Medical expert warns against excessive use of Favipiravir for Covid infections

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

The concern was voiced on 1 March by Assoc Prof Dr Thawee Chotepithayasunon, a specialist of the Medical Services Department Thawee said about 90 per cent of people do not have symptoms or only have mild symptoms after they are infected with the Omicron strain of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, so they should not be given the Favipiravir antiviral drug. The doctor said statistics showed that Thailand is using about 2 million pills of Favipiravir a day or 60 million pills a month, which was very high. "Since the antiviral drug is used in very high amounts now, specialists fear drug resistance. Theoretically, it can happen," Thawee said. He said once the Covid-19 virus becomes resistant to Favipiravir, the antiviral drug would become useless.

4. Govt agrees plan for Saudi Arabia labour deployment as ties normalise

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

The government plans to facilitate the deployment of labour to Saudi Arabia for the first time in decades, a spokesman said on 1 March, part of the restoration of ties that were severed by the Gulf State over a multi-million dollar jewellery theft. Thailand has been eager to normalise relations with the oil-rich Kingdom after a spat that has cost billions of dollars in two-way trade and tourism revenues and the loss of tens of thousands of overseas jobs. The two countries agreed to re-establish full diplomatic ties following the January visit by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha to Saudi Arabia on Jan 25 as a guest of Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, restoring diplomatic ties after a 30-year freeze.