

## **Thailand: Foreign Tourist Assaults Taxi Driver in Phuket**

Section: General News - An Australian tourist, seemingly intoxicated, attacked a taxi driver, who told him not to smoke in the vehicle.

The incident occurred on Wednesday about 30 meters away from Thalang Police Station in Phuket province.

According to the taxi driver, he had picked up the tourist from Phuket International Airport and was en route to a hotel. When the tourist started smoking, he informed the tourist that smoking was not allowed in the vehicle.

Then, the tourist crossed over from the back seat and grabbed him by the neck. He lost control of the vehicle, causing it to lurch forward and collide with a car in the front.

The tourist has agreed to compensate for damages to both vehicles and has apologized. The taxi driver has also been taken to the hospital for a medical examination as part of the legal process.

Police have filed charges against the tourist for “using violence against others” and have noted signs of alcohol intoxication during their investigation. (TNA/MCOT)

## **Thailand: Gold Price Continues to Surge**

Section: Business News - The global gold price has exceeded expectations, reaching a new high while the weakening baht has also influenced the price of Thai gold this morning, pushing it to new highs as well.

The Gold Traders Association reported that as of 09.19 am, the price of Thai gold has risen by 400 baht in total, with gold ornaments selling at 40,450 baht per baht and gold bars at 39,950 baht per baht. This is based on the Asian gold price of \$2,301 per ounce and the Thai baht weakening to 36.70 baht per dollar.

Mr. Jitti Tangsitpakdee, the association's chairman, stated that there is still no sign of a decrease in the gold price, except for possible selling pressure from gold funds.

Although Thai gold may experience a slight decrease of 50-150 baht in the short term, it quickly rebounds and could potentially reach 42,000 baht.

Hua Seng Heng Gold Futures Company has indicated that the gold price has reached \$2,300 per ounce and the market is closing in on a new All-Time High.

Investors are closely monitoring the range of \$2,300-2,305, with potential for further upward adjustments. Resistance is expected at \$2,320 per ounce.

Factors influencing the gold price include the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the Middle East tensions, alongside the weakening US dollar. Meanwhile, central banks of various countries are increasing their gold reserves to mitigate risks. (TNA/MCOT)

### **Thailand: Fire Breaks Out on Ferry Bound for Koh Tao**

Section: General News - A fire broke out on a night ferry, carrying passengers and goods while heading to Koh Tao from a pier in Surat Thani this morning.

The ferry carried approximately 97 Thai and foreign passengers and 11 crew members, totaling 108 individuals.

The vessel departed Surat Thani at 11 p.m. on Wednesday and was expected to arrive at the island in the morning.

Additionally, there were numerous cars, motorcycles, and consumer goods on board.

The fire started in the ship's engine room and quickly spread. At the time of the incident, the ship was about 3 miles off the coast of Koh Tao.

Authorities and private ship operators successfully evacuated all passengers and crew members safely, although some suffered from smoke inhalation.

Rescue teams transported them to hospitals. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

(TNA/MCOT)

### **Thailand: Air Pollution Affects Chiang Mai's Hotel Bookings**

Section: General News - The situation of forest fires in Chiang Mai continues to be severe, resulting in high levels of air pollution. This has impacted hotel bookings during the Songkran Festival.

This morning, the level of PM2.5 in Chiang Dao District reached as high as 820 micrograms per cubic meter, ranking it as the worst air quality in the world.

The Chiang Mai skyline remains covered with smoke haze from ongoing forest fires, both from deliberate burning and transboundary haze. This morning, there were as many as 411 hotspots, with Chiang Dao District having the highest number at 83.

According to the weather data center at Chiang Mai University, the PM2.5 level at 7 a.m. in Baan Pangmayao in Chiang Dao District was at 820 micrograms per cubic meter, which is 21 times higher than the standard.

The PM2.5 level at Chiang Mai University was at 254 micrograms per cubic meter, while in the night bazaar area, it was at 218 micrograms per cubic meter, both reaching unhealthy levels.

The IQAir website also ranks Chiang Mai as the city with the worst air quality in the world, with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 207 at 11 a.m., indicating a purple level warning. People are advised to wear N95 masks when outdoors.

