

Thai News Update: 4 September 2020

1. Special visa eyed to serve long-staying travellers

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

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) plans to submit to the cabinet a "special tourist visa" scheme for approval, targeting long-staying travellers with the lengthiest period extending to 270 days. The new visa, with a 90-day length of stay and two extensions available for 90 days each, would be issued to those who agree to be kept in 14-day quarantine at a certified alternative state quarantine (ASQ) hotel or villa, according to the TAT. The applicant must show evidence of a booking payment, strictly follow screening measures and meet the same requirements as previous groups that were allowed to enter, such as Covid-free certificate, insurance and undergoing several tests.

2. PM discusses economic recovery with property sector honchos

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

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha held discussions at Government House with businessmen and entrepreneurs involved in the property sector on ways to drive the country's economy. The prime minister and Deputy PM Supattanapong Punmeechaow met Pornnaris Chuanchaisit, president of the Thai Real Estate Association, and representatives from Home Builder Association, Supalai, Sansiri, AP (Thailand), Land and Houses, Pruksa Holding and Goldenland Residence.

3. Road connecting Bangkok Port with Bangna-Artnarong expressway expected by 2025

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

The Expressway Authority of Thailand (Exat) will work with the Port Authority of Thailand (PAT) in a Bt1.6-billion project to connect Bangkok Port with Bangna-Artnarong Expressway to reduce traffic congestion. Exat governor Surachet Laophulsuk said that the authority had recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Port Authority of Thailand to build a connecting road between Bangkok Port and Bangna-Artnarong Expressway (S1 route), a distance of 1.8km.

4. Govt looking into visa extension for stranded foreigners

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

PM's Office Minister Anucha Nakasai said he met Stanley Kang, president of the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand (JFCCT), on Thursday (September 3) to discuss the option of offering long-term visas to foreigners stranded in Thailand. He also thanked

JFCCT on providing advice and promoting trade and investment in Thailand, as well as helping the government come up with measures to boost the economy. Kang said he wants Thailand to extend the visa for foreigners who are unable to leave Thailand due to Covid-19 restrictions. There are currently 2 million foreigners in Thailand, while the visa of 400,000 will expire this month.

5. Thailand slips one place in 2020 GII

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

Thailand slipped one position to 44th out of 131 countries in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2020 commissioned by the World Intellectual Property Organization, hurt by a shortage of innovators and researchers and poor regulatory processes. "The drop was mainly due to the regulatory environment and human capital issues, including education," said Pun-Arj Chairatana, executive director of the National Innovation Agency. Switzerland ranked first in the index, followed by Sweden, the US, Britain and the Netherlands. Several Asean countries kept their positions unchanged from last year, including Singapore (eighth), Indonesia (85th) and Vietnam (42nd).

6. Ministry woos Canadians for EEC activity

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

The Industry Ministry is courting Canadian officials and investors to take part in public-private partnerships (PPPs) as the government attempts to fund a variety of economic recovery infrastructure projects in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). Industry Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit said the ministry yesterday discussed potential partnerships and cooperation on an agricultural project with Canadian ambassador Sarah Taylor. "Canada is a big player in agriculture and an expert in high technology that compliments Thailand's Smart Farmer scheme," Mr Suriya said. The minister said Canada could support the project by sharing its technology, building on the good diplomatic relationship between the countries.

7. TAT vows to eliminate dual pricing, mulls expat ID card

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

Expatriates may not be able to join tourism stimulus packages, but the government pledges to end dual pricing as soon as possible. Yuthasak Supasorn, governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), said the We Travel Together stimulus campaign is carried out with budget from the Loan Act, which has a clear mandate and objectives that make it hard to include foreigners. But the TAT will discuss stopping dual pricing for expatriates with the National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department, as well as famous tourism sites.

Mr Yuthasak said the move will let expats save money, allowing them to spend more as a key target to boost domestic tourism.

8. Finance Ministry preps B45bn for latest cash handout

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

The Finance Ministry is to propose a 45-billion-baht cash handout to 15 million people for cabinet approval by mid-September to stimulate consumer spending. 2 September's meeting of the Center for Economic Situation Administration approved the stimulus measure proposed by the ministry. The proposal will be forwarded for cabinet approval in the middle of this month, said Lavaron Sangsnit, director-general of the Fiscal Policy Office. Under the measure, the government will give 3,000-baht cash handouts to individuals to buy consumer goods. They are required to register for the cash and the money will be transferred through the Pao Tang app's G-wallet app, similar to procedures under the Taste-Shop-Spend scheme.

9. Exim Bank launches scheme to help businesses with post-Covid-19 recovery

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

The Export-Import Bank of Thailand (Exim Thailand) has launched a business rehabilitation scheme for specific clients, by using its "support-relax-extend-sustain" approach. Exim Thailand president Pisit Serewiwattana said that the persistence of Covid-19 across the world had hindered economic activities in almost all sectors. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank have predicted global GDP contraction of 4.9 per cent and 5.2 per cent in 2020 respectively, the highest contraction in more than 90 years.