

Thai News Update: 4 March 2021

1. Anutin-led panel to consider vaccine passport, travel bubble

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

Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said on 3 March that people who have been vaccinated against Covid-19 will be given a book, which can be used as evidence for travel and to boost public confidence. “The Public Health Ministry is making preparations to bring life back to normal, restore businesses and revive the Thai economy,” Anutin said. The National Communicable Diseases Committee, which is chaired by Anutin, will on March 8 discuss the vaccine passport as well as the option of creating a travel bubble with countries where a large number of people have been vaccinated.

2. Cabinet okays MoU on expanding trade cooperation with Russia, targets \$10 billion

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

At its weekly meeting on 2 March, the Cabinet gave the green light to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the expansion of trade and economic cooperation between Thailand and Russia. The objective of the MoU is to enhance and strengthen relations, as well as expand economic cooperation and technological development. The Thai-Russian Trade and Economic Cooperation subcommittee has set a trade-value target of US\$10 billion by 2023 and will discuss cooperation on a sector-by-sector basis, such as:

- Agriculture: Russia urged to consider importing Thai agricultural produce and rubber.
- Industry: Both sides eyeing a joint working group on industrial development.

3. EA Group subsidiary Amita teams up with Taiwan’s ITRI to develop innovative solid-state batteries

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

Amita Technologies, Inc has successfully developed state-of-the-art solid-state batteries called NAEPE, or Networked-Amide Epoxy Polymer Electrolyte, with the Industrial Technology Research Institute of Taiwan (ITRI), Energy Absolute Public Company Limited (EA) announced in a press release. Amita, a subsidiary of EA Group, has already bagged the 2020 R&D 100 Technology Award, well recognised as “the Oscars of Innovation”. Clean energy use and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions are now ingrained in the consciousness of all countries. Therefore, the introduction of renewable energy storage systems and the promotion of electric vehicles are being unanimously implemented by governments, automakers and enterprises across the globe.

4. Economic titans urge passport idea

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

The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking (JSCCIB) urges the government to speed up its decision on adopting a Covid-19 vaccine passport scheme to increase tourist arrivals, despite uncertainty over the effectiveness of such schemes. The group also wants the government to consider making travel bubble agreements with countries that have low or moderate levels of Covid-19 infections. The EU has launched Digital Green Pass, allowing people vaccinated against Covid-19 to travel more freely.

5. CAAT issues important guidelines for international transit/transfer passengers

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

International flights carrying “transit/transfer” passengers are now allowed to arrive at Suvarnabhumi Airport, the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) confirmed. However, CAAT has issued a series of guidelines that such passengers and airlines should follow:1. International flights carrying transit/transfer passengers will be permitted only at Suvarnabhumi Airport;2. Each passenger should possess a complete set of relevant documents, which are:(a) A fit-to-fly health certificate;(b) Medical certificate with a laboratory result showing that Covid-19 is not detected (carried out by the RT-PCR technique and issued no more than 72 hours before travel)

6. AIS snags innovation honour

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

Advanced Info Service (AIS), the country's largest mobile operator by subscribers, has won the Most Innovative Knowledge Enterprise (MIKE) award for 2020. "In the six years since AIS announced its vision of becoming a digital life service provider, our top priority has been creating a corporate culture aware that using innovation can inform both the forms and the methods of people's thinking," said Kantima Lerlertyuttitham, chief human resources officer at AIS. "This includes managing knowledge for transfer through digital platforms, bringing a new capability to meet the needs of a digital world, and delivering tangible and sustainable performance." The award is given for leadership in Thai innovation and technology to support sustainable national development, as chosen by a panel of Fortune 500 executives and business experts.

7. Thai Airways debt revamp plan gets support from finmin

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

The Finance Ministry, the largest shareholder of Thai Airways International Plc, signalled its support for a restructuring plan that includes raising fresh capital, a temporary freeze on

repayment of borrowings and slashing its workforce by half to return the debt-ridden airline to profit. The key elements of the debt rehabilitation plan are “quite acceptable,” Pantip Sripimol, director-general of the State Enterprise Policy Office under the ministry, said on 3 March. The ministry will study the restructuring proposals in detail before deciding on its vote, she said. THAI, with liabilities of about 330 billion baht last year, expects its creditors to vote on the court-mandated debt recast plan on May 12, Acting President Chansin Treenuchagron said on 2 March. The airline, which posted a record loss of 142 billion baht last year, aims to return to profit in 2024, he said.