

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 30 AUGUST 2021

1. GPO to sign purchase contract for 8.5 million ATKs on Monday

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

The Government Pharmaceutical Organisation (GPO) will sign a contract with Ostland Capital Ltd to purchase 8.5 million antigen test kits (ATKs) on August 30, said GPO director-general Dr Witoon Danwiboon on 27 August. The ATKs will be used by the National Health Security Office and Rajavithi Hospital," he said. "Both organisations stipulate that the ATKs must be for home use and not professional use and must be approved by Thailand's Food and Drug Administration. He added that no requirement has been set regarding approval by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The GPO's purchase of 8.5 million ATKs made by Beijing-based Lepu Medical Technology sparked public controversy in recent weeks following news that the brand is banned in the United States due to a high risk of false results. This sparked doubts about the product's quality.

2. India pinpointed for TAT tourism bonanza

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

Thailand should grant Indian tourists permission to visit after Covid infections on the subcontinent improved significantly, as pent-up demand is starting to flood into other countries, says the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). The Indian market is forecast to have 21,000 tourists generating at least 938 million baht in the fourth quarter under a best-case scenario that assumes Indian tourists can access the sandbox programme without quarantine, as well as commercial flights to six key cities resuming services, said Cholada Siddhivarn, director of TAT's Mumbai office. At present, there are no commercial flights between the two countries as Thailand suspended certificate of entry (COE) issuance for Indian nationals since April, due to a spike in caseloads in India.

3. Aviation authority gives the green light for air travel between dark red provinces

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

The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) announced on 29 August that from September 1 airlines can operate passenger flights between 29 "dark red" provinces while ensuring disease control measures are strictly followed. The announcement came after the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration on Friday announced the lifting of restrictions on domestic air travel. Passengers must present a vaccine certificate or a negative test result as required by the destination provinces. The 29 "dark red" provinces are: Bangkok, Kanchanaburi, Chonburi, Chachoengsao, Nakhon Pathom, Nakhon Nayok, Nakhon

Ratchasima, Narathiwat, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Prachinburi, Ayutthaya, Phetchaburi, Pattani, Phetchabun, Yala, Rayong, Ratchaburi, Lop Buri, Songkhla, Singburi, Samut Prakan, Samut Songkhram, Samut Sakhon, Saraburi, Suphanburi, Tak and Ang Thong.

4. Incentives for promotion of electric vehicles to be announced next month

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

Tax incentives and other measures supporting electric vehicles (EV) will be unveiled in September, Minister of Energy Supattanapong Punmeechaow told a seminar on 27 August. These measures will encourage manufacturers and users to invest in EVs, he said. The measures would be implemented without waiting for market demand and they would come out along with infrastructure to support EVs, he added. Supattanapong said that these measures are a part of the 30/30 policy under which 30 per cent of automotive manufacturing in Thailand must be EVs by 2030, or nine years from now.

5. Government urged to promote edtech

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

The government is being advised to apply more educational technology as a tool to address inequality in education and upgrade Thailand's competitiveness. Danucha Pichayanan, secretary-general of the National Economic and Social Development Council, said educational technology (edtech) is a trend increasing the quality of academic content and teaching techniques that aims to solve the problem of inequality in education. This technology enhances opportunities to access learning and solves the problem of students stuck at home during the pandemic, he said. Edtech combines IT tools and educational practices meant to facilitate and improve learning.

6. South Korea may supply vaccines to Thailand at September-end

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

South Korea is likely to provide Covid-19 vaccines to Thailand at the end of September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. Ministry spokesperson Tanee Sangrat said that discussions were held with South Korean Foreign Minister Chung Eui-yong during his visit to Thailand from August 26 to 28. This was the first visit by the South Korean after he was promoted as minister, Tanee added. Chung met Don Pramudwinai, his Thai counterpart, on Friday and both discussed collaboration on Covid-19 vaccine. The South Korean said that his country could provide vaccines to Thailand at the end of September, after fully vaccinating 70 per cent of its population.