

## THAI NEWS UPDATE: 26 AUGUST 2022

### **1. BOI-approved foreign businesses can now own land in Thailand**

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

Thailand's Board of Investment (BOI) published new regulations on 25 August allowing foreign companies granted investment privileges to buy land in the country. The regulation signed by the prime minister on August 8, is effective retroactively since June 13 under the 1977 Investment Promotion Act. The regulation requires the business to sell or transfer the land within a year once its BOI-approved status has expired. Each land ownership will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the BOI.

### **2. Wage hikes likely fixed by Friday**

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

The tripartite committee considering minimum daily wage hikes is expected to reach its final decision on 26 August amid concern that too much of a raise could be detrimental to workers and businesses. The committee is represented by employees, employers and government organisations including the Ministry of Commerce, the Bank of Thailand and economists. While many employers sitting on the board of the Employers' Confederation of Thailand (ECT) accepted a wage rise of between 7% and 10%, employers at SMEs found them excessive given the slow economy, said Boonchob Suthamanaswong, permanent secretary for labour.

### **3. Retail e-commerce to hit B4tn in 2025**

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

Thailand's retail e-commerce market is expected to reach 4 trillion baht in 2025, up from 817 billion this year, while online sales through virtual space, known as meta-commerce, is tipped to be a future trend, says Kulthirath Pakawachkrieters, newly appointed president of the Thai eCommerce Association (Theca). Meta-commerce is expected to be a new shopping trend in years to come with global investment in the metaverse reaching US\$120 billion in 2021, she said.

### **4. State agency plans another major push to develop smart cities**

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

Thailand plans to pursue smart city development across the country with the help of 150 second-generation smart city ambassadors (SCA), president of the Digital Economy

Promotion Agency (DEPA) Nuttapon Nimmanphatcharin said. Nuttapon, who is also the CEO of the DEPA, told a press conference that the key was to develop and transform their hometowns into smart and modern cities. He clarified that being a smart city does not mean that all infrastructure and services would use cutting-edge innovation and technology. Being a smart city means finding the ideas and methods to apply all available local resources for better living in the upcountry, he explained. This type of development is required to ensure that prosperity is distributed evenly across the country. This is also a practical way to encourage young people to stay in their hometown and work, he said.

#### **5. PTT makes move into plant-based products**

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

National oil and gas conglomerate PTT Plc is preparing to build a factory to process a variety of plant-based foods, with the aim of turning them into popular new products. The facility, to be located in Rojana Industrial Estate in Ayutthaya, will initially have a production capacity of 3,000 tonnes a year, which will increase to 25,000 tonnes within seven years. PTT is keen to diversify into the latter business as the market value of plant-based food stood at around 9 billion baht last year, with predicted annual growth of 12-15%. Thailand is also a major food exporter.

#### **6. Thailand aims to become disaster warning management leader in SE Asia**

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

The national disaster warning system executive committee on 25 August approved a strategic plan to promote Thailand as a leader in disaster warning management in Southeast Asia. The approval came during a video conference chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan at the Five Provinces Bordering Forest Preservation Foundation in Bangkok's Phaya Thai district. The plan, which is in line with the country's 20-year national strategy, aims to apply standardised digital technologies to disaster warning systems, said Prawit's assistant spokesman Lt-General Patchasak Patirupanon.