

Thai News Update: 26 August 2020

1. Cabinet allocates Bt572m to foundation promoting sufficiency economy

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

The Cabinet has approved a budget of Bt572.58 million for the Pid Thong Lang Phra Foundation, which is dedicated to promoting the sufficiency economy vision of King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great, Deputy Government Spokesperson Traisulee Traisoranakul said on Tuesday (August 25). The budget is allocated for use in the foundation's projects during 2021-22. "The budget will be divided as follows: Bt62 million for promoting model communities in sufficiency economy, Bt224.58 million for adoption of sufficiency economy in areas with security problems, and Bt286 for expansion of royal-initiated projects," she said.

2. Prayut learns about progress made in EEC projects

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

During a visit to Rayong province on Tuesday (August 25), Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha checked out an exhibition organised by the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) Office, which showcased advances made in EEC projects. Kanit Sangsubhan, secretary-general of the EEC Office, said the premier was told about the progress made in the high-speed train project linking three key airports. The first phase of this project is under construction and is expected to be completed by 2024. The second-phase of the project, which will cover 190 kilometres from U-Tapao Airport to Trat province, is expected to be completed by 2028.

3. Transport Ministry turns to faster road and rail spending to prop up economy

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

The Transport Ministry plans to accelerate spending on roads and rail projects in the fiscal year starting in October to aid an economy hammered by a slump in exports and tourism. Key programmes include expansion of Bangkok's mass-transit network and expressways linking several nearby provinces and the nation's eastern seaboard to Bangkok, as about half of Thailand's gross domestic product comes from the capital city though it has less than a 10th of the nation's population. Also high on the government's transport agenda is a highway network connecting neighbouring countries and a high-speed rail that goes through neighbouring countries to China.

4. Commerce Ministry eyes Asian top-five trade ranking

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

The Commerce Ministry has set a goal to raise Thailand's international trade value to Asia's top five by 2027, up from eighth in 2019, by focusing on value-added industries such as digital, food and healthcare. To achieve the goal, Thailand would need to fetch at least \$12 billion in export value a year or \$1 billion monthly, said Somdet Susomboon, director-general of the International Trade Promotion Department. "We have set the focus mainly on Asia because exporters in the region are the major suppliers to the world market," Mr Somdet said.

5. SRT eyes next stage of EEC train project

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

The State Railway of Thailand (SRT) hopes to submit plans by next year for the second phase of the high-speed train route in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) that would see it extended to Trat province. Kanit Sangsubhan, secretary-general of the (EEC) Office, on Tuesday gave an update on plans for the second phase of the key infrastructure project at the mobile cabinet meeting in Rayong province. The SRT is drafting the blueprint for the project and preparing a cost estimate, he said, and hopes to table it for cabinet approval sometime in 2021.

6. Cabinet approves more measures to spur domestic tourism

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

The Cabinet on 25 August approved more stimulus measures to support domestic tourism to recoup some of the losses from the absence of global travel after the coronavirus pandemic shut borders, a government official said. The government will increase benefits contained in an earlier package including subsidies for hotels and flights, deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek told a briefing. A 40% discount will cover 10 hotel nights for each traveller, up from 5 nights earlier, while a subsidy on flights will double to 2,000 baht, she said. The tourism-reliant country has had no foreign tourists since April due to a travel ban.

7. IEAT creating over 7,400 jobs as it expedites Map Ta Phut Smart Park project

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

The Industrial Estate Authority of Thailand (IEAT) is accelerating its Smart Park Industrial Estate plan as part of the Map Ta Phut Port Project so it can open for business in 2026, expecting to create more than 7,400 jobs with over Bt1.3 billion circulating in the system per year. It aims to start reclaiming land in early 2021 and begin construction in 2024, with

service commencing in 2026. After visiting Map Ta Phut Industrial Estate and Map Ta Phut Industrial Port with Industry Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit, IEAT governor Somchint Pilouk said the Smart Park project focuses on using modern technology and is environmentally friendly. It will be a commercial centre, supporting the growth of marine business services.

8. GrabFood in biggest-ever marketing push

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

GrabFood will deploy its biggest-ever marketing budget this year to retain its customer base, boost food orders and draw new users as key rivals receive strong financial support and realign their business strategies. The marketing splurge reflects intensifying competition in the third quarter. "Grab sees the potential of the food ordering business in Thailand, which continues to grow as the pandemic has changed people's behaviour to use such services, while mobile internet penetration has reached 80%," said Chantsuda Thananitayaudom, marketing head of Grab Thailand. There is still room to grow in the food ordering market, valued at 35 billion baht, when compared with e-commerce, estimated at 300 billion baht.