January 5, 2021

Thai Enquirer Summary

**Political News**

- Thailand recorded a new high of 745 coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, with 1 new death in Bangkok after a semi-lockdown went into effect. The new infections bring the total number since last January to 8,439, while the death toll has climbed to 65.

  - The Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA)’s meeting yesterday decided to impose lockdown on 5 high-risk eastern provinces of Samut Sakhon, Rayong, Chon Buri, Chanthaburi and Trat for 28 days as the number of daily Covid-19 cases in these provinces show no sign of subsiding.

  - This ‘lockdown’ means travel in and out of the provinces is banned, unless it is absolutely necessary. Deputy Minister Sathit Pitutecha.

  - The newly recorded death was of a 56-year-old man in Bangkok. The man died on Sunday, 2 days after testing positive for Covid-19 and had traveled to Samut Sakhon province, where the current outbreak started in mid-December.

  - Samut Sakhon reported 470 more confirmed Covid-19 cases in the past 24 hours. The new caseload include 49 Thais and 390 migrant worker, bringing the total in the province to 2,871.
Meanwhile, local residents of Larn Island off Chonburi’s Pattaya municipality, decided unanimously to lockdown the island for 15 days in a bid to curb the spread of Covid-19.

Under the lockdown, all tourists have been transported back to the mainland since yesterday as the island is now closed to all outsiders. People on the island are also banned from leaving. All boat services between the island and the mainland are suspended with the exception of vessels delivering food and drinking water.

The decision has the consent of residents and business operators on the island although they are aware that the measure will have economic impacts on them, says Sorasak Thongbongpetch, secretary of Larn Island community.

- An infected woman, 25, has Chiang Mai residents startled following Chiang Mai health officials’ report that the woman had visited several places in the province including entertainment venues before travelling to Phrae and Lampang. The infected woman is patient 50\textsuperscript{th} of Chiang Mai province.

- The timeline of the infected woman showed that she visited several places like Mee Chok and Kampoeng flea markets, a wedding, a CD store, 5 night clubs and bars including Warm Up Cafe bar, Tha Chang Cafe, Infinity Club, Pretty Exclusive Club, Star Avenue Lifestyle Mall, Tesco Lotus Kham Thiang store, Central Festival Chiang Mai.

- Meanwhile, the Chiang Mai International Airport Facebook has posted a message showing the provincial communicable disease committee’s order asking travellers from 28 red-zone provinces to enter quarantine for 14 days on arriving in the province.
Meanwhile, a photo of a crowded pub in Chiang Mai where crowds attended a New Year’s countdown went viral on social media, defying coronavirus-related bans on large gatherings.

- The photo was posted on the Facebook page called “Vaccine” which obtained the photo from the public owner before it got deleted. This FB page called on Chiang Mai Governor and involving agencies to look into the event and take legal action against the pub owner.

- It is said that apart from this pub, several other pubs and entertainment venues in Chiang Mai Township also organised New Year Countdown events on New Year’s Eve of December 31.
Embattled Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha has come out to downplay criticism by some health experts over the decision not to impose another nationwide lockdown in light of the 2nd wave. He said the government was mindful of the potential economic damage from strong containment measures.

“‘We don’t want to lock down the entire country because we know what the problems are, therefore can you all lock down yourselves?’ he told reporters.

Gen Prayut yesterday overruled Bangkok Metropolitan Authority (BMA)’s order and decided Bangkok restaurants should be allowed to provide table service until 21.00 hrs, not 19.00 hrs from today.

The BMA earlier ordered restaurants and street food vendors under its jurisdiction to stop dine-in service between 19.00 hrs and 6.00 hrs.
The BMA said 5 out of the 50 districts in the capital have not discovered any Covid-19 infections. These 5 districts are Saphan Sung, Khan Na Yao, Bang Khen, Phra Khanong and Pathumwan.

- The Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) yesterday proposed an extension of an emergency decree that gives power to health authorities and provincial governors by another 45 days until the end of February. The country is currently under a state of emergency until January 15, 2021.

- The 45-day extension will be put to the Cabinet today.

- In terms of vaccines, Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha said the government is expecting to distribute at least 2 million doses for medical purposes within the next 1-2 months.

- He said the government is now ordering a total of 52 million AstraZeneca-Oxford University doses which would be enough for 26 million people, as each person will need 2 doses.

- The Ministry of Public Health said they aim to inoculate 50 per cent of the population or around 34 million people, relying on both internationally-sourced vaccines and domestic ones by year’s end.

