

Thai News Update: 13 August 2019

1. PTT subsidiary invests in new coal mine in Indonesia

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

PTT Plc's subsidiary in Indonesia, Sakari Resources Ltd (SAR), has invested in a small coal mine in Indonesia that has 10 million tonnes of reserves. PTT Plc's chief operating officer for Upstream Petroleum and Gas Business group, Wirat Uanarunit, said recently that the move was aimed at securing its coal reserves for 10 years in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the company is still studying its plan to seek a listing for its coal mine business on Indonesia's stock market, he said. Currently, PTT Plc holds a 94.56 per cent stake in SAR, which owns coal mines in Sebuku and Jembayan, a 35 per cent stake in a cold mine in Brunei, and an 80 per cent stake in a coal mine in Madagascar.

2. Trade between Thailand and 17 partners reach 140 billion USD in 2019's first half

Source: Xinhuanet ([Link](#))

The Thai Department of Trade Negotiations under the Commerce Ministry on 14 August said that the total trade value between Thailand and its Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) partner countries reached over 140 billion U. S. dollars in the first half of the year. The Department of Trade Negotiations website announced that trade figures between Thailand and its 17 FTA partners show overall trade in the first half of 2019 reaching 142.97 billion U. S. dollars, with 70.16 billion dollars from export and 72.81 billion from import. The website also indicated that trade value between Thailand and other nine members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) reached 53.56 billion U. S. dollars, ranking the first.

3. Thailand to hold 64th Bangkok Gem, Jewelry Fair to expand exports

Source: Xinhuanet ([Link](#))

Thailand's Ministry of Commerce is holding the 64th Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair in September to promote Thailand as one of the key hubs for gems and jewelry trading and

manufacturing in the world. Vannaporn Ketudat, deputy director-general of Department of International Trade Promotion under the Ministry of Commerce, said at a press briefing that the gems and jewelry industry in Thailand has been key to the country's economy for several decades, creating jobs, generating added value, and elevating creative ideas from up-and-coming designers.

4. Hong Kong unrest hits Thai travel market

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

The bitter protests in Hong Kong are expected to have a significant impact on Thailand's travel industry, with a number of outbound trip cancellations in recent weeks. The Association of Thai Travel Agents said travel agencies have cut many tour packages to Hong Kong after a wave of sometimes violent protests erupted in the territory since June. President Thanapol Cheewarattanaporn estimates that tour companies slashed the volume of tour packages to Hong Kong by up to half as most Thai travellers shifted their travel plans to other countries in Asia. He said most travellers from Thailand to Hong Kong are independent travellers who have flexibility and can adjust travel plans easily.

5. CP chief discusses automation

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

Adopting sophisticated technologies to drive operations is high on Charoen Pokphand (CP) Group's agenda, as one of Thailand's largest conglomerates works to enlarge its footprint during the fourth industrial revolution, says chief executive Suphachai Chearavanont. "We want to transform ourselves into a technology-led company, spanning food, retail and telecom businesses," Mr Suphachai told the Bangkok Post in an exclusive interview. "Digitalisation has to be done across all business groups [for] information management in the 4.0 era." Part of the group's digitalisation scheme is to gradually transform 7-Eleven, the convenience store chain run by flagship retail arm CP All, through integration of robotics and automation.

6. Tax perk aims to help SMEs join digital wave

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

The Digital Economy Promotion Agency (Depa) plans to offer a 200% tax deduction for the purchase of smart devices, digital services, robotics and Internet of Things (IoT) devices by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), in addition to software, starting next year. From 2017 to this year, SMEs have been entitled to tax deductions of up to 200% of the value of computer programs they buy, but the incentive places a ceiling of 100,000 baht in product value. These software providers must be registered with Depa. The cabinet will be asked to approve the extension of the tax deduction, which is expected to run from Jan 1, 2020 to Dec 31, 2022, said Chatchai Khunpitiluck, vice-president of Depa. The ceiling will be pushed up from 100,000 baht to 200,000 baht.

7. WMS, SCG mull EEC recycling plant

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

Waste Management Siam (WMS) is teaming up with Siam Cement Plc (SCG) to study the feasibility of an electronic waste recycling plant in the flagship Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), expecting to serve demand for waste circulation in the country. Both parties expect the study to be completed by 2019, with details of an investment plan, budget and location. Sutthida Fakkum, senior communications director at WMS, said the EEC project emphasises development of the industrial sector, so expansion of new facilities and industrial estates will increase the amount of hazardous waste in the three EEC provinces (Chachoengsao, Chon Buri and Rayong).

8. Thailand a rising star in Asean's additive manufacturing scene

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

Thailand's vibrant additive manufacturing (AM) ecosystem is expected to continue its rise with evolving fab labs, new partnerships between academe and the industry and increasing university activities generating more interest and awareness of the technology. A white paper study entitled "Additive manufacturing: adding up growth opportunities for Asean", recently launched by global engineering giant thyssenkrupp, discussed Thailand's position as a rising star in Asean's

AM scene, with 25 per cent of market share. Driven by automotive, chemicals, and healthcare industries, AM adoption in the country continues to evolve with more local and foreign players.