

## Thai News Update: 21 September 2020

### **1. Treasury tweaking SEZ perks for companies**

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

The Treasury Department is preparing to adjust investment privileges given to private investors in the department's special economic zones (SEZs), aligning them with the incentives for the Eastern Economic Corridor. Adjusting the investment privileges is meant to attract investors who want to invest and develop land in the SEZs, which are located close to the borders of neighbouring countries, in order to build up the local economy, said Yuttana Yimgarund, the EEC's director-general. One of the adjustments that will be made to attract investors is the extension of the lease period to 50 years from the previous 30 years, while rental fee is waived for the first two years of the lease period, Mr Yuttana said.

### **2. Government panel pushes Bt1.2-trillion transport mega-projects**

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

The government's subcommittee tasked with examining medium and long-term economic measures has reportedly suggested expediting mega-projects to the Centre for Economic Situation Administration. The total value of the projects is estimated at around Bt1.2 trillion. Investment in these projects should be accelerated, the panel has recommended. Among them are the Bang Sue-Rangsit and Bang Sue-Taling Chan Red Line mass-transit system worth Bt1.07 billion. The project is slated to be trialled on July 1, 2021. Another project is the Phase-1 Thailand-China high-speed train project. All its civil work contracts are expected to be signed next year and construction is expected to be finished in 2025.

### **3. Special visa provisions prompt TAT inquiries**

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

The special tourist visa (STV) scheme is starting to gain momentum as overseas offices under the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) report high interest from tour agents. After the cabinet approved the STV scheme last week, all TAT offices in Europe received a number of calls and emails asking for more details about the visa process and available period, said TAT governor Yuthasak Supasorn. For instance, the TAT London office reported 31 inquiries on one day after the news broke. But the scheme still requires an official announcement from the Immigration Bureau, meaning the TAT can clarify little at the moment.

#### **4. Phuket targets long-stay Scandinavians**

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

More than 10,000 Scandinavians have inquired about the new extended visit programme the resort province is preparing to offer, according to Thailand Longstay Company. This enthusiastic response came as the province looks to assure locals that reopening of the country to foreign tourists can be done safely without risking a re-emergence of Covid-19 infections. At this time of year, many Scandinavian holidaymakers often seek to leave behind the cold winter of their home countries and spend long holidays in Thailand, Italy or Spain, said Piyapat Suban Na Ayudhaya, CEO of the company. "And since both Italy and Spain are still reeling from the Covid-19 outbreak, it presents an ideal opportunity for Thailand to attract the Scandinavian visitors for extended holidays here instead," she said.

#### **5. Study identifies pros and cons of Thai-EU free trade deal**

**Source: the nation ([link](#))**

Entering a free trade agreement (FTA) with the European Union would boost revenue from some Thai exports but at the cost of Thailand having to import more products from the EU, according to a study. The findings of the study, conducted by the Institute of Future Studies for Development, will be presented at a Department of Trade Negotiations' seminar in Bangkok next Tuesday, said the department's director general Auramon Supthaweethum. The preliminary study on the pros and cons of a Thai-EU free trade pact found it would expand Thai exports of auto parts, electronic equipment, food, rubber and plastic to the EU.

#### **6. Energy giants make adjustments to cope with the new normal post-Covid-19**

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

Energy organisations have modified their operations for the 'new normal', after Covid-19 changed the situation in Thai energy sector. The virus outbreak led to a nationwide lockdown, slashing oil and electricity usage by around 20 and 10 per cent, respectively. Moreover, total backup electricity that time increased to around 37 to 40 per cent of normal level. This situation had huge ramifications for the energy sector of the country, prompting relevant organisations to improve themselves to survive in the post-coronavirus era..

#### **7. BGRIM CEO Preeyanart named most influential business woman by Forbes Asia**

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

Preeyanart Soontornwata, Chief Executive Officer of B.Grimm Power Plc (BGRIM) was chosen as one of 25 Most Powerful Business Women in Asia in 2020 by Forbes Asia Magazine. Mrs Preeyanart has been a talented woman executive with over two decades of experience in

the energy sector She pioneered the energy business for the B.Grimm Group of Companies and successfully turned subsidiary BGRIM into one of the top private power producers in Thailand which has been well recognised by local and foreign investors. Under her leadership, BGRIM has become one of the prime businesses of the B.Grimm Group which generate the highest revenue for the conglomerate.