

THAI NEWS UPDATE: 27 SEPTEMBER 2021

1. Pattaya turns to domestic tourists

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

Pattaya City and tour operators will target Thai tourists instead of foreigners during the approaching traditional high season, with the country's reopening to international travellers again delayed. Pattaya mayor Sonthaya Khunplome said on Friday that the planned reopening of five tourist provinces, including Chon Buri, could be postponed from Oct 1 to Nov 1. Most vaccinated people in those provinces had received only their first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine and the Public Health Ministry was concerned about public safety. He said Pattaya City had already allocated budgets for events from October to the end of the year and he hoped they could attract Thai tourists.

2. Commerce Ministry launches new hotline for consumer complaints

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

The Commerce Ministry has set up a special 1569 nationwide hotline for people to file complaints if they find themselves having to pay unnecessarily high prices for necessities. The ministry has also warned shopkeepers that they can face more than seven years behind bars and/or a fine of 140,000 baht if they take undue advantage of consumers, especially in areas hit by natural disasters. Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit told the press on 26 September that his ministry wants to ease people's burden, especially those already suffering from floods. As part of this effort, it has instructed all provincial offices to closely monitor prices and take action if shopkeepers are caught making profits. Apart from making necessities available at affordable prices, the ministry will also ensure people have access to other necessary products like tools as well as cleaning and building equipment to repair their homes once the floods recede, Jurin said.

3. Asean and South Korea to deepen trade ties

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

Asean countries and South Korea agreed to improve their free trade agreement during the recent 18th Asean-Korea Economic Ministers Consultation held virtually from September 13 to 15, Vice Commerce Minister Sansern Samalapa said on 26 September. The meeting agreed to expand the existing Asean Korea Free Trade Agreement (AKFTA) to provide tax exemption for additional products and promote trading between Asean members and South Korea," he said. "The ministers also urged the countries to exchange know-how in Covid-19 management to speed up their economic recovery after the outbreak situation has improved.

“South Korea is especially eager to cooperate with Asean nations in various aspects, such as establishing an industrial innovation centre to promote innovation development and commercial adaptation of innovations in Southeast Asia and South Korea,” added Sansern.

4. Thailand-US talks next week on more vaccine donation

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

US government agencies will start discussions next week with a Thai working team on donating another 1 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines, Manasvi Srisodapol, Thailand's ambassador to the US, said. He said the discussions will pave the way for vaccine shipment in line with US Senator Tammy Duckworth's announcement in July and the US ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield's remarks during a visit to Thailand in August. He told the press that the discussions next week would cover shipment methods, contract documents and public relations, citing the previous discussions on shipment of 1.5 million vaccine doses.

5. TAT eager to lure neighbours

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

The Indonesian and Malaysian markets are being excluded from the approval list to visit the Phuket sandbox, though there is demand to visit Thailand in those countries, says the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). Sophon Tantayotai, director of the TAT's Jakarta office, said Indonesian tourists can take overseas trips and travel sentiment on social media remains positive. However, tourists have to undergo 14-day quarantine because Indonesia is listed as a high-risk country following an outbreak in July, which peaked at 60,000 cases per day.

6. Exporters told to equip for weapons rule

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

Exporters are being urged to prepare for the implementation of the catch-all control (CAC) measure in the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 2019 this year. Preparatory steps include setting up an internal compliance programme (ICP) to prevent trade activities pertaining to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) as well as monitoring compliance with the export control legislation. Dhadchayrbhon Abhimontejchbud, deputy director-general of the Department of Foreign Trade (DFT), said the CAC measure will soon come into force as part of the new act that became a law early last year.