The haze situation continues to affect tourism. Mr. Paisan Sukcharoen, the president of the Northern Thai Hotels Association, revealed that hotel room bookings in Chiang Mai province during the upcoming Songkran Festival period have decreased. Between April 12 and 27, approximately 20,000 rooms have been booked out of a total of nearly 60,000 rooms. This includes bookings for 5-star hotels, which account for nearly 70% of the total. Most tourists are from Europe.

He said one of the reasons for the decrease in bookings may be due to the haze from forest fires. At present, only about 60% of hotel rooms have been booked for the Songkran Festival in mid April, a much lower rate compared to previous years.

However, it is believed that more Thais will book rooms from April 8 to 10, as the government and all sectors are stimulating tourism during the Songkran Festival. It is expected that tourists will return, increasing the occupancy rate to 90%. In his own hotels, they are spraying water mist on the building's facade and providing air purifiers in the rooms.

Currently, foreign tourists arrive in Chiang Mai through the airport at a rate of approximately 3,000 people per day, with about 20,000 Thais, bringing the total to more than 20,000 people per day. In March, Chiang Mai earned more than 20 billion baht in tourism revenue. (TNA/MCOT)

**Thailand: Court Accepts Petition, Seeking MFP Dissolution**

Section: Government & Politics - The Constitutional Court has accepted a petition by the Election Commission (EC) asking the court to consider dissolving the main opposition Move Forward Party (MFP).

The petition alleged that the MFP's efforts to change Section 112 of the Criminal Code or the lese majeste law showed an intention to undermine the constitutional monarchy, which violates Section 92 of the organic law on political parties.

The petition also requested the withdrawal of the party's executives' right to run for election for a period of 10 years.

The Court has concluded that there is credible evidence that the MFP committed the alleged acts. Therefore, the petition will be considered.

A copy of the petition will also be sent to the MFP and the party is asked to submit an explanation to the Court within 15 days from the date of receipt of the petition.

In January, the Constitutional Court ruled that MFP's plan to amend the lese majeste law was unconstitutional and tantamount to an attempt to overthrow the system of the government with the King as the head of state. The court ordered the cessation of such activities.

Move Forward has denied any attempt and intention to do so and has prepared its defence to provide explanation regarding the allegation. (TNA/MCOT)

**Thailand: Healed King Cobra Released Back into the Wild**

Section: General News - "Boonrod," the king cobra that survived severe wounds from a dog bite, has fully recovered following surgery and sterilization procedures. It has now been released back into its natural habitat in the forest.

Veterinary teams and soldiers from the 4th Special Warfare Training Camp, Sichon in Nakhon Si Thammarat, joined forces to conduct a final health check on Boonrod before releasing it back into the forest.

The king cobra, over 5 meters long, survived a dog attack within a local orchard. At that time, soldiers rushed to rescue Boonrod, who had festering wounds and took it to be treated by a veterinary team. After a month passed, its condition improved.

Lt. Porphitak Chimkhornburi, a military instructor from the special warfare training camp, said that Boonrod had been recovering in the camp for over a month until it fully healed and was then released back into the forest. Previously, the veterinary team had to sew up over 30 stitches and perform sterilization to save its life, including surgery to remove its reproductive organs, making Boonrod the first sterilized king cobra in Thailand to receive treatment.

During today's health check, Boonrod was found to be in good health and had fully recovered. In its enclosure, traces of shed skin were found, confirming Boonrod's strong health. Officials then moved it to a hill, sprayed water to cool it down before releasing Boonrod back into the forest. (TNA/MCOT)

#### **Thailand: Deputy National Police Chief Surrenders Himself**

Section: General News - Deputy national police chief Pol.Gen. Surachate Hakparn also known as "Big Joke" on Tuesday surrendered himself in a money laundering case and was released on bail.

Pol. Gen. Surachate acknowledged money laundering charges at the Tao Poon Police Station after a court issued an arrest warrant for him.

He briefly spoke to the media, stating that he has entered the judicial process today and does not feel anxious about being dismissed from his official duties.

He is currently in the stage of being accused, therefore he still considers himself innocent, he said.

