

Thai News Update: 19 February 2018

1. Powering the EV Surge

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

The government is keen on transforming Thailand into a global production hub for electric vehicles (EVs), offering measures to encourage local car factories to build this new generation of automobiles, but uncertainty persists about how to generate demand in the domestic market. There are four EV platforms globally. Hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) were first developed with two systems, electricity-petrol and electricity-diesel. Battery Battery electric vehicles (BEVs) were later developed fuelled purely by electricity with fuel-cell electric vehicles (FCVs) representing the latest EV technology. With the rise of renewable energy, several SET-listed Thai energy firms are diversifying into the power storage sector in response to the government's policy to fully support renewable energy sectors.

2. South Koreans Keen on Thailand

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

South Korean investors are eager to expand investment in Thailand after focusing on Vietnam for the past several years. South Koreans have paid more attention to Thailand since Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak visited South Korea in 2016, said his spokesman Nathporn Chatusripitak. During Mr Somkid's visit, he urged South Korean investors to consider Thailand. The trip also saw the first meeting of the Korea-Thailand Committee on Economic Cooperation (Kotcom). The two countries also conducted a blueprint for new economic cooperation initiatives and the development of the Huai Luang water diversion project.

3. France's Schneider Electric Warm to Thailand 4.0 Initiative

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

SCHNEIDER Electric of France, a leader in digital transformation of energy and other sectors, has embraced the government's Thailand 4.0 initiative as a key driver of the transformation process. Luc Remont, executive vice president of Schneider Electric, said in an interview that Thailand,

Vietnam, Indonesia and Singapore are among major markets for the firm in Southeast Asia. Based on its Eco-struxure platform, Schneider focuses on the optimisation and automation of energy systems, industrial and manufacturing sectors, buildings and infrastructure systems. He said the Eco-struxure platform is designed to connect machines and devices in energy plants, factories, data centres, buildings and infrastructure systems, among others, to boost operational efficiency for cost-saving and higher productivity

4. Laem Chabang Expansion Edges Closer

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

Construction of a new phase of the deep-sea port at Laem Chabang is expected to get under way soon if a study into the environmental and health impacts of the project—a key plank of the Eastern Economic Corridor initiative – clears the final scrutiny in the next six months. Construction of the third phase of Laem Chabang Port is expected to cost Bt140 billion. “The study for the environmental health impact assessment (EHIA) has been completed and sent to the Environmental Impact Evaluation Bureau for approval,” Porntipa Taweenuch, the general administration division’s director of the Port Authority of Thailand, said on Feb 16. “The approval or any requests for amendments would be finished within six months. Then we can start an international bidding process to choose potential port terminal operators.”

5. Talad Platform offers SME Loans Based on Invoice Collateral

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

Talad Invoice, a lending platform initiated by a fintech startup, is expected to grow at an exponential rate this year, following two years of peer-to-peer lending using invoices as loans collateral, said Watwiboon Pumipue, chief executive officer of D90 Capital Co, which operates the financial platform. Loans have reached Bt30 million since the Talad Invoice platform was launched in late 2016, he said in an exclusive interview to The Nation. “We expect lending to reach Bt1 billion this year and we already have Bt100 million in the pipeline,” said Watwiboon. The company will also next month expand its business to Hanoi Vietnam.

6. Cryptocurrencies Still outside Thai Law, Warns SEC

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

Several companies have plans to issue ICO but the SEC did not have any rules to cover such offerings, secretary-general Rapee Sucharitakul said on Feb 18. Investors in ICO needed to realise the risks they were taking because the country did not yet have any laws in place to protect them and White Papers detailing the ICO were likely be oral contracts only, he said. “The SEC is studying [potential] rules for ICO but it is an ongoing process,” Rapee adde

7. Japanese Firm Hails Thai Embrace of Robotics

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

Robotics in Thailand is thriving on rising demand in Asia and around the globe as automation helps reduce manufacturing costs and the space needed at factories, says a Japanese electronics executive. Demand for robotics in Thailand is surging, especially in the automotive industry, said Junji Tsuda, chairman of the board at Yaskawa Electric Corporation, a maker of servos, motion controllers, AC motor drives, switches and industrial robots. Robotics now represents 25% of Japan’s automotive manufacturing output in Thailand. Mr Tsuda said he expects the local automotive industry to rely more heavily on industrial robotics as the government promotes next generation cars.

8. Sahathai Seeking to Make a Regional Splash

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

After listing on the stock market last November to acquire funding for future expansion, SET-listed marine logistics provider Sahathai Terminal Plc (PORT) is keen to broaden its regional outlook. Sahathai raised 526 million baht from its initial public offering on the Stock Exchange of Thailand. Founded in 2007, Sahathai has two ports in service-Sahathai Terminal and Bangkok Barge Terminal-spanning 168,000 square metres on the Chao Phraya River. Mr Banchai also has a positive outlook for the government's flagship Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) project, saying it will be another milestone for the country’s logistics sector. To deal with further expansion from the EEC, Sahathai plans to bring on two barges to transport heavy goods. The company expects demand from marine transport to increase over the next five years until 2023, as this for, of logistics is relatively cheaper.