

Chinese tourist gets lifetime ban in Thailand

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Dhaka: Thailand has imposed a lifetime entry ban on a Chinese tourist after he allegedly kicked and damaged automated passport control gates at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport, in a case reflecting the country's growing crackdown on unruly foreign visitors.

The 30-year-old man, identified as Zheng Liwei, allegedly damaged two automated gates at the airport on the afternoon of May 13 while attempting to pass through passport control ahead of a flight to China.

Local media reports said Zheng grew frustrated after repeatedly failing to use the automated system correctly. Video footage reportedly shows he slammed his travel document on a reader before kicking the barriers and forcing his way through.

He then allegedly shouted abuse at immigration officers in Chinese

before pointing at them and attempting to advance toward them, until his wife pulled him back.

Thai immigration authorities filed complaints against Zheng for damaging government property valued at THB 480,000, equivalent to USD 15,000, insulting officers on duty, and passing through a checkpoint without authorization. His visa was subsequently revoked, and he was placed on a lifetime blacklist pending deportation after legal proceedings.

The incident comes as Thailand moves to reduce visa-free stays for visitors from 93 countries from 60 to 30 days. Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow said the measure is aimed at curbing criminal activity.

Thai media reported that the policy review was expedited following the arrest of a Chinese national linked to a cache of military-grade weapons and explosives found in Chonburi province.

The Interior Ministry recently directed provincial authorities to act firmly against foreigners who break the law, intimidate residents, or behave inappropriately in public. Officials cited incidents in tourist provinces including Phuket and Surat Thani, where disorderly conduct had alarmed local communities and damaged Thailand's tourism image.

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