

## Thai News Update: 19 November 2018

### **1. Workplace Safety Plan A Hazard, Say Critics**

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

With the Labour Ministry poised to allow companies to hire anyone to work as safety officers rather than being required to recruit only staff who graduated with a degree in occupational health and safety, educational institutions and students have voiced strong opposition to the idea. This proposed relaxation of the 2011 Occupational Health and Safety Act appears in Section 13(4) of the ministry's new draft regulations, which allow anyone with a bachelor's degree in any field of study and five years of work experience to undergo a 222-hour training course to become a safety officer.

### **2. Meeting Planned On WTO Ruling On Cigarette Imports**

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

Thai Customs officials plan to hold a meeting next week on the ruling issued by a World Trade Organisation [WTO] against the country's regulations on cigarette imports, a spokesperson of Customs Department told The Nation on 17 November. The WTO dispute panel on 19 November released its report that said Thailand has failed to implement the recommendations and rulings of the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) to bring its measures into conformity with its obligations under the Customs Valuation Agreement (CVA) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

### **3. Excise Rejig Could Boost Electric Vehicles**

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

The Excise Department could revise its tax structure for conventional cars by tightening greenhouse gas emission limits in a push to encourage electric vehicle (EV) production and usage in Thailand. The excise tax structure for internal combustion cars does not encourage automakers to produce EVs so that tax rates need to be reworked, said a source at the Excise Department who requested anonymity.

#### **4. Water Resources In EEC Area Being Studied**

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

State agency aims to ensure that increased demands from ambitious project are met. Water usage for all activities in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) provinces will be studied, as the Office of National Water Resources (ONWR) is drafting a water management plan. The plan aims to deal with increasing water demand in the EEC. ONWR secretary-general Somkiat Prachamwong said that as the government is currently promoting industrial investment in the three EEC provinces – Chon Buri, Rayong, and Chachoengsao – water demand in the region is expected to rise drastically.

#### **5. Land And Building Tax Legislation Passed By NLA**

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

The National Legislative Assembly (NLA) on 16 November passed the long-delayed bill on land and building tax, which will become law after it is published in the Royal Gazette. The bill cruised through the second and third readings, each by 169-0 votes and three abstentions. Its final passage ended the long legislative process since it entered the NLA for the first reading in March last year. Deputy Finance Minister Wisudhi Srisuphan, who chaired the committee vetting the bill, thanked all legislators for their support and said it will boost the economy and bring the tax structure up to international standard.