The arrest warrant was issued after he failed to answer three summonses for questioning.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Srettha Thavisin, in his role as the Chairman of the Police Civil Service Commission, provided comments on the case involving the court's approval of an arrest warrant for Pol Gen Surachate Hakparn in connection with alleged money laundering linked to online gambling.

He said Deputy National Police Chief, Pol Gen Kitrat Phanphet, who is currently serving as the acting National Police Chief, along with the legal team, will deliberate on whether Pol Gen Surachate will face suspension from duty. The decision will be announced this afternoon. He emphasized fairness for all parties involved. (TNA/MCOT)

## **Thailand: Senate Passes First Reading of Same-Sex Marriage Bill**

Section: Government & Politics - The Senate votes to accept the marriage equality bill in principle and establishes a committee for further study.

The bill was endorsed by the lower house last week and forwarded to the Senate for consideration.

The vote on Tuesday saw a significant majority of 147 in favor, 10 against, 7 abstaining out of 158 total members.

The draft amendment to the Civil and Commercial Code or the marriage equality bill will replace terms such as “men and women” and “husband and wife,” with gender-neutral terms like “individuals” and “marriage partners” ensuring inclusivity for same-sex couples.

Following this, a committee of 27 members will be established to further study the bill and propose amendments within 7 days.

If it becomes the law, Thailand will be the first country in the Southeast Asia to recognize same-sex unions. (TNA/MCOT)

### **Thailand: World War II Bunker Discovered in Kanchanaburi**

Section: General News - A World War II bunker was discovered in Kanchanaburi’s Sangkhlaburi district prompting local residents to call on government agencies to expedite studies for preservation and development into a tourist attraction.

The bunker is believed to have been excavated during World War II when Japanese troops forced prisoners of war to build the Thailand- Burma railway also known as the Death Railway. It is situated on a hill about 100 meters away from the Highway 323 linking Sangkhlaburi – Three Pagodas Pass area.

The discovered bunker measures approximately 2 meters wide, 180-190 centimeters tall, and around 35 meters long, dug into the hillside and connected to the lush forested area behind it.

Inside the bunker, the temperature is comfortably cool (around 24-25 degrees Celsius) with good ventilation, indicating its likely use as an air raid shelter during wartime construction with traces of the use of pickaxes, hoes, and crowbars in excavation.



It remains relatively intact, with evidence of earth collapses only at the entrances on both sides of the hill. Traces of smoke residue were also found on the walls where lamps were likely installed to illuminate the interior of the bunker.

Part of the bunker's structural integrity is attributed to its design, resembling pillars dug every 2 meters throughout its length, combined with the soil composition in the excavated area being denser than usual.

Local residents are urging relevant authorities to conduct further surveys and studies for preservation and development into an educational and tourist destination, aiming to conserve the site and generate income for the local community in the future. (TNA/MCOT)

### **Thailand: Heat Index Forecasted to Reach Extremely Hazardous Levels**

Section: General News - Today's forecast predicts a scorching high temperature index, reaching dangerously high levels, posing a risk of heatstroke. The Department of Health advises against outdoor activities.

The heat index refers to the temperature the body perceives at a given moment, depending on the temperature, humidity, and air movement. It's suitable for indicating the risk level of the body experiencing more significant impacts from the heat than just the maximum temperature alone.

When the heat index rises, precautions should be taken based on Celsius degrees, as follows:

27-32.9°C: Green – Cautionary level, at-risk groups should drink plenty of clean water, reduce outdoor activities between 11 am to 3 pm.

33-41.9°C: Yellow – Warning level, drink plenty of clean water, reduce outdoor activities between 11 am to 3 pm, at-risk groups should monitor themselves.

42-51.9°C: Orange – Danger level, at-risk groups should monitor themselves closely, have the nearest hospital contact number ready.

52°C and above: Red – Extremely dangerous level, refrain from outdoor activities entirely.

Today's heat index is forecasted to reach extremely hazardous levels.

The health impacts of heat result from exposure to air temperatures higher than the body can handle, potentially affecting the body directly or indirectly, such as fatigue, dizziness, heat rash, cramps, and heat-related illnesses or heatstroke.

