

Blacklist awaits visa-overstaying foreigners



Immigration police will blacklist foreigners who overstay their visas early next year. (Photo by Krit Promsaka na Sakolnakorn)

The Immigration Bureau plans to fine and blacklist foreigners who overstay their visas from March or April next year.

Bureau chief Pol Lt Gen Nathathorn Prausoontorn said on Wednesday that Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha had approved the bureau's proposal on Nov 27 to fine and ban overstayers from re-entering the country for some years depending on the length of their overstay.

People who overstay will be treated according to whether they turn themselves in or are arrested.

For cases of surrender, those who overstay their visa by up to one year will receive a one-year re-entry ban, and for more than one year they will be banned from re-entering Thailand for three years. Those with more than three years' overstay will be blacklisted for five years. Excessive overstay of five years or more will result in a re-entry ban of 10 years.

In cases of arrest, those who overstay their visas by up to one year will be banned from re-entering Thailand for five years and those with more than one year's overstay period will be blacklisted for five years and those with more than one year's overstay period will be blacklisted for 10 years.

The immigration commissioner expected the new regulation to improve control on visiting foreigners and screen out unwanted elements.

A large number of foreigners likely would pay fines and leave the country ahead of the imposition of the regulation, he said, while admitting that the fine was small at 20,000 baht.

At present, European, American and Asian visitors without approved visas can stay for 30 days, renewable for 30 days. Those with prior-arranged visas can stay 60 days renewable for 30 days. Those who want longer stays for medical treatment or business could have their intention verified before approval, the commissioner said.

