

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 7 DECEMBER 2021

1. Govt eyes face-to-face Apec meets

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

Phuket: Thailand, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) 2022 host country, plans to organise physical meetings year-round amid the emergence of the coronavirus' Omicron variant, said the permanent secretary for foreign affairs. Thani Thongphakdi, who is mainly responsible for the preparation of Apec leader meetings, told the Bangkok Post that he is optimistic that having mass vaccination among the global population, including those in Thailand; relaxed regulations on trans-boundary travel and self-prevention measures are key factors that could lead Thailand to successfully host various Apec-related physical meetings next year. Mr Thani said Apec has held meetings since 1989. However, 2021 meetings hosted by New Zealand were conducted via online conference platforms due to the deadly coronavirus pandemic. It has been estimated that Apec's 21 member countries account for 38% of the world's population and over 60% of its GDP. China, Japan, Russia and the United States are considered political and economic heavyweights in the group.

2. Govt urges Thais to hit 100m trip mark

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

The government is encouraging more Thais to travel to stimulate local tourism as it hopes to see 100 million domestic trips by them by the end of the year. Rachada Dhnadirek, deputy government spokeswoman, said Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha has attached great importance to promoting domestic tourism as this will generate income for businesses and spur the growth of jobs in the tourism industry, which has been severely battered by almost two years of the Covid-19 pandemic. Even though the country has reopened to welcome back foreign tourists, it will take some time before international arrivals rebound and come back past the million mark, she said. Therefore, encouraging Thais to travel in the country is a necessary step to stimulate economic growth, she said.

3. Pattani's Baan Khun Phithak Raya wins Unesco award for cultural conservation

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

The building, located in the Hua Talat community on a small road named Pattani Phirom near Pattani River, was used both as a place for business and residence by Chinese settlers. The two-storey shophouse played a significant role in Pattani's history and its economic growth. There is also a mention of Baan Khun Phithak Raya in records of King Rama V's visit to the province and features prominently in photographs taken during the Japanese invasion of

Thailand in 1941. Senator Anusat Suwanmongkol spent some 8 million baht to have the century-old structure restored by skilled craftsmen from the Fine Arts Department. Unesco (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) said the shophouse won the award because it showcases the contribution of one of the town's many ethnic communities to the multicultural social fabric of Pattani.

4. CCSA eyes border reopening

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

The Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA)'s forward command dealing with Covid-19 in the deep South will this week consider whether to reopen the Thai-Malaysian border as proposed by MPs from the southern region. Deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek said on Sunday the CCSA previously agreed in principle with the proposal and instructed its forward command to study the details. However, after Malaysia detected its first case of the Omicron coronavirus variant in a foreign student who was quarantined after arrival from South Africa, the forward command is now monitoring the situation in the neighbouring country closely, she said. "The forward command will discuss the border reopening proposal and present the matter to the CCSA for consideration at a meeting expected next Monday," Ms Rachada said.