

## THAI NEWS UPDATE: 9 MARCH 2022

### **1. WHA Rayong 36 ready to support investors in EEC**

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

SET-listed WHA Corporation, Thailand's largest developer of built-to-suit logistics facilities, has launched a new smart and eco-friendly industrial estate in Rayong to serve investments under the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) scheme. WHA Rayong 36 is aimed at serving 12 targeted S-curve industries, ranging from new-generation cars and smart electronics to robotics, logistics and aviation. The new industrial estate, which covers 1,281 rai, is the eleventh industrial complex developed by WHA. "The industrial estate adopts digital and innovative technologies to facilitate communication and transport, ensure security and safety as well as support environmental management, including wastewater treatment," said David Nardone, WHA's group chief executive for industrial and international affairs.

### **2. State slashes excise tax on fuels used by Egat**

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

The cabinet on 8 March approved cutting the excise tax on diesel and bunker oil used to generate electricity by the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (Egat) to zero in a bid to lower electricity bills for six months. Deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek said the cabinet agreed to reduce the excise tax on diesel oil with sulphur not exceeding 0.005%, so-called diesel B0, as well as for bunker oil. The approval is effective once it is published in the Royal Gazette, lasting until Sept 15 this year. The current excise tax rate for diesel oil with sulphur not exceeding 0.005% is 3.44 baht per litre, while bunker oil is 0.64 baht per litre. Ms Rachada said the government wants to reduce the electricity generation cost for Egat for six months, which can help lower electricity bills by 1-1.50 baht per unit.

### **3. Cabinet okays easing levies on digital assets**

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

The cabinet agreed to ease tax regimes on 8 March for investments in digital assets in a move to promote the digital economy. According to government spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana, the cabinet approved two royal decrees: one regarding the Finance Ministry to waive the 7% value-added tax (VAT) on cryptocurrency transactions and another about the Bank of Thailand to waive VAT on the transfer of digital currency to be issued by the Bank of Thailand as part of its test of Retail Central Bank Digital Currency. The measures take effect one month after the cabinet's approval or until Dec 31, 2023.

#### **4. Thailand discusses purchasing of crude oil at 'friendly' price**

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

The energy and foreign affairs ministries are negotiating with oil producing countries, including Saudi Arabia, the purchase of crude oil at lower than the global market price, Deputy Finance Minister Santi Promphat said on 8 March. We are lucky the government has successfully revived diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia for the first time in over 30 years,” he said. “We hope Saudi Arabia agrees to sell us oil at a friendly price, at least until the Russia-Ukraine conflict is over.” Finance Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith meanwhile warned a rise in global energy prices "could cause domestic consumption to slow down”. Arkhom said the war could produce a global economic impact that causes Thailand’s gross domestic product this year to miss the lower end of the estimation at 3.5 per cent expansion.

#### **5. Cabinet okays VAT exemption, income tax deduction on cryptocurrencies, digital tokens**

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

The Cabinet on 8 March approved value-added tax (VAT) exemption and personal income tax deduction on cryptocurrencies and digital token trading. The draft royal decree on VAT exemption, which covers the trade of cryptocurrencies or digital tokens in digital asset exchanges and digital currencies issued by the Bank of Thailand (BOT), will come into effect from April 1 this year and last until December 31 next year. Meanwhile, the draft ministerial regulation on personal income tax deduction will be calculated from profit minus loss in the same tax year since May 14, 2018, resulting in a decline in tax payment. “Investment in digital assets has been developing quickly, so investors must pay 15 per cent of profit from cryptocurrencies or digital token trading after a loss deduction in personal income tax,” said government spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana

#### **6. No extra holidays for Songkran fest this year**

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

A cabinet meeting on 8 March approved the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration’s (CCSA) proposal to retain the number of Songkran holidays at three days – from April 13 to 15 – said government spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana. With these three days being combined with the weekend of April 16-17, the Songkran Festival will be a five-day holiday this year. In the past, the government had sometimes announced additional holidays before or after Songkran to form a longer holiday period in a bid to promote tourism. However, due to the Omicron variant spreading fast this year, the CCSA believed it was best

to minimise the number of holidays to prevent a spike in infections from interprovincial travel during the festival, he said.

### **7. Thai exports under RCEP jump by over 200 per cent in second month**

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

The value of Thai exports has risen by more than 200 per cent in the second month since the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) came into effect, with total exports of Bt1.165 billion in the first two months. Pitak Udomwichaiwat, director-general at the Department of Foreign Trade, said the value was estimated from applications by exporters seeking to exercise their rights under the RCEP agreement. From January 1, when the RCEP agreement took effect, until February 28, Thai exporters had sought certificate of the country of origin for RCEP exports valued at a total of Bt1.165 billion. Pitak said exporters sought the certificate for RCEP exports worth Bt277.84 million in January, but the amount rose to Bt887.67 million in February. The biggest value of Thai exports for which the certificate was sought under RCEP was to Japan, totalling Bt540.36 million.