

New Advisory from Government on Procedure, Documents and Steps to Enter and Leave Lao PDR

On 16 December 2020, the National Task Force Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Prevention and Control of COVID-19 ("**Task Force**") issued an Advisory on the procedure, documents and steps required to enter and leave Lao PDR ("**Procedural Advisory**"). The Procedural Advisory follows the Decision of the Prime Minister No. 09/PM dated 3 February 2020 and the Notice of the Prime Minister's Office No.1291/PMO dated 26 November 2020 which are referred to in the Procedural Advisory. The Procedural Advisory replaces the Instruction No.1861/MOFA dated 31 July 2020.

The Procedural Advisory sets out the following procedures, documents and steps for individuals who wish to enter Lao PDR from countries with outbreaks of COVID-19:

1. Request for entry into Lao PDR

(1) Prior to entry into Lao PDR

- (a) Ministries and relevant departments/agencies with an essential and urgent need to bring in experts, technicians, volunteers, and foreign students can do so by requesting approval from the Task Force (stationed at the Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs);
- (b) Any individuals or entities with an essential and urgent need to bring in investors and entrepreneurs for feasibility studies, or execution of contract or memorandum of understanding shall comply with the requirements of the concerned authorities before requesting approval from the Task Force. They must attach the following documents in their application:
 - i. Domestic and foreign investment licenses;
 - ii. Enterprise registration certificate;
 - iii. Tax payment certificate;
 - iv. Letter of support for visa from the Investment Promotion Department, Ministry of Planning and Investment or Provincial/Vientiane Capital Planning and Investment Division addressed to the Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prior to its submission to the Consular Department, it has to obtain prior approval from the Department of Immigration, Ministry of Public Security;
 - v. Proposal letter addressed to the Task Force should set out the following:
 - Full name, passport number, and phone number;
 - Anticipated date of entry;
 - Checkpoint of entry;
 - Mode of transportation/flight details;
 - Details of route (Departure and Transit country);

- Reasons for the urgent need to enter Lao PDR; and
 - Venue for self-quarantine
 - vi. Confirmation of reservation at a designated hotel or specific venue for quarantine approved by the Central and Local Task Force Committees;
- (c) Companies or project owners in the Lao PDR with an essential and urgent need to bring in foreign workers and technicians for their businesses or projects can do so. They shall comply with the requirements of the relevant laws and regulations for bringing in foreign workers. The application to the Task Force shall require the following supporting documents:
- i. Investment license in Laos;
 - ii. Enterprise registration certificate;
 - iii. Tax payment certificate;
 - iv. Proof of permission to employ foreign workers from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare;
 - v. Import permit of foreign workers from the Provincial/Vientiane Capital Department of Labour;
 - vi. Application for visa from business/project owner addressed to the Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prior to its submission to the Consular Department, it has to obtain approval from the Department of Immigration, Ministry of Public Security;
 - vii. Proposal letter addressed to the Task Force should set out the following:
 - Full name, passport number, and phone number;
 - Anticipated date of entry;
 - Checkpoint of entry;
 - Mode of transportation/flight details;
 - Details of route (Departure and Transit country)
 - Reasons for the urgent need to enter Lao PDR; and
 - Venue for self-quarantine
 - viii. Confirmation of reservation at a designated hotel or specific venue for quarantine approved by the Central and Local Task Force Committees;
- (d) For Lao citizens who wish to return to Lao PDR, they need to register at the Lao Embassy or the Consulate at the country of their residence and provide necessary information about: (i) the contact person in Lao PDR; (ii) his name and phone number; (iii) reasons for being abroad; (iv) approximate date of entry; (v) mode of transportation; (vi) checkpoint of entry; and (v) venue for quarantine (at a hotel or state quarantine center identified by Central and Local Task Force Committees) for the Task Force to consider options to help facilitate on their return;
- (e) A diplomatic mission and international organization with an essential and urgent need to bring in its diplomats or staff to carry out its duties both on a short or long term can do so by applying to the concerned Department of Ministry of the Foreign Affairs together with necessary information such as: (i) name; (ii) approximate date of arrival; (iii) mode of transportation; (iv) transit countries; (v) checkpoint of entry; and (vi) address of the venue

for quarantine. The Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs will then consider and proceed in accordance with its procedures;

- (f) All requests for entry into the Lao PDR shall reach the Task Force at least 7 days prior to the proposed date of departure.

