

Daily Thai News Updates: 7 July 2017

1. Thai investors try to crack Kazakhstan

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

Kazakhstan is seeking to attract foreign investors to explore business opportunities, including oil and gas exploration in its abundant petroleum reserves, say senior Thai government officials. Energy Ministry Anantaporn Kanjanarat said members of both the public and private sector, including representatives from SET-listed PTT Exploration and Production Plc (PTTEP), are due to visit Kazakhstan during the Astana Expo 2017, being held by the Kazakh government from June 10 to Sept 10 to exhibit future energy concepts. Mr Anantaporn said PTTEP's officers were in Kazakhstan to explore future opportunities regarding Kazakhstan's petroleum reserves. "Since we have had a good relationship with Kazakhstan for many years, I think Kazakhstan is an interesting country to help secure energy resources in the future, especially if there are any petroleum shortages," he said.

2. 700,000 to miss out on state help

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

More than 700,000 of the 14.1 million Thais who registered for the government's subsidy and welfare scheme this year have been disqualified during an initial check of information they provided, the Fiscal Policy Office's (FPO) chief says. The 700,000 did not qualify as their income or assets exceeds the scheme's maximum requirement. Another 10,000 were also disqualified as some had died soon after registering and the names of others do not match their household registration, Krisada Chinavicharana, director-general of the FPO, said. The Finance Ministry's criteria for aid requires applicants to be unemployed or have an annual income of 100,000 baht or less last year. They must also have savings, bonds or savings certificates worth less than 100,000 baht in total. If applicants own property, the area must not exceed 35 square metres for a condo unit, 25 square wah for a townhouse or 10 rai of land for agricultural purposes. He said the ministry also hires 70,000 students across the country to survey the living conditions and double-check information declared by registrants.

3. E-payment deal defies tax plan

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

Competition in the e-payment market continues to surge, despite the threat of a tax on e-commerce business. The acquisition of Paysbuy by startup payment gateway Omise underlines the trend. Paysbuy is the payment gateway unit of Total Access Communications (DTAC). Omise announced it has entered into an agreement with DTAC in which Omise will acquire Paysbuy's payment services. With this acquisition, Paysbuy's assets and services will be merged into Omise. "This deal will combine the strengths of both parties," said Panthep Nilasinthop, DTAC assistant vice-president. Paysbuy currently has two business units: payment gateway and e-wallet; and cash card, which is for prepaid card users. The payment gateway and e-wallet sections as well as 80 employees from them will be transferred to Omise within three to six months, while the cash card unit will remain at DTAC...Paysbuy was founded in 2004 and sold to DTAC in 2007. Its co-founder Somgwang Luangphaiboonsri is now the country manager of PayPal Thailand. PayPal opened here in 2016. Paysbuy has developed payment expertise, delivering a broad range of payment solutions to the e-commerce industry. Omise operates in Thailand and Japan, with the service to be available in Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia soon.

4. Export controls to combat terrorism

Source: The Nation ([Link](#))

The Commerce Ministry is setting up a system to monitor exports of dual-use items (DUI) as the government prepares to enforce a law to regulate trade in such items in compliance with international efforts against terrorism. The law, to be enforced from the start of next year, is aimed at helping to increase the confidence of Thailand's trading partners and prevent the country from being subject to trade barriers. Winichai Chaemchaeng, Vice Minister at the Commerce Ministry, yesterday announced the date for the start of enforcement of the law. The government says about 1,200 items will be controlled under the law. Exporters wanting to sell products on this list need to seek permission from the government. For products that are not on the list, exporters will need to get certification that they are not DUI items. "This law enforcement should help increase trading partners' confidence and ensure that Thailand has not supported any terrorism, while should effectively prevent future problem, he said.

5. Sustainability a key issue for foreign stock investors here

Source: The Nation ([Link](#))

Foreign investors favour investing more in sustainable stocks, resulting in a trend-line of growth from US\$2 trillion (Bt68 trillion) to US\$62 trillion, said a Thai stock expert who urges Thai listed firms to build up value-added from sustainability. Patareeya Benjapolchai, special expert for corporate governance and social responsibility at the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET), said that some Thailand funds have capitalised on the trend for sustainable stocks through launching funds focusing on sustainable stocks. But, she warns, Thai listed firms must pay more attention. Building up sustainability requires a board of directors committed to blending a sustainability plan into a firm's business operation and development policy with all-party cooperation, Patareeya said. Large local companies in particular have been paying increasing attention to the trend, she says. Even though a company's costs will rise following sustainability development, it is worth investment for long-term business opportunities, Patareeya said. Consumers and investors will help add value to firms with a sustainability program in the future.

6. Improved exports, budget disbursement to spur growth

Source: The Nation ([Link](#))

Public and private organisations have revised up their estimates of this year's economic growth as the Thai export recovery continues amid higher-than-targeted budget disbursement. Kasikorn Research Centre (KResearch) has raised its forecast for this year's expansion to 3.4 per cent from the earlier estimate of 3.3 per cent due mainly to robust export recovery and a higher-than-expected rise in household spending in the first half. Thai export growth has been revised up to 3.8 per cent for the whole of 2017, the research house said. Kalin Sarasin, chairman of the Board of Trade of Thailand and the Thai Chamber of Commerce, said the Thai economy is expected to grow in a range of 3.5-4.0 per cent this year on the back of higher-than-expected export growth and recovery in tourism.

7. Startups 'need tailored help alongside cash'

Source: The Nation ([Link](#))

Capital markets can play a driving force for startups but to propel the small companies' growth they need customised regulations and assistance that reaches beyond financial access, say exchange executives from Thailand, Japan and South Korea. At a seminar on "Asia Capital

Market: Driving Force for Startups”, part of Startup Thailand 2017, Yasuyuki Konuma, executive officer of Japan Exchange Group, said that most startups have good ideas but their main challenge lies in governance, particularly in human resources. “There are many funding sources for startups, from the government and local governments. But a key success factor is how the money is being used. The government is about to monitor the use of funds. What we can help with concerns expertise and HR management,” he said.