At-risk groups include infants up to 5 years old, adults aged 65 and above, pregnant women, patients with chronic illnesses, outdoor workers, and tourists. In case of emergency, call 1669.

The low atmospheric pressure due to the prevailing heat across Thailand causes extreme heat conditions. Therefore, citizens are advised to avoid working or engaging in activities outdoors for extended periods. The maximum temperatures are around 41-42°C in the northern, northeastern, and central regions, 41°C in Bangkok, and approximately 39-40°C in the eastern and southern regions. (TNA/MCOT)

### **Thailand: Lawyer Files Complaint against National Police Chief**

Section: General News - Well-known lawyer Sittha Biabungkerd on Monday filed a complaint against national police chief Pol. Gen. Torsak Sukvimol and his wife on charges of money laundering.

Sittha, the secretary-general of the Foundation of People's Lawyer filed a report with the Taopoon police station against Pol. Gen. Torsak and his wife along with two alleged mule account owners on charges of money laundering and conspiracy to launder money and presented evidence to proceed with the case.

The lawyer also revealed that he will continue to pursue the case to its conclusion and will introduce new evidence if available. He will also monitor the investigation to ensure it is conducted properly.

If investigators neglect their duties, they will also face legal action for their failure. He said there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the national police chief is indeed involved in this case.

Furthermore, Sittha questioned why Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin remains silent on this. If this were a leader of a foreign government, an investigative committee would be established to examine the high-ranking officials of that country. However, so far, there has been no action.

At present, only the opposition has contacted and shown interest in the issue, as they recognize the genuine concerns of the public. This issue is considered significant as it is seen as a corruption scandal that has serious implications for the nation.

The lawyer stated that he will continue to investigate the financial transactions of the national police chief and his relatives, especially donations made to various temples. It has been reported that donations have been made to another 2-3 temples, which are currently under investigation due to irregularities in transactions, similar to those exposed in a temple in Nonthaburi Province previously. Additionally, financial transactions providing monthly allowances to family members and police officers involved in arrests and crackdowns on wrongdoers have been discovered.

Sittha concluded by admitting that he fears for his safety, as there is currently no one looking out for his security. Only opposition leaders have shown concern for his well-being during this time. He stated that he must take care of himself first. He ruled out requesting police protection because the more police are involved, the more fearful he becomes. (TNA/MCOT)

## Thailand: Chiang Mai Zoo Aquarium Reopens after Renovation

Section: General News - The Chiang Mai Zoo Aquarium also known as the “Sea atop the Mountain” reopened its doors to tourists today after more than a year of renovation.

An investment of almost 30 million baht was made to refurbish both the exterior and interior of the exhibition building, including the freshwater and saltwater animal tanks, stretching up to 133 meters.

The renovation also involved upgrading the life support systems for hundreds of fish species, particularly the 30-strong shark population, which is a highlight of the Chiang Mai Aquarium, ensuring better health care for them.

The Director of the Zoological Organization of Thailand stated that the Chiang Mai Aquarium has replicated important global sites underwater to promote nature conservation and contribute to reducing global warming.

He expressed confidence that the new renovations will attract tourists, especially during the Songkran festival this month. (TNA/MCOT)

## Thailand: Monkey Gang Robs Mangoes While Car Stuck at Red Light

Section: General News - In Lopburi, a troop of monkeys swarmed around a pickup truck carrying two crates of ripe mangoes and another two crates of graded green mangoes while it was stopped at a red light.

Amidst efforts to address the monkey issue in Lopburi province, residents still need to be cautious about safeguarding their property and food from theft.

Recently, a troop of monkeys surrounded a pickup truck loaded with four large crates of ripe mangoes, nearly stealing them all.

During the halt, waiting for a passing train at the intersection in front of the historical Phra Phrang Sam Yot temple in Mueang Lopburi District, the pickup truck loaded with mangoes remained stationary.

However, neither advancing nor retreating was an option as the mangoes were almost completely taken by the monkeys until the train passed.

The truck hurriedly moved forward to pass the nearby Phra Kan Shrine. The monkeys, already eyeing their prize, leaped and grabbed most of the mangoes.

The pick-up truck driver mentioned the urgent need to deliver the mangoes to the market and had no time to cover them with cloth.

