

## THAI NEWS UPDATE: 6 MAY 2022

### **1. TAT keen on 20m goal**

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

Thai tourism remains on course to reach 20 million arrivals next year as the prime minister predicted, following the easing of travel rules on May 1, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). "The industry next year is poised to strengthen from this year, making the goal of attracting 20 million tourists, half the total in 2019, achievable. This is particularly the case if China, which previously contributed one-third of arrivals, lifts border controls by that time," said TAT governor Yuthasak Supasorn. Tourism revenue should recover to 80% of the 2019 level or around 2.4 trillion baht in 2023 to help the battered industry recuperate, he said.

### **2. Thailand Pass set to be scrapped for Thais first**

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

The government is considering revoking the Thailand Pass for Thai nationals returning home, Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said on 5 May. The ministry will ask the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) to allow Thais to re-enter the country freely, as those who later test positive will receive treatment under the UCEP Plus universal emergency treatment scheme. "As for foreigners, we will consider lifting the Thailand Pass system in the next phase," said Anutin, speaking after a monthly meeting with senior public health officials. Anutin said last week that vaccine passports will likely replace the Thailand Pass as the means of screening foreign arrivals. The minimum requirement for vaccine passports would be three doses, as two jabs do not give prolonged immunity, he added.

### **3. New regional zones approved by panel**

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

The Special Economic Zone Policy Committee chaired by the prime minister yesterday approved four new special economic corridors, meant to resemble the flagship Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), in a move to spur the economy and decentralise income to the regions. According to Danucha Pichayanan, secretary-general of the National Economic and Social Development Council, the zones comprise the Northern Economic Corridor (NEC), the Northeastern Economic Corridor (NEEC), the Central-Western Economic Corridor (CWEC), and the Southern Economic Corridor. The NEC covers Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Lamphun and Lampang. It is designated as a production base for the creative economy based on Lanna culture.

#### **4. Ministry to host Apec trade talks**

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

The Commerce Ministry is set to host Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) trade ministers in Bangkok, with renewed talks on the long-delayed Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) and open economies topping the agenda. Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit is scheduled to chair the Apec Ministers Responsible for Trade meeting 2022 (MRT) in Bangkok during May 19-22, with a free trade deal to help the region recover from the pandemic one of the top priorities. FTAAP involves the 21 Pacific Rim nations that are part of Apec, a forum created in 1989 to promote free trade in Asia-Pacific. FTAAP first appeared in the joint statement of Apec trade ministers in 2008. It was again a topic in November 2021 in Apec's Putrajaya Vision 2040 implementation plan.

#### **5. Thailand and Japan to forge 'comprehensive strategic partnership'**

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

Thailand and Japan have agreed to consider elevating their bilateral ties from a “strategic partnership” to a “comprehensive strategic partnership” to reflect their “close and progressive relations”, the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on 5 May. The agreement was reached during the Monday’s meeting between Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida at Government House, the ministry said in a statement released on its website. The two countries established diplomatic relations 135 years ago, and this year marks the 10th anniversary of their strategic partnership. Kishida paid an official visit to Thailand on May 1-2 as a guest of the Thai government — the first visit by a Japanese prime minister in nine years.