

Thai News Update: 20 August 2019

1. Govt pledges strict study of port plan

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

A controversial project to build a new port and petrochemical factories in Chon Buri's Laem Chabang area on reclaimed land will undergo a strict Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), the permanent secretary for natural resources and environment insisted on 19 August. "The plan is said to cover between 1,000 and 3,000 rai of ocean area, which is large enough for the project developer to be required to conduct an EIA," Wijarn Simachaya said on 19 August. "The EIA will suggest ways to mitigate any severe impact on the environment. Coral reefs located along the country's eastern coast must also be taken into consideration," Mr Wijarn said.

2. Teamwork urged to meet EEC needs

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

Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak has urged Thai universities to join with overseas counterparts and the business sector in efforts to meet the huge demand for skilled workers in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). "Big universities should set up branches in the EEC and work with private companies to develop more degree programmes and short-term training courses that can produce a workforce with skills and potential, as desired by the industrial sector," Mr Somkid said on 19 August during a meeting with higher-education representatives at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation.

3. Foreign investment more than doubles in first half, as BoI gets 758 new projects

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

Duangjai Asawachintachit, secretary-general of the Board of Investment (BoI), said 758 projects were submitted in the first six months of the year for investment promotion, recording a 7 per cent increase from the same period last year when 707 projects were submitted. Of the projects seeking investment, 57 per cent are industrial companies valued at a total of Bt131 billion. The

highest number of applicants are electrical appliance manufacturers, followed by carmakers, agriculture and food-processing businesses. Meanwhile, in the first half of the year, foreign investors have spent Bt147 billion on 468 projects, 109 per cent more than Bt70 billion invested in the same period last year.

4. Foreign Ministry not keen on allowing visa-free entry to Indians, Chinese

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

The Foreign Ministry is reportedly against the proposal to grant Indian and Chinese travellers visa-exempt stay for 14 days, citing concerns over national security and social impact. A Foreign Ministry source said this offer should be made to countries whose citizens pose less of a risk. This proposal was made by the Tourism and Sports Ministry and will be discussed in the Cabinet on August 20. The unnamed source said that since both China and India have a huge population, their nationals were prone to entering Thailand illegally to either make a living or to protect themselves from natural disasters in their own countries.

5. AIS unveils 5G auto surveillance

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

Leading mobile operator Advanced Info Service (AIS) has launched 5G-equipped surveillance vehicle technology that can help detect suspicious items and automobiles in southern Thailand. The prototype innovation, called surveillance and security vehicles, was presented when AIS organised a media event to present its 5G-powered technology in Songkhla on 16 August. Video analytics and AI will bring video data from CCTV on vehicles to a central control room via the 5G network, enabling the analysis of images and identification of objects around cars, such as suspect licence plates, car models, the colour and appearance of vehicles, allowing risk notifications to be sent to various areas in real-time.