

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 4 JULY 2022

1. All Thais can still get free Covid treatment despite move to endemic

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

Although Covid-19 has been regarded endemic since July 1, all Thai citizens remain eligible for free treatment if they catch the disease, according to the National Health Security Office (NHSO). The government said on Saturday that Covid-19 patients can still get treatment in line with their healthcare rights. “The prime minister has stressed that healthcare must cover all groups of people,” government spokesperson Rachada Dhnadirek said. “The government certainly will not leave anyone behind. Please believe in the Thai public health system.” However, she said it was more important for people to boost their immunity by taking care of their health.

2. Proposed culture avenue part of soft power push

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

The Ratchadamnoen Knowledge & Culture Avenue, expected to promote the creative economy and soft power, is scheduled for cabinet approval soon. According to Deputy Prime Minister Supattanapong Punmeechaow, the avenue, with a budget of 900 million baht, will be handled by the Office of Knowledge Management and Development (OKMD). The avenue is located on Rattanakosin Island, the old town of Bangkok ripe in Thai culture with many historical sites. "This project should support the government's ongoing soft power development efforts to generate more income for the country," said Mr Supattanapong.

3. Thailand expected to see 9.3 million tourists this year

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

Over 7 million tourists are expected to enter Thailand in the second half of this year, adding to nearly 2 million in the first half, government spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana said on Saturday. Between January 1 and June 28, a total of 1,978,023 foreign visitors entered the Kingdom, generating an estimated 114 billion baht. The Ministry of Tourism and Sports estimates that another 2.7 million tourists will arrive between July and September, and 4.5 million between October and December, he said. Most arrivals by air this year have been from India, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and the United States while tourists arriving by land have come mainly from Malaysia, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and China, Thanakorn said

4. Malaysia lifts 20-year ban on Thai rice flour exports

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

Malaysia is allowing Thailand to export rice flour to the western part of the country after shipments were halted for almost 20 years, Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit said on 3 July. The move came after a long-standing ban on issuing licences for Malaysian importers to import rice flour to the west was lifted, he said. "We found that Malaysian agencies responsible for issuing licences to import products to the western and eastern parts of the country were different," Jurin explained. In response, Thailand's trade envoy in Malaysia had asked importers to send evidence to the Department of Trade Negotiations (DTN) for negotiations between the countries, he added. Recently, Malaysian importers had informed the DTN and Thai trade envoy that they had received the licences.

5. Ko Phangan upbeat after being ranked No 1 destination for 'workation'

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

Ko Phangan, an island district of this southern province, has been ranked the No 1 destination for people seeking a workation (work + vacation) in a recent survey by William Russell, a website which offers health insurance, life insurance, and income protection plans for people living and working abroad. The website's users include expats, individuals, professionals, families, remote workers, digital nomads, frequent travellers, startups, small and medium-sized businesses, large corporates, charities and governmental organisations. The survey concludes Ko Phangan is the No 1 destination for workation, followed by No 2 - Gran Canaria, Spain; No 3 - Lisbon, Portugal; No 4 - Austin, Texas, USA; No 5 - Sao Paulo, Brazil; No 6 - Budapest, Hungary; No 7 - Canggu, Bali, Indonesia; No 8 - Belgrade, Serbia; No 9 - Berlin, Germany; and No 10 - Buenos Aires, Argentina.