

Vibrant Thai tourist sector braces for impact of deadly Mother's Day

REUTERS, Hua Hin/Bangkok

On what should be a bonanza weekend for the tourist industry in a seaside playground favoured by Thailand's royal family, shops and restaurants are shuttered, streets are empty and security forces are advising people to stay in their hotels.

The resort of Hua Hin was rocked by four bombs less than 12 hours apart that killed two people and wounded 24, as thousands flocked to its hotels and beaches for a long weekend to celebrate the Queen's birthday, which is also Mother's Day in Thailand.

"It's a ghost town now," said Irish tourist Tim Kelleher. "Usually this place is so popular."

The bombings were part of a series of attacks on world-renowned seaside resorts in southern Thailand that may jeopardise the Southeast Asian nation's target of luring a record 32 million visitors in 2016.

Tourism is one of the only growth sectors in Thailand, and accounts for 10 percent of an economy that has struggled under the stewardship of a military government that seized power two years ago.

"It's bad for the economy, which is limping along on one leg, and now we have these incidents," Itirit Kinglek, the president of the Tourism Council of Thailand, told Reuters.

"It will definitely have an impact on tourism, but it's too early to estimate how it will affect tourist numbers and revenues."

Other blasts hit the island of Phuket, a resort town in Phang Nga province, and Surat Thani, the jumping off point for travellers heading to the white sandy beaches of Gulf of Thailand islands such as Koh Samui.

No group has claimed responsibility, though suspicion could fall on insurgents from Muslim-majority provinces in southern Thailand. Police and security analysts said the small devices appeared to be aimed more at sending a message than causing widespread death and destruction.

Embassies in Thailand warned their citizens to stay vigilant on Friday and some warned that there could be more attacks.

Australia, the source of just over 800,000 visitors to Thailand in 2015, issued a travel advisory saying Australians should "exercise a high degree of caution", and warned that "further explosions in any part of Thailand are possible."

China, the single biggest source of tourists to Thailand with nearly 8 million visitors in 2015, told citizens to avoid crowded areas and pay close attention to security developments.

The German units of tour operators TUI and Thomas Cook said

customers booked on trips to Thailand departing before Aug 15 could cancel or rebook to other destinations free of charge.

TUI, which has about 2,000 customers in Thailand at present, said it would help any who wished to leave early.

Thai Tourism Minister Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul said the sector was resilient and would rebound from any impact fast, as it had in the past. "If anything happens, Thailand's tourism will be able to adjust and come back quickly," she told Reuters.

The attacks are the latest challenge to an industry that has weathered more than a decade of political instability and bounced back from several major setbacks in the past two years.

A bomb attack at a Hindu shrine nestled among luxury shopping malls and hotels in central Bangkok killed 20 and injured more than 120 in August 2015.

Tourist arrivals dropped by more than half a million in the month after the blast, but Thailand still hosted a record 29.88 million visitors in 2015.

A year earlier, months of sometimes deadly street protests paralysed the Thai capital before a coup in May 2014. The month after the military takeover, tourist numbers slipped to their lowest in more than two and a half years.

The attacks would hurt business and consumer confidence, Thai Airways Chief Financial Officer Narongchai Wongthanavimok told Reuters.

"To some extent, it should affect the Thai tourist industry and Thai Airways because confidence may be hit," he said. "But how much the impact will be, we need to monitor and assess the situation."

Business at budget airline Thai AirAsia was so far unaffected, Chief Executive Tassapon Bijleveld told Reuters.

Thailand's Erawan Hotel Group, one of the top five Thai hotel operators with a portfolio that includes two of the targeted resorts - Hua Hin and Phuket - has increased security at its hotels but not yet seen cancellations because of the blasts, group president Kamonwan Wipulakorn told Reuters.

At the Erawan shrine in Bangkok on Friday, the location of the 2015 bombing, there were no security checks as tourists and Thais visited, a Reuters witness said.

