

Thailand launches new VAT refund for foreign travellers

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Thai government recently announced new regulations, making it easier for foreign travellers to claim value-added tax (VAT) refunds on goods purchased in Thailand. Effective from January 1, 2024, the regulations expand the eligibility criteria for refunds and increase the maximum refund amount.

Earlier, travellers had to wait in a queue for a long time for claiming VAT refunds. With a view to handling the congestion at airports, the Revenue Department has adjusted the criteria to align with the current situation, providing a more suitable and appropriate VAT refund process for tourists.

Accordingly, the previous threshold of THB 5,000 (USD 140) for goods to be declared to customs has been raised to THB 20,000, which means tourists purchasing goods worth less than THB 20,000 can request a

VAT refund directly from the Revenue Department without going through customs procedures.

Also, the number of categories of goods requiring declaration to the Revenue Department has been increased to include such items as jewellery, gold ornaments, watches, eyeglasses, smartphones, laptops and tablets.

The value thresholds have been adjusted to THB 40,000 for certain items and THB 100,000 for items that can be carried onboard.

In addition to these adjustments, the conditions for tourists to request a VAT refund include taking the purchased goods outside Thailand within 60 days from the date of purchase, total purchased amount at least THB 2,000 (including VAT) on the same day from the same businesses displaying the "VAT Refund for Tourists" sign.

If the requested tax refund amount does not exceed THB 30,000, tourists can choose to receive in cash (THB) as a draft or transferred to a credit card account. However, if the refund amount exceeds THB 30,000, it is received in a draft or transfer to a credit card account.

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