

Thai News Update: 31 July 2018

1. On The Road To Self-Betterment

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

Thai Consumers are looking for ways to fulfil their desires to better themselves, according to a new survey conducted by Mintel, the global market intelligence agency. Its latest findings revealed that as many as four in five (79 per cent) Thai consumers living in the cities would like to have a healthier diet, just over three in four (76 per cent) would like to have a better work-life balance while 73 per cent to exercise more. The survey was carried out in May this year among 1,500 internet users, aged 16 and over, living in the metropolitan areas of Thailand. Almost half (48 per cent) of metro Thai consumers plan to adjust their diets over the next 12 months for their personal health and wellness. Of these consumers, the majority (90 per cent) plan to eat more fruits or vegetables, over half (53 per cent) are looking to reduce their meat intake and 45 per cent to follow a plant-based, vegetarian or vegan diet.

2. Thai Firms Urged To Invest In India

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

Thai businessmen are being encouraged to "Act West", and become the first investors in eight northern states of India which are set to receive a share of 6.2 trillion baht as part of a project to boost India's economic connectivity with the Southeast Asian region. This proposal was made by Thai ambassadors at the 10th Delhi Dialogue Summit held in New Delhi during 19-20 July in which Indian deputy foreign minister VK Singh reiterated his government's "Act East" initiative which aims to strengthen economic ties with the 10 members of ASEAN. The high-level summit was attended by regional foreign dignitaries and business luminaries including Thai billionaire and CP chairman Dhanin Chearavanont. Under Act East, the government of India is set to spend 6.2 trillion baht on developing maritime infrastructure and economic and industrial zones over the next 10 years. Mr Modi announced Sagarmala in 2015 as an initiative to develop ports along 14,500 kilometres of coastline to reduce transportation costs and facilitate shipping. In terms of geopolitics, Mr Pradap said Act East will provide necessary competition to the larger-scale Belt and Road initiative. With the ongoing territorial disputes over the Spratly Islands in the South

China Sea between China and some ASEAN members, other trade linkages should not be ignored, he believes.

3. Thai Backs Indonesian Call For More Flights To Jakarta, Bali

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

Thai Airways International (THAI) has expressed its commitment to help boost tourist arrivals to Indonesia, particularly to Jakarta and Bali, from Bangkok. “Thai Airways would like to increase the number of flights from Bangkok to Jakarta and Bali, but there is concern about facilities and slot times in Jakarta and Denpasar,” Thai Airways’ district sales manager in Jakarta, Abdul Azis Maliki, said on the sidelines of an event to promote the airline’s Live TV onboard entertainment in Bangkok recently. Thai Airways cooperates with tourism boards in South Korea, Japan, Dubai, India, Australia and Europe, and its base in Bangkok has many connecting flights from various countries to Jakarta and Bali, he added. Abdul Azis responded to a statement made by Indonesian Tourism Minister Arief Yahya, who was seeking cooperation with tourism stakeholders in Bangkok. Thailand welcomed 35 million tourists in 2017. Abdul Azis called on the Indonesian government to cooperate with governments around the world.

4. Ptt Gains Backing For Lng Plans

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

The Committee on Energy Policy Administration (CEPA) will soon propose that the National Energy Policy Council (NEPC) unlock PTT Plc's planned gas procurement of about 2.6 million tonnes a year from a gas field in Mozambique, allowing Thailand's largest energy firm to import gas for domestic sales and exports. Wirat Uanarumit, chief operating officer of the upstream petroleum and gas business group of PTT, said that in the future, PTT will be able to manage markets by itself and gain a chance for domestic sales, sales to non-pool gas customers, and exports to other countries. In other words, this could lead PTT to reach its target as a liquefied natural gas (LNG) trader, and trade prices will follow a market mechanism, he said. “We understand that the Ministry of Energy will allow PTT to buy gas from the Mozambique project and there could be other players to import gas under non-pool gas system. So, we will manage our trading portfolio,” he said, referring to the Mozambique Rovuma Offshore Area 1 Project.

5. Six Services To Be Liberalised For ASEAN In 2019

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

Thailand looks set to open six more service businesses to Asean members next year, as the private sector urges the government to come up with more open policies to cope with digital technology. According to Auramon Supthaweethum, director-general of the Trade Negotiations Department, Asean members have been speeding up implementing the 10th package of commitments under the Asean Framework Agreement on Services (Afas), which calls for an increase in minimum Asean equity participation to 70% in the service sector. Afas was signed in December 1995 in Bangkok, two years after Asean launched the initiative to work towards the Asean Free Trade Area (Afta) for trade in goods through the Agreement on Common Effective Preferential Tariff Scheme for Afta signed in 1993. Afas provides the mandate for progressive negotiations on the liberalisation of trade in services, recognising that intra-Asean services liberalisation will strengthen the flow of trade and investment in the services sector among Asean member states and will eventually contribute to overall economic integration in the region.