Australian tourist Vanessa Jamieson, at the shrine with 6-year-old twins on Friday, said the bombings in southern Thailand had made her rethink her holiday plans.

"We stayed away from most public places today," she said. "Frankly, if the bombings continue then we might as well jump on a plane and go somewhere else."

Modest euro zone economic growth masks diverging performance around bloc

REUTERS, London

Euro zone economic growth halved in the second quarter to a modest pace, as a mild slowdown in Germany was overshadowed by a surprise stagnation in Italy, offering scant hope of a decisive rebound for the currency bloc as a whole any time soon.

The 0.3 percent quarterly expansion, or 1.6 percent annual pace, matched expectations in a Reuters poll of economists and showed the euro zone already slowing ahead of Britain's shock June 23 vote to leave the European Union.

While there have been no clear signs in survey data of an economic hit outside of Britain since the vote, the official data showed that a burst of activity at the start of the year was fleeting and more stimulus may still be required.

"The question remains if even this lower growth rate can be sustained in Q3," wrote ING Senior Economist Bert Colijn.

"With Brexit uncertainty weighing on exports and industrial weakness, it seems that the consumer has to carry a lot of the weight of the euro zone expansion on its shoulders."

There is also little sign of any broad improvement around the corner, a Reuters poll showed on Thursday.

The challenge for policymakers, both at the European Central Bank and in member

economies which are reluctant to or restrained from opening the fiscal taps for stimulus, is that growth rates across the euro zone are now varying widely.

In the biggest economy, Germany, gross domestic product grew 0.4 percent, double the 0.2 percent expected in a Reuters poll and marking a 3.1 percent pace compared with the same period last year - the strongest annual figure in five years.

While slower than the start of 2016, growth was boosted by exports as well as consumer spending, putting Germany's performance and prospects ahead of many of its peers.

So while the euro zone figures as a whole broadly support continued stimulus from the European Central Bank, which has cut its deposit rate to -0.4 percent and is buying 80 billion euros of mainly government securities a month among other measures, they don't appear to be so necessary for Germany.

KfW bank economist Joerg Zeuner said Britain's vote to leave the EU would eventually hurt, however.

"The decision to leave the EU will hit the British economy, and the slowdown will spread to Germany through muted exports," he said. "The UK is an important market, especially for German car makers, but also for our chemical and pharmaceutical industries."



Abrar A Anwar, CEO of Standard Chartered Bangladesh, and Syed Farhad Ahmed, managing director of aamra networks limited, sign a deal at a programme. Aamra will provide high-speed internet through Wi-Fi connectivity at all branches of the bank in Bangladesh. The bank's customers will enjoy free internet while visiting the branches.

STANCHART

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Memo No. 00.00.1561.033.09.01.519-2016 Dated: 10-08-2016

e-Tender Notice No: 01/2016-2017

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the below schemes/packages:

Tender ID	Schemes/packages name	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time
63324	MGSP/PAT/2015-16/W-02 (a) Construction of RCC drain & footpath on both sides of Chittagong-Cox's Bazar main road from Shachand Aulia Mazer Gate to Indrpul with beautification works. (Total Length= 3110m) (b) Supplying, fitting & fixing of street light on Chittagong-Cox's Bazar main road from Shachand Aulia Mazer Gate to Indrpul with beautification works, Chittagong.	07-September-2016 Time: 17.00	08-September-2016 Time: 14.00

These are online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 17.00 on 07 September 2016.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Tarequl Islam
Executive Engineer
Patiya Pourashava, Chittagong

GD-1619

The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd.
Gazipur

International e-Tender for Supply of 69,000 KGs UV Curing Varnish for Bank Note

Electronic tenders (e-Tenders) are hereby invited from the competent international manufacturers/suppliers for supply of the above materials for this Corporation as per under noted schedule. Tender documents showing terms and conditions with specification will be available at web: etender.spcl.org.bd/114.130.43.56. It is to mention here that this is online tender(s) where only e-Tender will be accepted and no hard copy will be accepted except price of e-Tender schedule and earnest money. To submit e-Tender bidders need to register on etender.spcl.org.bd/114.130.43.56. For more details please contact cell: 880-1534002183 & 880-1534002184. Necessary information is given below:

- Price per e-Tender schedule : 5000.00 (five thousand) Taka only.
- Date of publish of e-Tender : 14.08.2016
- Last date & time for submission of e-Tender : 18.09.2016 up to 11.00am.
- Date & time for opening of e-Tender : 18.09.2016 at 11.15am.

