

## Thai News Update: 31 August 2020

### **1. Nations still want India in RCEP**

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

Ministers from the 16 Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Participating Countries 30 August reaffirmed their commitment to signing the RCEP agreement in November, insisting they will invite India to return to the negotiating table. Vice Minister for Commerce Sansern Samalapa said on 30 August the countries had reached agreements on all pending issues for 2020. The ministers confirmed their readiness to sign the RCEP agreement at the fourth RCEP summit in November 2020 and welcome back India if the country wishes to re-enter into negotiations.

### **2. Asean preps mutual recognition arrangements for cars, materials**

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

Asean is scheduled to clinch a pact on mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) for automobiles and building and construction materials next month in a move to reduce production costs and foster trade among members. Sansern Samalapa, vice-minister to the commerce minister, said that despite the Covid-19 crisis, Asean members have continued working closely on MRAs for automobiles and parts, as well as for building and construction materials. Once effective, the pacts will help reduce production costs and ease exports and imports of automotive products and construction materials among members, he said.

### **3. Govt mulls buying back more trawlers, ease rules**

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

The government has agreed to help commercial fishing operations by pledging to consider buying back more trawlers from companies affected by the regulations and relaxing several fishing regulations. "The government has been working hard to find ways to respond to the demands of those affected by the government's fishing regulations, which were aimed at solving illegal, unreported and unregulated [IUU] fishing in Thailand," said deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek on Sunday after the National Fisheries Association of Thailand (NFAT) threatened to stage a mass protest in Bangkok. She said the prime minister has made the fishing industry a national priority and ordered state bodies to listen to local fishermen and associations like NFAT to fine-tune its policies.

#### **4. PM Awards 2020 winners reveal their secrets**

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

DITP drives Thai business owners to greater success. This year's Prime Minister's Export Awards (PM Awards) hosted by the Ministry of Commerce's Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) are particularly timely in their mission to drive Thai entrepreneurs to develop their services and products despite the coronavirus pandemic and flagging global economy. The DITP consistently supports both the companies and the awards. Initiated in 1992 by former Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun, the PM Awards are presented to Thai businesses in a way that helps drive the Thai economy by shining a spotlight on exceptional and innovative products and services.

#### **5. Botanical garden in Rayong to be developed as EEC tourist attraction**

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

The Rayong Botanical Garden will be developed as a tourist attraction in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). Last week, officials from the Pid Thong Lang Phra Foundation took government executives to the Rayong Botanical Garden, during their mobile meeting in the province. The foundation chief, Wanchana Boonchai, informed the executives that the idea for creating botanical gardens in the country came from the Queen Mother. The first botanical garden emerged in Chiang Mai province, before the Botanical Garden Organisation built more gardens, he added.

#### **6. Job expo in September aims to offer a million positions**

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

The Labour Ministry is preparing to host the Thailand Job Expo 2020 in September to provide up to 1 million positions from government, private and state enterprise sectors to help those who have lost their jobs due to the Covid-19 situation. "The ministry will also roll out measures to help new graduates find jobs during the Covid-19 situation, including prohibiting employers under the social security scheme to lay off more than 15 per cent of their existing staff for a period of one year, which should reduce the congestion in job markets," he added.

#### **7. Israel includes Thailand in list of safe countries**

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

Israeli Ambassador Meir Shlomo announced on Sunday (August 30) that Thailand has been added to his country's list of 21 safe countries, whose citizens will be exempted from the 14-day quarantine when they travel to Israel. However, he said, this list will be reviewed every fortnight. The ambassador added that this exemption also covers Thai labourers who work in

Israel's farming sector. Last week, 92 Thai workers headed off to Israel for employment, becoming the first such group to travel overseas after Covid-19 hit the world.