- Deputy Prime Minister Gen Prawit Wongsuwon says he doubts there are any illegal gambling dens in Bangkok, despite warnings by a senior health official that such premises pose a serious coronavirus threat.

- Opas Bhudachareon, head of Chulalongkorn Hospital's Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases, said recently one Covid-19 patient there was linked to a gambling den in Bangkok. He further urged those who had visited the venue to be tested for Covid-19.
However, Gen Prawit yesterday claimed there were no such illegal activities because the police had clamped down on them.

"You must ask the doctor who provides this information," he said. "I don't believe illegal casinos are operating in Bangkok, but if the doctor knows about it, he can inform the authorities."

- Ruangkrai Leekitwattana, a former member of the dissolved Thai Raksa Chart Party, threatened to expose alleged irregularities against Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha, saying that he has sufficient evidence to back claims.

- Ruangkrai said he had sent an EMS letter to the Prime Minister to seek a meeting with him to present evidence concerning alleged irregularities surrounding him.

- Ruangkrai said he is now equipped with evidence to support his claim that Gen Prayut had knowledge of corruption in the government. He challenged Gen Prayut to defend himself before the media. Ruangkrai’s move came after Gen Prayut asked admonished his critics on October 16, 2020 by rejecting resignation and asking reporters, “What have I done wrong?”

- Ruangkrai said his evidence include all receipts to back his claims over irregularities implicated the Prime Minister. He advised Gen Prayut to step down to show the soldier’s spirit.

- The ex-senator said he is ready to seek a public apology in front of the media if the alleged irregularities against the Prime Minister is unsubstantiated. Ruangkrai threatened to expose Gen Prayut within 7 days if the latter fails to meet him.

- The Election Commission (EC) yesterday verified the results of provincial administrative organisations (PAOs) and members of PAO councils in 12 provinces.
The 12 provinces are Lamphun, Tak, Petchaburi, Krabi, Pattani, Chanthaburi, Phitsanulok, Phayao, Samut Songkram, Nong Khai, Nong Bua Lamphu and Phetchabun.

Interestingly, Akkara Prompao, a younger brother of Deputy Agriculture Minister Capt Thammanat Prompao, is also on the list as he won the PAO chairmanship in Phayao.

The EC is expected to announce the 2nd batch of PAO election winners in 10 more provinces today.

- Former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra reportedly instructed Phichit Chuenban, former legal adviser of Thai Raksa Chart Party, to file a countersuit against the Central Tax Court and 4 defendants including the Revenue Department, Pongsak Maethaphiphat, representative of the Revenue Department, Prapas Sanansilp, representative of the Office of the Attorney-General, and Pisit Sriwaranant, representative of the Department of Provincial Administration, for signing their names to support the dismissal of Thaksin’s appeal for 17.6 billion baht in tax from the sale of Shin Corp shares 11 years ago.

- House secretary Pornpit Petcharoen yesterday issued an urgent letter to suspend the current parliamentary session for 2 weeks in light of the new wave of Covid-19 cases in the country.

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**Economic News**

- Budget Bureau (BB) director Dechapiwat Na Songkhla confirmed that the government has sufficient budget to tackle the economic effects of the 2nd wave of the Covid-19.

  - The BB chief said the government still has more than 600 billion baht from the central budget for the fiscal year 2021 and the 1-trillion-baht loan decree.
Patricia Mongkhonvanit, director-general of the Public Debt Management Office, said the government still has 400 billion baht left from the 1-trillion-baht loan bill to take care of the economy in the midst of the resurgence of virus infections.

Under the 1-trillion-baht borrowing plan, the government also took out 370 billion baht in which 348 billion baht earmarked for economic and social rehabilitation.

- The Bank of Thailand (BoT) and the Thai Bankers Association (TBA) are set to meet to discuss measures to help businesses affected by the resurgence of Covid-19 infections.

- The 2 agencies initially agreed on 3 pillars, “Restructuring, Reviving and Reform” to maintain financial stability of financial institutions, says a source with the financial market.

- The 3 pillars are:
  
  1) The debt restructuring approach, with the idea of setting up a national warehousing fund and the creation of bank-specific asset management companies (AMCs).
  
  2) The reviving approach. This approach is to help revive business operations by increasing the soft loan disbursement, giving SMEs better access to the soft loans and introducing the SMEs Supply Chain Franchise scheme.
  
  3) The reform approach to support business restructuring with new S-Curve and matched supply chain schemes.

