

Thailand turns Suvarnabhumi airport into covid vaccination centre

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Dhaka: Thailand has turned Suvarnabhumi Airport's check-in area into an immunization center as part of efforts to speed up its Covid-19 vaccine rollout.

Cordons and suitcases of travelers were replaced with evenly-spaced chairs at check-in counters, where immigration and airport staff and cabin crew lined up to register for the vaccines, of which over 1,000 are administered each day.

The inoculations provided a buzz of activity hardly seen till last year at Suvarnabhumi airport, which has been hit by a slump in passengers and air traffic from weaker demand and tighter entry curbs.

Staff member Siwaporn Singkhрут, who was among the first of more than 30,000 sets to receive vaccines at the airport, said there was plenty of room to expand the service to more people.

"Now, only a portion of the airport is in operation, and it would be even better if it were to fully open to the public so people can come and get vaccinated," she said.

After a year of relatively minor outbreaks, Thailand is experiencing its biggest and

fastest spread of coronavirus. Yet the country is ready to reopen Phuket to international travelers in July and go ahead with an even wider opening in October, as mass covid vaccination is underway in the country.