Authorities are preparing to relocate unruly monkeys, roaming the Lopburi city to a temporary shelter as a short-term measure to tackle the monkey overpopulation following an incident of food snatching causing injury last month. (TNA/MCOT)

**Thailand: Illegal Migrants from Myanmar Arrested**

Section: General News - Many provinces along the Myanmar border have been vigilant due to the influx of people from Myanmar illegally crossing the border into Thailand, both in search of employment and to escape internal conflicts within Myanmar.

Authorities arrested 119 illegal migrants from Myanmar at various points in Kanchanaburi province during searches on five vehicles.

Investigations revealed that most of the apprehended workers entered through natural channels, specifically through the Three Pagodas Pass in the Sangkhla Buri District.

Upon entry, they were escorted by Myanmar nationals, traversing through the forests to avoid checkpoints or hiding within the woods, awaiting transportation to work in the inner provinces such as Samut Songkhram, Samut Sakhon, Nakhon Pathom, as well as southern provinces and Bangkok.

Additionally, some groups of Myanmar nationals have fled due to political conflicts following the Myanmar government's announcement of criteria for conscription, setting the minimum age at 15 years old to combat opposition groups. This led to Myanmar nationals fleeing the country and crossing over to Thailand. (TNA/MCOT)

#### **Thailand: Pink Line Construction Suspended after Cement Fall Accident**

Section: General News - Transport Minister Suriya Juangroongruangkit ordered a seven-day suspension of the construction of the MRT Pink Line extension after liquid cement fell on a car's rear windshield, injured a three-year-old child in the back seat.

The incident occurred on Saturday around 8.00 p.m. when liquid cement from the construction of the Pink Line in Muang Thong Thani fell onto a passing BMW sedan and injuring a 3-year-old child's head. The injured child was rushed to hospital.

The Northern Bangkok Monorail Company has taken full responsibility for the damages to the car and will also follow up with the injured parties regarding further compensation.

The Transport Minister ordered an expedited investigation into the incident and instructed the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRT) to keep the record of the concessionaire. If a repeat incident occurs, the company may be blacklisted and prohibited from bidding attempts in the future.

The Pink Line Monorail runs between Nonthaburi province and Bangkok's Min Buri district. The extension will connect the service with Impact Arena, Exhibition and Convention Center, Muang Thong Thani. (TNA/MCOT)

## **Thailand: GPO - Thailand Has Sufficient COVID-19 Treatment Products Amid**

Section: General News - The Government Pharmaceutical Organization (GPO) has announced the availability of COVID-19 treatment options for both the public and private sectors.

The announcement came in response to a recent uptick in COVID-19 cases across Thailand, with several hundred new infections reported last week.

Between March 24th and 30th, approximately 730 patients were admitted to hospitals due to COVID-19, of which 215 experienced severe pneumonia and about 70 required ventilator support. During this period, there were also two new fatalities, maintaining an average of one death per

week. Although the current dominant COVID-19 variant, JN.1, is more contagious, there's no evidence to suggest it leads to more severe illness.

A decline in preventive measures and incomplete vaccination rates among certain individuals are contributing to the ongoing transmission.

The GPO has made Favipiravir and Molnupiravir, both in 200 mg capsules, available as effective treatments for COVID-19 patients aged 18 and older. The organization ensures an ample supply of Molnupiravir and a steady availability of raw materials for ongoing production.

For further details on these treatments, the public is encouraged to contact the GPO Contact Center at the hotline 1648 or visit any of the eight GPO pharmacies across the country.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: Ministry of Labour Concerned for Thais in Taiwan After Earthquake**

Section: General News - The Ministry of Labour has raised concerns for Thai workers in Taiwan following a 7.3 magnitude earthquake in Hualien City.

Labor Minister Phipat Ratchakitprakarn recently directed Prapawadee Kaewsiripong, the Minister Counselor on Labour, to keep a close watch on the situation and ensure the safety of Thai workers.

Prapawadee reported that following the earthquake, the Taiwan Meteorological Department issued a tsunami warning, urging coastal residents to be vigilant against sudden high waves. Efforts to communicate warnings to Thai workers include coordination with employers and a network of translators.