- Meanwhile The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking (JSCCIB) plans to reassess Thailand's economic outlook in 2021 on Wednesday as
stronger state measures against the new outbreak have begun to affect employment in at-risk provinces.

- A surge in daily infections since late last year, with a record of 745 new coronavirus cases yesterday, has meant several business sectors, particularly restaurants, are suffering.

- The situation prompted the JSCCIB to reconsider the impact of the pandemic on the economy, said Supant Mongkolsuthree, chairman of the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI).

  "It is too soon to say whether we will downgrade the economic forecast. The FTI wants to discuss the impact with other JSCCIB members on Wednesday first," he said.

- More than 100,000 employees have lost their jobs or been suspended from work as a result of the closure of more than 6,000 businesses in 28 red-zone provinces in the wake of the new outbreak of Covid-19.

  Insured workers left unemployed due to the pandemic could begin applying for compensation payments from yesterday, according to Labour Minister Suchart Chomklin.

  Mr Suchart said provincial communicable disease committees in the 28 red-zone provinces have ordered the closure of businesses to curb the spread of the new outbreak, putting more than 100,000 workers out of work.

  Jobless workers who are insured under the Social Security Act are entitled to compensation under a ministerial regulation on unemployment benefits in the event of force majeure arising from the outbreak of dangerous diseases under the Communicable Disease Act.
The Ministry of Commerce yesterday predicted that Thailand’s economy in 2021 would see 4 per cent expansion, mainly driven by domestic purchasing power and improving export markets.

- Arkhom Termpittayapaisith, the Finance Minister, expected that a key factor for the Thai economy would be public spending as tourism income won’t rebound to pre-COVID-19 levels this year.

- The Finance Minister predicted only 5 million arrivals this year, from an average record of 40 million of tourists per year. He said the economy has to rely on domestic factors, with government measures to stimulate people’s confidence in their spending.

- Bualuang Securities said the Thai economy will grow at the rate of 3.8 per cent. The recovery will be gradual and will meet pre-Covid levels in 2022 – 2023,” Bualuang said.

- SET-listed Sri Trang Gloves Thailand (STGT) will make its trading debut in the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) index from today with a par value of 0.50 baht each, from 1 baht per share.

- Based on this par value, STGT shares will amount to 2,869.56 million shares. Its trading in the SET is to increase liquidity.

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General News

- Thailand recorded 745 new coronavirus cases, 709 of them local transmissions, bringing the total number of infections to 8,439. One additional death was reported, raising the accumulated toll to 65.
The 24-hour total of 709 cases comprised 557 migrant workers and 152 Thai nationals.

Political News Headlines in Thai Media

- YouTube has geo-blocked, blocking access to a video from a specific location, a music video by a Thai rap group that criticized the current government, the group said on Monday.
- The Thai government announced on Monday that it has discovered 28 coronavirus cases in Bangkok. This brings the total number of cases found in the capital to 248.
  - Link: https://www.thaienquirer.com/22374/list-of-places-infected-patients-have-visited-in-bangkok/
- The end of 2020 may have been met with a damper following the latest COVID-19 outbreak at Samut Sakhon but there is also cautious optimism as vaccines are finally rolling out. Finally, the end of the pandemic is in sight.
- Thailand could see up to 1,000 Covid-19 cases per day by mid-January according to public health officials and doctors who say the government has not done enough to lockdown the country following a second wave of infections.
  - Link: https://www.thaienquirer.com/22322/thailand-could-see-1000-cases-per-day-by-mid-january/
- Children’s Day on Saturday will be very quiet in the 28 red-coded provinces because no activities will be allowed, Taweesin Visanuyothin, spokesperson for the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA), said on Monday.
The Committee of the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) on Monday approved extending the state of emergency to the end of February.

No coronavirus case was found among lawmakers who had attended the same meeting at the Parliament with an infected gambler from Rayong, officials said Monday.

Security forces were on high alert yesterday at the army's Ratchanakarin camp, also known as Pileng camp, as Jan 4 marked the anniversary of a separatist attack on the facility in 2004.

Economic News Headlines in Thai Media

There will be no nationwide lockdown for the time being but people should stay home for the next fortnight, Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha told reporters on Monday.

The Ministry of Commerce said on Monday that Thailand’s economy in 2021 would see 4 per cent expansion, mainly driven by domestic purchasing power and improving export markets.
The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) index fell 22.55 points to 1,428.80 when the market opened on Monday amid economic concerns over the soar of COVID-19 cases throughout the country.


