

## Thai News Update: 16 July 2019

### **1. NBTC, DE Ministry focus on critical trio**

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

The telecom regulator plans to continue pushing ahead in cooperation with the new government's Digital Economy and Society (DE) Ministry on three critical projects: fifth-generation wireless broadband adoption, putting the overhead telecom and broadcasting cables underground, and infrastructure sharing between state telecom enterprises to ease 5G adoption. The auctions for 5G spectrum, use-case development and Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) projects are seen as core drivers of the overall economy in the years ahead. Revenue streams from tourism have declined due to the drop in tourist numbers and a stronger baht, according to a source on the board of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC).

### **2. Wage-hike disaster looms for many companies, FTI warns**

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

Raising the daily minimum wage to 400 baht would have a detrimental impact on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI) says. The 400-baht wage was a Palang Pracharath Party election campaign promise. "The economy is not good now and this wage hike would certainly take its toll on SMEs," FTI chairman Suphan Mongkolsuthee said. A wage rise must respond to economic conditions in each area, he said. He said the private sector attaches importance on how to improve skills among workers so they can have a better chance of earning more income.

### **3. Asean-BAC's non-tariff bid gains traction**

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

The Asean Business Advisory Council (Asean-BAC) was satisfied with negotiations over Asean trade facilitation procedures, in which all members agreed to form and implement guidelines on non-tariff measures, says the Trade Negotiations Department. Thailand is the Asean chair for

2019. The Asean Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Committee was held last week. Director-general Auramon Supthaweethum said Asean members agreed to implement the guidelines on non-tariff measures. "Under the guidelines, all members are informed before the implementation of non-tariff measures and each measure should be applied as reasonable and necessary, while public hearings should be held with stakeholders before implementation," Mrs Auramon said. "After implementation, Asean countries have to review and evaluate impact by setting up National Trade Facilitation Committees in each country to regulate the trade measures in line with the World Trade Organization [WTO]."

#### **4. Breakthrough reached on RCEP pact**

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

Delegates negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) have agreed on a basis for certifying the origin of goods at customs checkpoints. Thailand's Adul Chotinisakorn said on 15 July it was agreed on July 3 that preferential tariff privileges could be granted for products from certified exporters on receipt of a document from the exporter or manufacturer proving their origin. It's being called "certificate of origin self-certification". The agreement allows each country to choose a model for establishing proof of origin rather than tying them to certification based on specific products, Adul said, thus increasing convenience for businesspeople and flexibility in trade between nations.

#### **5. Thai chicken exports boosted by Chinese demand**

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

Thai exports of fresh and processed chicken totalled 390,000 tonnes in the first five months of 2019, up 15 per cent from the same period of last year, according to the Thai Broiler Processing Exporters Association on 15 July. The association's manager, Kukrit Arepagorn, attributed the rise to growth in demand from China, which imported 25,000 tonnes of Thai chicken products in the first five months, up 1,462 per cent from the same period last year. Demand from other countries had also increased by up to eight per cent in the first five months, to 138,000 tonnes. Exports to South Korea, Japan and Malaysia also rose, he said.