

Thai News Update: 22 July 2020

1. Phuket in big push to revive tourism

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

The island province is drawing up short, medium and long-term campaigns to revive the local tourism industry, brought to its knees by the Covid-19 pandemic. Provincial governor Narong Woonsew said on Tuesday the province contributes 400 billion baht in tourism revenue to the country each year on average. The sector, which employed 323,219 people locally before Covid-19 struck early this year, generated 245 billion baht in annual gross provincial product (GPP). Mr Narong said the pandemic has dealt a devastating blow to Phuket's tourism industry on which 80% of its economy depends.

2. Unlicensed hotels in line for stimulus

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

The cabinet on 21 July gave the go-ahead for unlicensed hotels to join the We Travel Together tourism stimulus campaign and for expanded subsidies on services or goods bought by travellers during four working days (Monday-Thursday). The move is to increase supply and give tourists more choices, said Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha. Under the cabinet's decision, hotels that are not registered as required by the Hotel Act will be permitted to join the We Travel Together scheme, Gen Prayut said. The government will loosen restrictions on three groups: hotels in the process of obtaining a licence, hotels whose licences expired less than a year ago, and small or boutique hotels that do not fit the hotel licence criteria.

3. Egat moving ahead with Bt24.5bn FSRU unit

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

The Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (Egat)'s board is set to consider a project to construct a floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU), said governor Viboon Rerksirathai. The unit will be located in the Gulf of Thailand with capacity for 5 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) per year. If the board approves the project, Egat will press ahead by calling for bids to build the unit. The unit's capacity was expanded from the original 3 million tonnes per year to make it more commercially viable, said Viboon. The estimated cost of the project is Bt24.5 billion.

4. Hong Kong-listed CP Pokphand expects \$300m-\$330m net profit

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

Charoen Pokphand Foods (CPF) reported that its subsidiary in Hong Kong, CP Pokphand (CPP), expects to achieve a first-half net profit of US\$310 million to \$330 million (Bt10.4 billion), a significant increase of \$82 million compared to the same period last year. CPF had earlier reported to the Stock Exchange of Thailand that it holds direct and indirect shares of 52.24 per cent in CPP, a listed company in Hong Kong.

5. E-vehicles to power Bt14.4bn transport network in EEC

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

Electric vehicles (EVs) will serve the three provinces of the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) in a project that will cost around Bt14.4 billion. Public hearings conducted by the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning (OTP) unveiled a three-tier plan for transport in Chachoengsao, Chonburi and Rayong. The first tier covers transportation between regions, the second transport within cities, and the third transport to link people's homes with other transport networks.

6. Cabinet boosts weekday tourism vouchers to Bt900/night

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

The Cabinet today agreed to improve the "Rao Tiew Duay Kan" (We Travel Together) domestic tourism scheme by increasing the value of weekday accommodation vouchers from Bt600 to Bt900 per day, to encourage travel between Monday and Thursday. It also decided to boost the remedial effects of the scheme by including One Tambon One Product (OTOP) items on the list covered by food vouchers. The vouchers offer 40 per cent discounts on purchases of up to Bt600 per day.

7. Another emergency extension to be proposed

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

A committee on lockdown easing will on 22 July propose that the state of emergency be extended by another month to the end of August, citing increased uncertainty. National Security Council secretary-general Gen Somsak Rungsita, in his capacity as chairman of the committee, would make the recommendation to the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration at its meeting on Wednesday. Authorities had to closely monitoring the situation following visits by an infected Egyptian serviceman in Rayong and an infected daughter of a Sudanese diplomat in Bangkok, as well as the opening of schools, Gen

Natthaphol Nakpanich, deputy army chief in his capacity as deputy chairman of the lockdown-easing committee said on 21 July.

8. Thailand, U.S. to promote fundraising for infrastructure

Source: Reuters ([Link](#))

Thailand's cabinet on 21 July approved a draft framework for cooperation with the United States to promote fundraising for infrastructure projects via capital markets, a government official said. Both countries will jointly set guidelines and identify opportunities to develop infrastructure and remove obstacles to capital market access, deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek told a news briefing. The cooperation with the United States, with its large capital market and investor potential, would benefit Thailand's large scale infrastructure development under its 20-year strategic plan, Rachada said.

9. Cabinet approves 3 projects worth Bt4bn to revive economy

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

The Cabinet on 21 July approved another three projects worth around Bt4 billion under the Bt400-billion budget earmarked to lift the battered economy. The three projects were sent to the Cabinet by the committee which screens projects proposed by state agencies. An Interior Ministry project for volunteers to take care of the elderly was approved with a budget of more than Bt1 billion. The year-long project will start this month and create 15,548 jobs. The second project is the Interior Ministry's so-called integrated tambon development worth Bt2.7 billion, which aims to generate 14,510 jobs across the country. The project runs from next month to September next year.

10. COVID-19 testing at Suvarnabhumi airport upgraded to increase efficiency

Source: Thai PBS ([Link](#))

The DCD's Director-General, Dr. Suwanchai Wattanayingcharoenchai, said today (Tuesday) that the Point of Care RT-PCR laboratory, which was put into service on July 1st to conduct tests on foreign arrivals, such as diplomats, official guests, businessmen on short-term visits and those suspected to be infected, is capable testing 170 people a day. By July 16th, 46 arrivals had been tested, including the daughter of a Sudanese diplomat, who returned a positive result for COVID-19. Suvarnabhumi international airport has capped the number of daily arrivals, of both Thai and foreign nationals, at 600 and 200 respectively. Meanwhile, city officials have stepped up field inspections of pubs, bars and karaoke bars in Bangkok, to make sure that they are strictly abiding by the required safety measures, such as limiting the number of customers and maintaining social distancing.