

## Thai News Update: 21 August 2020

### **1. FTI hammers out job creation path**

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

The Federation of Thai Industries (FTI) is in talks with private and state-owned companies to devise ways to create jobs as the pandemic threatens to leave millions of workers unemployed this year. The FTI is asking CP Group, SCG, PTT and other heavy hitters to join the campaign, hoping to stimulate weak purchasing power and drive the national economy forward. Chairman Supant Mongkolsuthree said he plans to propose the idea to the government so that officials will launch measures to support participating companies.

### **2. Minister commits to repairing economy**

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

Energy Minister Supattanapong Panmeechaow vows to revive the economy using energy projects, with the Energy for All scheme at the top of the list for quick remedies. Critics want the government to delay Energy for All because of the huge surplus of the country's power generation capacity in reserve, but Mr Supattanapong said yesterday that the scheme would be the "first priority" and carried out within a month. The minister said he has separate plans to solve the oversupply of electricity.

### **3. Trade fairs eyed to lift rural spirits**

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

Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit vows to play a key part in developing local economies through online shopping and interprovincial trade fairs to boost incomes. Speaking at the 100th anniversary of the Commerce Ministry, Mr Jurin said yesterday that the ministry needs a big adjustment to cope with the ongoing crisis. "Provincial commerce officers must function as provincial salesmen to coordinate with the local private sector and farmers to enhance market connectivity," Mr Jurin said.

### **4. Central touts microgreen machine**

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

Central Food Retail, the food retail arm of Central Group, has launched an urban farming machine called Smart Mobile Farm to grow fresh microgreens indoors for sale in Bangkok. The first Smart Mobile Farm will debut at Central Food Hall Chidlom. The machine uses vertical farming techniques developed in Canada, as well as cloud services to monitor the soil health and other metrics. The vegetables will be grown without pesticides or other chemicals,

Central said. The device is directly consumer-facing, meaning it grows the produce in the same machine from which consumers will eventually purchase the final product.

### **5. Developers woo local buyers with discounted sale of luxury condos**

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

Luxury condos in the Sukhumvit area have slashed prices to attract buyers, while demand for condos as a second home has been rising. Aliwassa Pathnadabutr, managing director at CBRE Thailand, a property consultant, said that the property market in the second quarter of the year is showing positive signs after the government eased lockdown measures imposed during the Covid-19 outbreak. CBRE also found out that in 2019, 61 per cent of buyers bought condos for residential purposes, 34 per cent bought for investment and 5 per cent bought as a second home. However, in the first half of 2020 the number of people buying condos as a second home rose to 25 per cent while those buying for investment went down to 16 per cent, and 59 per cent bought for residential purpose.

### **6. Japan pushed to take more Thai pork**

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

Thailand will negotiate to increase pork exports to Japan, the Pig Board said after its meeting on Thursday (August 20). Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha is set to discuss the matter with his Japanese counterpart at the Asean Summit in November. Pig meat is traded between the two countries under the 2007 Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement (JTEPA). Japan last year became the first country cleared to export pork to Thailand. Meanwhile Japan is the top market for Thailand's Bt107-billion pig industry.

### **7. Minister orders energy agencies to create more jobs**

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

New Energy Minister Supattanapong Punmeechaow has instructed state energy agencies to draw up job creation plans to boost the virus-hit economy. They must also seek ways to ease energy costs for people and consider measures to peg the cost of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and natural gas for vehicles (NGV). He asked them to share the plans with one another in the next two weeks. He said his policies focused on boosting the subdued economy, creating jobs, and laying a foundation for the country's future energy direction. The planned community power plants project would continue, he said, with 30 days needed to revise details. The project is expected to invite applications to construct the plants late this year, with commercial operation expected to begin early next year.