

## Thai News Update: 21 August 2018

### 1. SCG Rebalances Towards Consumers

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

The SIAM Cement Plc (SCG) is embarking on a strategic transformation that incorporates a greater focus on retail consumers in addition to its mainstay cement and petrochemical product manufacturing. The corporate giant says the change is driven by the technological revolution that has impacted the company's businesses, especially its cement and buildings materials lines. Roongrote Rangsiyopash, SCG president and chief executive officer, said that, under the transformation programme, SCG will shift towards a much closer relationship with end-consumers and become a service-oriented company. In July, SCG Retail Holding Co Ltd, SCG's subsidiary for business cement-building materials, became a strategic shareholder in Indonesia's PT Catur Sentosa Tbk Adiprana via a rights issue. The move will accelerate the growth of Mitra10, a brand of modern home centres for building materials in Indonesia.

### 2. WHAUP Ups Pace Of Solar Rooftop Investment

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

WHA Utilities and Power (WHAUP) is racing forward with its solar-rooftop investment plan, targeting to complete an additional 2.6 megawatts of installed capacity during the current quarter. Most recently, the listed company was appointed by Electrolux to invest and operate a 0.50MW solar-rooftop system at one of its factories in Rayong, which is expected to reach completion next month. WHAUP is also eyeing to sign another 10MW contract this year, chief executive officer Wisate Chungwatana said on 20 August. Moreover, the company is in discussions with potential customers in WHA industrial estates and other industrial customers, expecting to sign another 10MW agreement this year, Wisate added.

### 3. Q2 Growth Slows But Still Impresses

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

The economy expanded at a slower pace in the second quarter, but the government's think tank is maintaining its growth forecast for 2018 at 4.2-4.7%, while raising the forecast for exports. The

National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) reported 20 August that GDP in the second quarter grew by 4.6% year-on-year, easing from the first quarter's revised reading of 4.9%, the highest in five years. Nonetheless, the growth figure topped the results for the fourth quarter of 2017 and the whole of 2017, which were 4% and 3.9%, respectively. The NESDB attributed second-quarter growth to an acceleration of private consumption, along with external demand and continuous expansion of both private and public investment. On the production side, the agricultural sector grew by 10.4%, up from a 6.5% rise in the previous quarter. The non-agricultural sector expanded by 4.1%, down from 4.8% in the first quarter on a slowdown in manufacturing and tourism-related service sectors.

#### **4. Dhanarak awaits Government Complex's Zone C nod**

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

The development of Zone C at the Chaeng Watthana Government Complex, worth 30 billion baht, is expected to be on the cabinet's agenda by September, says the head of Dhanarak Asset Development. If approved, the project's construction would start by late this year at the earliest and be completed by 2022, said Sumeth Damrongchaitham, outgoing president of Dhanarak Asset Development. Zone C, which spans 81 rai, will be developed into office buildings for government agencies over 670,000 square metres, of which 550,000 sq m will be usable space and the rest will be for utilities and facilities. Dhanarak Asset Development, a state enterprise under the Treasury Department, last year signed a 20-year rental contract for a convention centre and hotel at the Chaeng Watthana Government Complex to Centara Hotels and Resorts. Part of the proceeds have been used to finance design expenses for Zone C.

#### **5. Surat Proposal Headed Thani Oil Palm City To Cabinet**

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

The Industry Ministry will seek cabinet approval on 21 August for the oil palm city project in Surat Thani province to support local farmers in the South and boost competitiveness in related industries. The mobile cabinet meeting is heading to Chumphon province on 21 August after visiting Ranong. Thailand ranks third globally among oil palm producers, with a combined plantation area of 4.5 million rai, trailing Indonesia (58 million) and Malaysia (35 million). But oil

palm prices in Thailand have dropped for the past several years following policy to promote oil palm, which increased plantation area by 6 million rai.