Thailand’s Ministry of Finance has asked hotels that are part of the government’s “We Travel Together” subsidy scheme to allow participants to postpone their trips in light of a second wave of Covid-19 infections.


The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking (JSCCIB) plans to reassess Thailand’s economic outlook in 2021 on Wednesday as stronger state measures against the new outbreak have begun to affect employment in at-risk provinces.

- Link: https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/2045563/jsccib-regroups-for-2021-forecast-change

Two people working for major companies have contracted Covid-19.

- Link: https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2045463/2-infections-reported-by-listed-firms

Restaurant operators are worried new state measures to curb the wave of Covid-19 infections will halt their recovering sales.

- Link: https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/2045551/restaurants-jittery-on-new-restrictions

The use of free trade agreement (FTA) privileges and the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) by Thai exporters fell by 14.76% year-on-year in the first nine months of 2020, in line with the country’s lower overall exports because of the pandemic.


Foreign fund flows are the only hope to sustain the stock market during the fresh outbreak of Covid-19, as GDP growth and earnings estimates for listed companies are expected to be downgraded if the outbreak continues and the government does not offer any strong economic support, according to Asia Plus Securities (ASP).
Hotelier Erawan Group (ERW) has bought back 182,000 of its shares worth a total of Bt651,560 or Bt3.58 per share, the Stock Exchange of Thailand reported on Monday.

The government is seeking measures to combat the economic impact of the new Covid-19 outbreak, Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha said on Monday.

Issues to be watched out for

- January, 2021 – The opposition is planning to file a no-confidence motion against the government, the 2nd round of a censure debate the current administration is facing.
- January, 2021 – The parliament is set to deliberate the charter amendment bills in the 2nd reading.
- January 2021 – The World Bank will review Thailand’s economic growth outlook.
- January, 2021 – Charoen Pokphand Foods Plc (CPF) is preparing to issue 5 series of debentures with tenors of 2 years to 12 years to retail, institutional and high net worth investors.
- January 5, 2021 – Budget Bureau director Dechapiwat Na Songkhla will present the budget framework for the fiscal 2022 to the cabinet meeting.
- January 6, 2021 – The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking (JSCCIB) comprising the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI), Thai Bankers’ Association (TBA), and Thai Chamber of Commerce (TCC), is scheduled to meet to revise the economic growth outlook.
January 27, 2021 – The Constitutional Court is set to rule on Democrat Party MP for Nakhon Si Thammarat Thepchai Senpong’s MP status following the Election Commission’s petition.

February, 2021 – A law amendment bill that allows women with pregnancies of not more than 12 weeks to get an abortion is to take effect.

February, 2, 2021 – Thai Airways International Plc (THAI) said it will submit a rehabilitation plan to the Central Bankruptcy Court, postponed from the original schedule on January 2, 2021.

February 28, 2021 – Tentative date for municipality elections and the election of tambon administrative organizations (TAOs).

February 28, 2021 – The current parliamentary session is scheduled to end.

March 31, 2021 – The government’s half-half co-payment scheme is set to end.

April, 2021 – Thai Airways International Plc (THAI) expects the Central Bankruptcy Court to consider its rehab blueprint for approval.

April 2021 – The Batong Airport is scheduled to be opened after being postponed from February due to the resurgence of the Covid-19.

April, 2021 – The central bank plans to officially implement the new rule on the rate of penalty imposed on loan defaulters in a bid to ease borrowers’ burdens and motivate them to repay their debts.

**Key Data**

| SET Index | 1,468.24 | +18.89 |


**Global Commodities**
- Metal -Link http://www.bloomberg.com/markets/commodities/futures/metals/

Global Equity Market’s Movements

Asian Equity Markets Movement

Information on January 4, 2020

Buying, Selling or Transfer of shares by Owners/Management

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**Trading Breakdown on the Stock Exchange of Thailand**

**Daily as of 4 Jan 2021**

**Unit:** M.Baht

**XD, XE or XM or other notifications**

For list of Companies that have dividend payment and AGM meeting schedules click on [http://www.set.or.th/set/calendarofevents.do](http://www.set.or.th/set/calendarofevents.do)

**Monthly Cumulative between 1 - 4 Jan 2021**

**Unit:**
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**Yearly Cumulative since 1 Jan - 4 Jan 2021**

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**Total Trading Value 89,208.19 Million Baht**

**Background Information –**

The strength of each party in the Thai Parliament as of May 8, 2019 as per the report by the Election Commission of Thailand. Elections took place on March 24, 2019


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