(2) After receiving an entry approval from the Task Force to enter Lao PDR, the individual shall do the following:

- (a) The individual with a valid entry visa can to travel to Lao PDR (bringing along the approval from the Task Force);
- (b) For those who do not have an entry visa, after they have received approval for an entry visa from Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they can apply for a visa at the Lao Embassy or Consulate at the country of departure;

2. Authorization request for departing Lao PDR:

- (1) Lao citizens who need to travel abroad must first get an approval from his/her own organization and then apply to the Task Force to provide necessary assistance. They must follow the requirements under the laws and regulations of the destination country.
- (2) Lao citizens and foreigners who are seriously ill or who need regular medical treatment (i.e. illnesses that cannot be treated in Lao PDR) and require urgent medical treatment abroad must have a referral letter from the state hospital or proof of appointment from the hospital abroad. They must follow the laws and regulations of the destination country.

Foreign citizens who need to depart from Lao PDR need to propose through their respective Embassies and comply with the requirements of the country of destination. The respective Embassies shall apply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with necessary information such as: (i) name; (ii) passport number; (iii) approximate date of departure; (iv) checkpoint of exit; and (iv) mode of transportation for the Ministry to provide necessary assistance.

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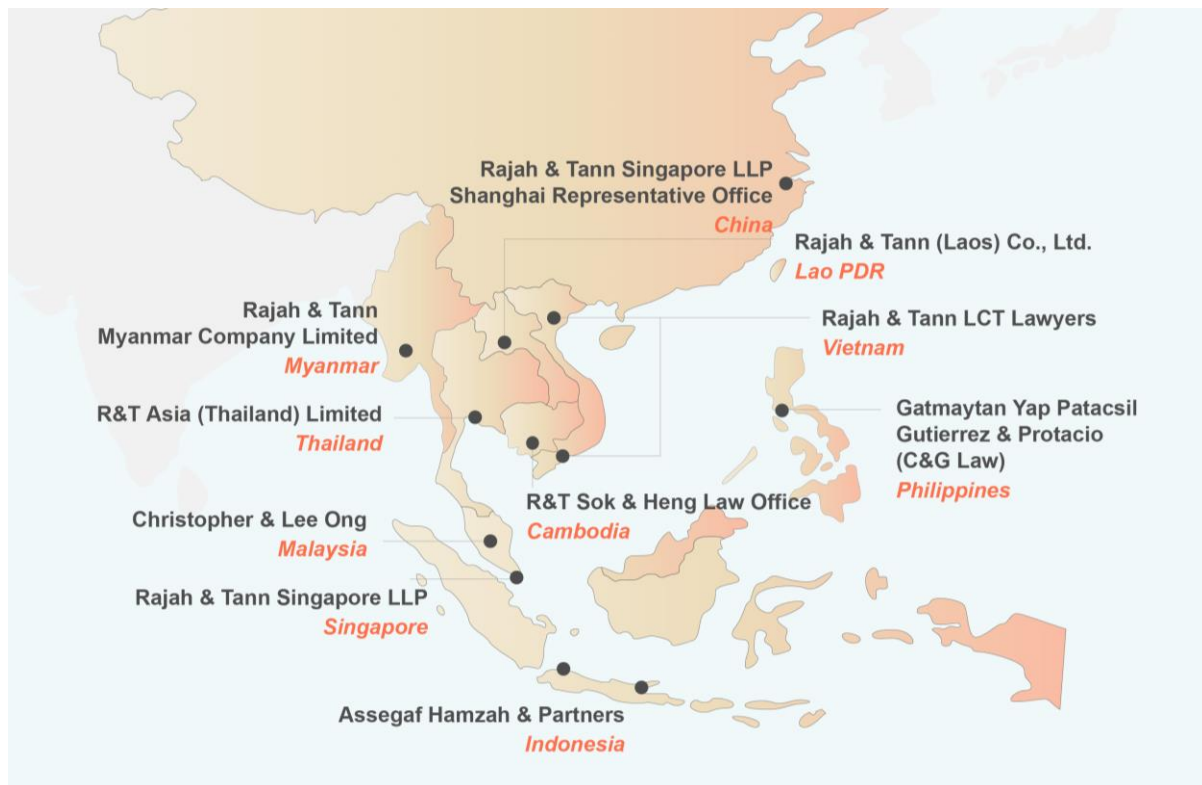
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