

Thai News Update: 30 March 2020

1. Prime Minister of Thailand discusses potential additional measures to control Covid-19 in Thailand

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

On 29 March, the Prime Minister called a meeting of relevant medical personnel to evaluate the plan for the week ahead and the restructuring of the COVID-19 Administration Center to solve the problem proactively. Prime Minister and Defense Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha arrived at the Thai Koo Fah Building at Government House in late morning to discuss and evaluate the situation, with relevant medical personnel, after the state of emergency was declared, to consider additional measures for next week. The Prime Minister stressed that the structure of the COVID-19 Administration Center is aimed at allowing the authorities to perform their duties to help people, solve problems, and prevent or halt the COVID-19 outbreak smoothly and efficiently.

2. Prayut approves buying medical supplies from china, japan

Source: Khasood English ([Link](#))

Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha has approved a 1.5-billion-baht (46-million U.S. dollar) budget for the Ministry of Public Health to buy medicines and medical equipments from China and Japan to cope with the COVID-19 spread in Thailand, Dr. Sukhum Kanchanapimai, at the ministry confirmed on Friday. “The budget is set to be spent on buying 340,000 favipiravir pills, the antiviral drug, used to treat COVID-19,” said the permanent secretary of the ministry, adding the new stock will be adequate for treating 6,000 patients. Two million N95 face masks and two million personal protection equipment suits will be also procured for medical staff within the budget.

3. GPSC bags four firms at 39.5MW

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

Global Power Synergy Plc (GPSC), the power generation arm of national energy firm PTT Plc, took over four firms yesterday operating nine solar farms in Thailand with total capacity of 39.5 megawatts. Chawalit Tippawanich, president and chief executive of GPSC, said the company took over the firms through its wholly owned Global Renewable Power Co (GRP), acquiring shares in GNPS Star Group Co, World X Change Asia Co, PP Solar Co and Terra Form Operating Thailand Co. The four companies operate nine solar farms in Lop Buri, Suphan Buri, Phichit and Khon Kaen provinces.

4. Industry Ministry to suspend small firms' debts

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

The Industry Ministry plans to roll out rescue measures by suspending debt payments for 6-12 months for small community enterprises for several industries affected by the Covid-19 outbreak. The measure covers businesses in food, drinks, herbs, jewellery, souvenirs and clothing. Local producers can apply for debt suspension in April. The Industrial Promotion Department under the Industry Ministry has extended loans to 2,500 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and community enterprises through a revolving fund for household industries and handicrafts.

5. Phuket airspace to shut down from April 10

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

Phuket Governor Phakkhaphong Thawiphath announced on March 29 that air transport to Phuket will also shut down after he had earlier ordered a halt to land and marine transport effective March 30 until April 30 in order to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus. "Shutting down the air transport route requires seven days notification in advance according to Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT)'s regulations, therefore the shutdown order will come into effect on April 10 and will last until April 30 just like other transport routes," he added.

6. Nok says it has no plan to halt all flights

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

Nok Airlines Plc has denied rumours appearing in several media that it would be suspending all flights. Chief executive officer Wutthiphum Jurangkool issued the statement on March 30 after the Stock Exchange of Thailand sought clarification on the rumour that it will be halting all flights temporarily. "The rumour is not true. If there is any change in the company's business operation, we will make an official statement to the public and Stock Exchange of Thailand," he said.

7. Medical body warns against testing for Covid-19 with kits bought online

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

The Association of Medical Technologist of Thailand (AMTT) has warned people against purchasing test kits online and examining themselves for Covid-19 at home. In a statement, the AMTT said some illegal Covid-19 test kits had leaked for sale on social media. AMTT warned people against buying these kits since they might be unverified or ones that had not

passed the FDA standard. if the test result is not interpreted by an expert, it might cause more harm than good, it warned.

8. Number of people registering for cash handouts crosses 18 million

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

More than 18.7 million people had registered as of 6am on March 30 for the government's Bt5,000 cash handout programme, the Ministry of Finance said. The government is offering eligible citizens whose livelihoods were impacted by the Covid-19 outbreak Bt5,000 a month for three months. The director-general of the Fiscal Policy Office, Lavaron Sangsnit, said that the registration results will be announced from April 4, while the registration website www.เราไม่ทิ้งกัน.com (we do not leave anyone behind) will remain open until no more people register.