Pairoj Chotikasathien, Permanent Secretary for Labor, confirmed that Thai workers in the northern part of Taiwan are safe and there have been no reports of Thai workers being affected in the south. Workers requiring assistance are encouraged to reach out to the Ministry of Labor's hotline or contact the Taipei and Kaohsiung Labour Offices through Facebook Inbox.

The Ministry of Labour is committed to supporting Thai workers affected by the disaster, advising them to take precautionary measures and stay updated with government announcements for their safety.

Currently, approximately 68,000 Thai workers are in Taiwan, spread across various cities including New Taipei, Taoyuan, Taichung, and Yilan, among others.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: RTAF Ready to Evacuate Thais from Taiwan After Earthquake**

Section: General News - The Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF) has prepared aircraft, personnel, and equipment to evacuate Thais in Taiwan back to the country if ordered by the government.

The statement follows an earthquake in Taiwan on Wednesday morning, with a magnitude of 7.4 Richter scale off the coast of Hualien, Taiwan. The quake was felt in many areas of Taiwan, causing significant damage in some locations. There have been no reports of injured or deceased Thais so far.

Air Chief Marshal Panphakdee Pathanakul, the RTAF Commander, has ordered the Air Force to be ready for missions to evacuate Thais or to support transportation for humanitarian aid and disaster relief if coordinated by the government.

Initially, the Air Force has prepared C-130 aircraft, previously used in evacuating Thais from earthquakes in Turkey and unrest in the Republic of Sudan. This includes readiness in related aspects such as flight route consideration, destination airport readiness, and preparation for medical air transport, among others.

The Air Force will closely monitor the situation and coordinate with the government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

#### **Thailand: NBTC Excludes World Cup from Broadcast Mandate**

Section: General News - The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) of Thailand has approved the removal of the FIFA World Cup from its “must-have” rule, which mandates that major sporting events be accessible on free TV channels. The rule, in place since 2012, also applied to other significant competitions such as the Southeast Asian Games and the Olympic Games. The decision follows a public hearing in 2023 to address uncertainties surrounding the rule's future application to seven major sports competitions.

NBTC Chairman Clinical Professor Sarana Boonbaichaiyapruk highlighted the commercial significance of the World Cup, a global event that commands a vast viewership every four years. The change signals the regulator's openness to revising the conditions of the rule in the future, as the World Cup requires broadcasters to air a minimum of 200 hours of football programming in the copyright holder's country.

The amendment also came after a period of contention involving the distribution of World Cup matches and broadcasting rights, which saw disputes between the NBTC, the Sports Authority of

Thailand (SAT), True Corporation, and other broadcasting entities. Despite a prior agreement in principle to remove all conditions of the must-have rule in March 2023, the decision was postponed until after the 2022 World Cup.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: TAT and Grab Launch Secondary City Tourism Campaign**

Section: Business News - The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), in partnership with Grab Thailand, has launched the “Amazing Thailand, Travel with Grab” campaign, set to invigorate domestic travel by highlighting attractions in both well-known tourist locales and burgeoning secondary cities.

The campaign, active from April 1 to June 30, leverages the influence of well-known travel personalities to uncover “Unseen Thailand” through the engaging “Eat Pray Shop” concept, offering promotional discounts on Grab's services and a chance for consumers to win a share of prizes exceeding 35 million baht.

The promotion introduces local explorers to Thailand's hidden gems via a series of travel vlogs titled “Amazing Thailand, Travel with Grab The Series,” created in collaboration with leading travel influencers. Audiences will be guided through a curated experience of undiscovered attractions, culinary delights, spiritual sites, and unique shopping opportunities. To make travel more accessible, Grab is offering substantial discounts to new users alongside a promo code “NEW AMAZING,” granting up to 100 baht off their first ride, amounting to over 8 million baht in total discounts.

The tourism project also encourages the exploration of Thailand's secondary cities with the chance to win exclusive travel packages and other valuable prizes. By using the promo code "AMAZING," travelers can enjoy discounted rides and participate in a lucky draw with prizes including a luxury trip to Nan province, gold necklaces, AirPods, and GrabGift cards.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: Bangkok Monorail Incidents Prompt Government Review**

Section: General News - The government is scrutinizing the operations of Bangkok's Pink and Yellow monorail lines after recent incidents raised concerns over their safety and construction quality.

Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit said under the existing contracts, penalties could be imposed on Northern Bangkok Monorail and Eastern Bangkok Monorail, operators of the Pink and Yellow lines respectively, for failing performance assessments. These penalties could include fines amounting to 5% of the annual construction cost installment paid by the Mass Rapid Transit Authority (MRTA) to the concessionaires, or even suspension of payments.

Recent malfunctions, including metal fragments falling from the Yellow Line tracks and concrete spilling from the Pink Line's construction site, have prompted these considerations. These incidents followed earlier problems, including a tire detaching from a Yellow Line train and a conductor rail breaking free on the Pink Line. The operators are slated to receive billions in construction costs from the state, distributed in annual installments over ten years.

Amidst these safety concerns, a new rail transport law is set to enhance the Department of Rail Transport's authority over rail operators' safety measures and practices. The initiative aims to

mitigate any potential future incidents and guarantee the reliability of Bangkok's burgeoning monorail system.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: Thai Senate Reviewing Equal Marriage Bill**

Section: Government & Politics - The Thai Senate is reviewing the Equal Marriage Bill, with a 60-day consideration period, after receiving it from the House of Representatives.

A significant number of members support the bill, which seeks to recognize the rights to form diverse family structures, despite some concerns about moral implications and religious sensitivities.

Wanchai Sornsiri, from the Senate Committee on Religions, Ethics, Arts, and Culture, highlighted the need to increase awareness among religious adherents about the formation of gender-diverse families. He proposed that societal measures and policies be developed to facilitate the law's implementation and the acknowledgment of new family configurations.

Several senators emphasized the critical need to promote equality and accept sexual diversity within society, viewing the rights extended to the LGBTQIA+ community as a stride towards achieving justice and gender equity.

The meeting concluded with broad approval of the bill, and the decision to form a special committee tasked with studying and proposing further amendments to the legislation. This decision underscores the council's commitment to fostering a society that genuinely embraces and supports sexual diversity.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

## Thailand: Lampang Hits Record Highs Amid Nationwide Heatwave

Section: General News - Lampang Province in northern Thailand has recorded its hottest temperatures for the year, with the Thoen district reaching a scorching 42 degrees Celsius early this week. The surge in temperature, persisting for six consecutive days since March 28, is anticipated to continue, with forecasts predicting averages between 38 °C and 40 °C for Lampang throughout the month.

Historical data from the Meteorological Department highlights that Thoen district once experienced a record-breaking high of 44.2 °C, marking the highest temperature ever recorded in Thailand.

Across the upper regions of Thailand, the current heatwave is expected to last until April 8, accompanied by thunderstorms and strong winds due to prevailing southern and southwestern winds. Similarly, the South anticipates thunderstorms driven by northwestern winds over the Andaman Sea and southeastern winds in the Gulf of Thailand. The department's outlook suggests a significant increase in temperatures across the country, with the North potentially reaching between 38 °C and 44 °C, and the Northeast between 36 °C and 43 °C.

The Central regions could see temperatures soaring between 35 °C and 44 °C, whereas the East is forecasted to experience 33 °C to 41 °C. For Bangkok and its neighboring provinces, temperatures are expected to range from 34 °C to 41 °C until the following Monday, indicating a nationwide trend of rising temperatures amidst summer. This widespread heatwave underscores the need for residents and visitors alike to prepare for extreme weather conditions.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

## Taiwan: Taiwan Shaken by Decade's Strongest Earthquake

Section: General News - A powerful 7.4 magnitude earthquake struck Taiwan early Wednesday (Apr 3), causing significant damage and marking the strongest seismic event the island has faced in over two decades. The earthquake's epicenter was located off the eastern coast near Hualien County, leading to extensive building damage and power outages across Taipei.

Despite the immediate chaos, there were no initial reports of casualties. The tremor prompted tsunami warnings for regions in southern Japan and the Philippines, though these were later downgraded to advisories after smaller waves were observed.

