

## Daily Thai News Summary: 7 September 2015

### 1. PM: Migrant worker's dependents to be barred in 2017

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

Thailand will prohibit family members from joining migrant workers coming to Thailand from neighbouring countries beginning in 2017, said Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha. Speaking at a seminar on improving cooperation between Mekong River countries on migrant labour, the prime minister provided few details behind the decision, but hinted that health insurance and education costs for non-working spouses and children of foreign workers was creating a burden on government coffers.

Gen Prayut said Mekong River countries are seeing their economies develop quickly and, thus, would need to retain more workers. Some migrants working abroad now, including in Thailand, also may begin to return home. He said worker migration is an issue that involves both the government and private sectors, especially recruitment companies that must raise their standards to prevent human trafficking. Thailand, he said, has pushed for origin countries to verify the nationalities of the workers being sent abroad to facilitate labour movement, with home countries supplying all the needed documentation for those coming to Thailand.

### 2. Ecotourism success story

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

Bo Hin Farmstay, located at Ban Bo Hin in Si Khao district, Trang province, is a community tourist attraction founded by the Ban Pru Jud Community Enterprise. It has been operating for 10 years showcasing the value of homeland and the self-sufficiency philosophy, with monthly income doubling to 40,000 baht over that period for families that jointly provide the homestay service.

In the past, people in this community depended mainly on fish cage farming and fishing. But now many of them prefer to be tour guides informing mostly urban visitors about their community lifestyle. Bo Hin was the first community to start a homestay in Trang. Today there are eight homestays in eight different communities in the province, and more than 100 in the South, reflecting the growing ecotourism trend in this part of Thailand.

The farmstay won the Kinnaree ecotourism award from the Tourism Authority of Thailand in 2015, confirming its community enterprise credentials. It is headed by Banjong Naruepornmethee, who is also president of the Trang Tourism and Hotels Association.

### **3. 40 Thai subcontractors seek business in Myanmar**

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

The THAI Subcontracting Promotion Association (TSPA) will accompany more than 40 part-makers to the Intermach and Subcon Myanmar 2015 with the hope of establishing a link and partnership with Myanmar manufacturers. *"All our members want to expand their markets and are willing to cooperate with companies in neighbouring countries,"* said Somkiat Chupukcharoen, president of TSPA and managing director of SCC Tech Co. *"We want to know more about Myanmar people and culture, etc. We must know each other first. Only then will we be able to cooperate through the means of establishing partnerships or starting small businesses."*

At the press conference last Thursday, Somkiat noted that the association, which has more than 400 members, is seeking to cooperate more closely with the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Myanmar Industries Association. *"The event is timed perfectly ahead of the launch of the Asean Economic Community,"* he said. The industrial machinery and subcontracting exhibition is set for September 24-26 at Tatmadaw Hall in Yangon.

### **4. SMEs look to refinance loans**

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

Many small and medium-sized enterprises have asked to have their loans refinanced with other banks despite higher interest rates, because prevailing economic conditions are not supportive for them getting overdrafts from their current creditors.

Vipon Vorasowharid, first executive vice president and head of Siam Commercial Bank's (SCB) business banking group, said the economic downturn had forced banks to tighten up on the provision of loans, as a result of which many SMEs had to look at refinancing as a solution to their funding needs. *"What we are worried about is that they are not subject to any conditions when refinancing, [and that they are looking to such institutions] even though the interest rates for refinancing are not lower than those at the banks where they are borrowers. The lack of*

*[refinancing] conditions tells us that they could become non-performing loans in the future. Therefore, all banks should offer their full support to their SME clients," he said.*

SCB this year has relaxed its lending conditions as a means of helping SME customers, such as a reduction in the debt-coverage ratio from 1.5 times to 1.2 times in order to leave them with sufficient cash flow to cover their loan repayments, Vipon said.

## **5. Bangkok hotel introduces innovative concept for meetings, events**

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

Radisson Blu Plaza Bangkok is introducing a new concept for business meetings and events, including the Thai hospitality industry's first high-quality "brain food" menu. The hotel's "Experience Meetings" feature three core components: "brain food", free Internet access, and "brain boxes". "We all want meetings that are more productive in a creative and intellectually stimulating environment. We have made a commitment to deliver successful meetings with higher productivity and greater creativity for our guests," said Sandy Russell, vice president for commercial operations at Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, Asia-Pacific.

The "brain box" is a room concept that takes into account different learning styles and creates a stimulating atmosphere through the use of bright colours and a flexible furniture layout with movable lounge chairs, cushions, and adjustable light systems. The aim is to inspire, help boost creativity, encourage active participation and enhance interaction among the delegates. The hotel's brain-food menu was developed by expert chefs and nutritionists. The food features well-balanced and primarily locally sourced ingredients such as fish, whole grains, fruits and vegetables, all of which have undergone minimal industrial processing.

## **6. Top hotels to promote Chao Phraya as world-class waterfront destination**

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

Eight Major hotels on the Chao Phraya riverside are working on a series of events and activities in the year to come with a view to drawing leisure and business travellers into Bangkok. Local and luxury international hotel brands have formed Bangkok River Partners to promote the river and top-brand hotels as a destination for such travellers, said David Robinson, director of the partnership.

The group members are the Millennium Hilton, Royal Orchid Sheraton, Mandarin Oriental Bangkok, The Peninsula Bangkok, Shangri-La Hotel, Chatrium Hotel Riverside, Ramada Plaza Bangkok Menam Riverside and Anantara Bangkok Riverside. *"We are busy*

*designing a programme of events - some large, some small - but all showcasing the very best of Thai creativity, showmanship and hospitality," he said yesterday.*

In the year to come, visitors will be able to participate in a lights festival, a design week, food fairs, music festivals, art gallery hops, fun runs, corporate social responsibility activities, and more. These events will help create a world-class waterfront destination and attract business and leisure travellers to Bangkok, he said.

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