

## THAI NEWS UPDATE: 28 MAY 2021

### **1. Agency launches contest for new Thai rice varieties in bid to boost exports**

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

The Thai Rice Exporters Association is holding a contest to find new rice varieties to feed the global market, as well as strengthen Thailand's competitiveness. Innovators have until June 30 to register, before planting their variety between July and November. The winner will be chosen in December when the rice is harvested and tasted. The association's president Charoen Laothamatas said Thailand exported 1.45 million tonnes of rice in the first four months of this year, a fair bit lower than the target of 2 million tonnes. He put the drop down to the price – Thai rice is more expensive compared to Vietnam or Pakistan – and an improvement in the quality of rice from other countries.

### **2. Firms eye EEC energy ventures**

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

Five Japanese companies have shown interest in investing in renewable energy businesses at Smart Park industrial estate in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) zone under a Thai-Japanese move to promote clean energy. Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Industrial Estate Authority of Thailand (IEAT) agree to push ahead with projects that match the global trend in environmental protection, said IEAT governor Veeris Ammarapala after a recent online meeting with METI officials.

### **3. Royal Academy can import vaccine directly but must get permission from FDA**

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

Chulabhorn Royal Academy will procure alternative brands of Covid-19 vaccine as per an announcement just published in the Royal Gazette, Deputy Prime Minister Wissanu Krea-ngam confirmed on Thursday. Wissanu said the royal college, a scientific research institute, had legal authority to issue announcements to import vaccines, drugs and medical equipment. However, any purchase of vaccine must abide by Thai law and be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Public Health Ministry, he said. The college would also halt the importation of vaccine once there was sufficient supply in the country, he added. The college said it would reveal plans to import Sinopharm vaccine tomorrow (Friday).

#### **4. PTT preparing to debut in EV assembly**

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

National oil and gas conglomerate PTT Plc is preparing to make its debut in the electric vehicle (EV) assembly industry in the third quarter after the launch of battery businesses last year. The company is currently in talks with partners on a business model and production facility location, said PTT chief executive and president Auttapol Rerkpiboon, declining to name the partners. PTT plans to assemble various types of EVs, including motorcycles, sedans, buses and trucks. Mr Auttapol said the company is making a mock-up model of an electric motorcycle and expects to unveil it to the public by the end of this year.

#### **5. PTT to import Remdesivir to treat severe Covid patients**

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

This drug is a second choice for the treatment of severe cases of Covid-19 if the patient has an allergic reaction to antiretroviral drugs like Favipiravir. Thailand initially imported about 4,000 bottles of Remdesivir, but stocks are running low now. Meanwhile, PTT has allocated 170 million baht for stimulus measures to help society as it struggles with the severe third wave of Covid-19. The state-run oil and gas conglomerate lent a helping hand earlier by donating more than 300 ventilators and oxygen cylinders, among other necessities, to hospitals.

#### **6. Huge area allotted for vaccine base**

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

CentralWorld, in cooperation with King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital of the Thai Red Cross Society, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and the Thai Chamber of Commerce, is preparing to open a vaccination centre in the mall's live zone on the eighth floor with an area spanning 4,500 square metres. Due to its large size and management system, the venue will be able to accommodate large crowds of staff and the public. In the first phase, the centre will administer vaccines to medical personnel, frontline officials and volunteers who have registered for the vaccination. It is expected to begin the service for the general public in June 2021. Interested individuals can find more information about registration on the following Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CentralwOrld>.