

## Thai News Update: 29 July 2020

### **1. Thailand tops global ranking for handling of Covid-19 crisis**

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

Thailand ranked highest in a global survey for its effective handling of Covid-19 and recovery from the crisis. The Global Covid-19 Index (GCI), published yesterday (July 28), gave Thailand an index score of 82.06, putting it on top of the global chart as an example of best practices in tackling the dreaded virus. South Korea ranked second with a recovery index of 81.09, followed by Latvia (80.81), Malaysia (79.37), Taiwan (78.94) and New Zealand (78.55). Australia, which used to top the chart in previous months, now ranks 6th, with a recovery index of 77.18.

### **2. BCPG eager to build Asean's largest wind farm in Laos**

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

SET-listed BCPG Plc, a renewable energy arm of Bangchak Corporation Plc, plans to build Asean's largest wind farm in Laos to generate revenue from rising demand for electricity. The company announced it will spend US\$ 840 million, around 26.8 billion baht, developing the facility, with a capacity of 600 megawatts, on 400,000 rai in southern Laos. The farm will be located near the Mekong River across Ubon Ratchathani. Electricity will be sold to Vietnam's state-run Electricity Vietnam (EVN). President and chief executive Bundit Sapianchai said his company plans to sign a power purchase agreement with EVN this October to kick start the project, named "Swan".

### **3. ASEAN hotel associations endorse travel bubble**

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

Hotel associations in Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines are advocating a start to intra-ASEAN travel to boost regional tourism, which has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the possibility of opening borders for tourism is likely still months away, each country is starting to open up travel and hospitality services for domestic tourists. Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Philippines head Eugene T. Yap said the country had created a local travel bubble program, allowing domestic tourists to visit 10 destinations with strict protocols in place. Thailand Hotel Association president Supawan Tanomkieatipum said that the Thai government was subsidizing 40 percent of local tourists' expenses, such as hotel fares, to help the travel industry recover.

#### **4. GPSC eyes power business expansion with parent PTT**

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

Global Power Synergy Plc (GPSC), the power flagship of PTT Group, expects to reach a conclusion in the third quarter on joint investment with PTT in the power business, GPSC chief executive Chawalit Tippawanich said. The investment aims to produce 8,000 megawatts in the next 10 years, starting from this year, of which 3,000MW will be achieved in the first five years. He added that the company was still looking for a merger and acquisition deal in the renewable energy business in foreign countries.

#### **5. AOT studying second airports for Phuket, Chiang Mai**

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

The Transport Ministry has asked Airports of Thailand (AOT) to deliver feasibility studies on second airports to serve Phuket and Chiang Mai by next year. The AOT is ready to invest more than Bt120 billion in the airports, confident construction will be warranted by growing travel demand. Chaiwat Thongkamkoon, Transport Ministry Permanent Secretary, said the ministry in June instructed the AOT to hire consultants for the feasibility studies. The AOT expects construction costs for both airports will be around Bt120 billion – Bt70 billion for the second Phuket airport and Bt54 billion-Bt60 billion for the second Chiang Mai airport.

#### **6. Thailand-Japan industrial bubble eyed**

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

In a recent discussion, the Department of Industrial Promotion (DIP) and the Organisation for Small and Medium Enterprises and Regional Innovation, Japan (SME Support Japan) decided to match Thai and Japanese businesses to create an industrial bubble. Nattapon Rangsitpon, DIP director general, said the industrial bubble will be operated through the T-GoodTech trading platform, which will link up with the J-Goodtech SME platform to match 4,000 Thai businesses with a Japanese business database of 20,000 members. This system will also help publicise different businesses so they can be matched with different target markets. DIP has recently been able to link up more than 70 businesses, accounting for up to Bt400 million in revenue from exports.