Bidder may collect e-Tender schedule from the aforementioned website. Earnest money @ 3% (three percent) of the total quoted price shall have to be submitted in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order/Irrevocable Bank Guarantee from any scheduled bank in Bangladesh in favour of the Managing Director, The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd, Gazipur along with the price of e-Tender schedule in the form of an Account Payee Cheque/Pay-Order/DD in the tender box kept at Corporation's office in Gazipur on or before the scheduled deadline for submission of e-Tender. Irrevocable Bank Guarantee may also be given as earnest money from any international commercial bank abroad with a counter guarantee from any scheduled bank in Bangladesh. e-Tender(s) without earnest money and price for procurement of e-Tender schedule shall not be acceptable. The e-Tender shall have to submit as per e-Tender guidelines mentioned at above website. Offer(s) shall be opened as per schedule mentioned above in presence of the tenderer(s) if any. 01 (one) e-Tender schedule is applicable only for one supplier/manufacturer for submitting one offer alongwith earnest money and price of e-Tender schedule. The authority reserves the right to reject or accept any e-Tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever. Submission of e-Tender after the specified time shall not be acceptable under any circumstances.

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GD-1633

Europe's biggest software maker SAP ditches annual reviews

REUTERS, Frankfurt

Germany's SAP, maker of software used to grade the performance of millions of employees worldwide, is ditching its own annual performance reviews as too expensive, time-consuming and often demotivating.

Once championed by business leaders as the key to better productivity, annual appraisals are falling out of fashion with companies including IBM, Gap and even General Electric, whose long-time Chief Executive Jack Welch is credited with popularising the system.

SAP, which for the last two years has had an American CEO and employs almost a third of its staff in the United States, is one of the first major European companies to join the trend that began across the Atlantic.

The ritual of the annual performance review is widely disliked by employees.

SAP's human resources head for Germany, Wolfgang Fassnacht, said Europe's biggest software maker had found the annual review process, with its focus on separating over- from under-performers, was often counter-productive to the goal of constructive dialogue. "Grading workers did not work. People are open to feedback, also to harsh criticism, until the moment you start giving scores. Then the shutters go down," he told Reuters.

SAP is testing a new process, which includes more regular check-in talks, on about 8,000 of its workers and aims to implement it for all of its almost 80,000 workforce next year. "The old system is too static," said Fassnacht. "It no longer reflects the dynamic circumstances we are operating in."

SAP is a world leader in human-resources (HR) software and made a big bet on performance-management tools with the \$3.4 billion acquisition of US cloud-computing company successfactors.com in 2012.

It gets a lot of feedback from its customers, Fassnacht said, a factor that may have influenced its decision to ditch the dreaded annual review.

"I meet many HR managers at other companies. The topic is on everyone's mind at the moment," he said. "This is actually one of the hottest topics discussed in the HR area." SAP is not putting itself out of business, however. It will continue to sell its performance assessment software and it announced in February it would also introduce software for continuous performance management of employees.

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Memo No. LGED/PD/RTIP-2/16-17/G14-2/4514 Date: 10/08/2016

e-GP: Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package:

Sl. No.	ID No.	Name of works	Last date and time for tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	Tender ID 63612	Supply, installation and configuration of Email Gateway Firewall appliance to protect email server from spam, virus, malware and other security related threats with 3 years warranty for hardware 3 years license for software (Package No. RTIP-2/16-17/G14-2)	06 Sep. 2016 13:00	06 Sep. 2016 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks' branches upto 06 Sep. 2016 12:00.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP held desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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