

## Thai News Update: 13 August 2020

### **1. Trade department to push for RCEP signing in October**

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

The Department of Trade Negotiations will urge the Cabinet in October to consider signing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) pact, the department's director general Auramon Supthaweethum said. She added that the vetting of all 20 chapters of the accord had been completed and that it can be signed during the Asean Summit in November, which will be held in Vietnam. After the signing, Thailand will have to undertake a parliamentary process to rectify the deal. The agreement is expected to come into force by mid next year.

### **2. Predee poised to implement economic action plan**

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

New Finance Minister Predee Daochai is expected to deliver his policies for implementation by the ministry's high-ranking officials soon, said a ministry source. Predee earlier held an informal meeting with them to discuss the economic situation and his plan to launch additional stimulus packages, the source added. Fiscal Policy Office director-general Lavaron Sangsnit said some economic indicators were positive after April and showed that domestic consumption recovered after the lockdown was eased. However, sectors such as exports and tourism have yet to recover to pre-Covid-19 levels and are in need of continued support from the government, he added.

### **3. OIE operating on plan to promote medical equipment industry**

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

The Office of Industrial Economics (OIE) is working on a plan to promote the medical equipment sector as one of the S-Curve industries to cope with a growing demand in the present Covid-19 situation, director Thongchai Chawalitpichaet said. The promotional campaigns will cover investment, manufacturing, marketing and research and development of necessary medical equipment to reduce Thailand's reliance on imports from overseas. "The OIE recently signed a MoU with the Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University, the Thai Electrical, Electronics and Telecommunications Industries Association, and the Electrical and Electronics Institute to jointly develop approaches to manufacture medical equipment using modern technology, such as CPAP [continuous positive airway pressure] machines," he said.

#### **4. Interior Ministry to propose BMA-BTS partnership that includes 30-year Green Line contract extension: news source**

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

The Interior Ministry will today (August 13) propose to the Cabinet a public-private partnership contract between the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and BTS Group Holdings, in which BTS will be offered a 30-year extension of the Green Line concession contract in exchange for a Bt73-billion debt owed by the BMA, a State Enterprise Policy Office news source revealed.

#### **5. New finance minister ready to seek remedies**

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

Newly appointed Finance Minister Predee Daochai is set to meet with the ministry's officials this week to discuss the economy and upcoming remedy measures. Mr Predee is expected to call for a meeting with top executives at the ministry for an update on economic conditions and forthcoming prospects to prepare measures to manage the economy, said a ministry source speaking on condition of anonymity. Mr Predee replaced Uttama Savanayana in the post. Six changes, all part of the cabinet reshuffle, were published in the Royal Gazette on Aug 6.

#### **6. TOT launches into satellite venture**

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

State telecom enterprise TOT says it has clinched a cooperation deal with Mu Space Corp, a Thai satellite and space tech startup, to venture into the low-earth orbit (LEO) satellite business as a potential revenue stream. LEO satellites are projected by some to have strong business potential because they can beam the internet all around the globe. The memorandum of understanding between TOT and Mu Space, which was signed last month, starts with a joint study and testing of program coding for server payload in rockets in a trial for signal transmission.