In the aftermath, several areas reported ongoing power outages, and the capital's infrastructure, including the MRT system and high-speed rail services, underwent inspections to assess and mitigate any damage. Taiwan's semiconductor industry, a critical component of the global supply chain, reported no significant impact, although some facilities were temporarily evacuated as a precaution.

The event brought back memories of the devastating 1999 earthquake, highlighting the region's vulnerability to natural disasters. Authorities have registered numerous aftershocks and are urging residents to remain vigilant. The quake has also been reported as far away as Shanghai and several cities in Fujian province, China.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

## Thailand: Government Aims for Tourism Supremacy

Section: General News - Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin has announced Thailand's ambitious goal to become a regional tourism hub, with plans to impress tourists from their arrival and throughout their stay. The government plans to host several global events to enhance tourists' experiences in the coming months, focusing on safety and encouraging repeat visits.

Detailing the vision to make Thailand an Aviation Hub capable of hosting up to 150 million travelers by 2030, Tourism and Sports Minister Sudawan Wangsuphakitkosol said the initiative is expected to introduce a new dimension to tourism. This will also stimulate growth through strategic concepts by 2025. The plan seeks to promote the country's unique cultural and natural resources, connect tourist routes to spread visitors across regions, and advertise less-known destinations.

Further ambitions include establishing Thailand as the 'Hub of ASEAN' for seamless travel and a 'World Class Event Hub', serving as a center for global experiences in music, sports, food, and lifestyle. The move aligns with the vision of ASEAN as a Single Destination accessible through the ASEAN Pass.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

## Thailand: PM Seeks Funding Solution for Digital Wallet Plan

Section: General News - Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin convened an urgent session of the Monetary Policy Committee on Monday (Apr 1) to deliberate on funding for the digital wallet initiative, shifting the venue from the Finance Ministry to Government House for discussions centered around expanding the fiscal 2025 budget deficit and additional borrowing.



The initial budget plan marked the deficit at 713 billion baht, with provisions allowing for up to 820.8 billion baht in borrowing to cover this shortfall. Expenditure proposals for 2025 tally up to 3.6 trillion baht, juxtaposed with anticipated revenue of 2.887 trillion baht, incorporating regular spending, investments, and loan repayments. Details from the meeting remain undisclosed.

In parallel, Deputy Finance Minister Julapun Amornvivat signaled that the specifics of sourcing the 500 billion baht required for the digital scheme would crystallize post an April 10 convening of the national digital wallet policy committee, presided over by Srettha. He noted that the session was crucial in revealing the financial plan for the government's key initiative, originally pledged by Srettha and the Pheu Thai Party as a 10,000 baht handout for all during their campaign. This plan, however, has been adjusted to focus on 50 million Thais with lower incomes.

The Bank of Thailand has advised a more targeted approach, advocating for the distribution of funds solely to vulnerable groups, arguing it would yield greater economic benefits. With consumption levels in several income brackets rebounding to pre-pandemic figures, the central bank noted that extending handouts to those already at sufficient income levels would not significantly stimulate the economy, contrasting with the proposed broad disbursement strategy.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

## **Thailand: Kingdom to Face Unprecedented Temperatures**

Section: General News - The Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) has forecasted a major increase in temperatures across Thailand this April, with an alert for extreme heat that could see the mercury rising to between 43.0-44.5 degrees Celsius.

In the coming week (Apr 7-14), the northeastern and eastern regions are expected to experience the brunt of this heatwave, with temperatures predicted to hover between 41-43°C. This surge in temperature is attributed to prevailing low-pressure areas coupled with scarce rainfall, amplifying the heat across these parts of the country.

The TMD anticipates several instances of summer storms, including potential hailstorms, from April 8 to 10, triggered by an incoming cold front from upper Vietnam. While the southern region may also witness thunderstorms, the weather conditions will remain generally conducive for tourism activities. Such sporadic storms are expected to provide temporary relief from the relentless heat experienced in the early part of the month.

For the duration of April, the TMD said average temperatures are predicted to be around 30% higher than the norm, especially in the North, Northeast, and the upper areas of the Central Plains and the East. Despite the possibility of summer storms brought on by southerly and southeasterly winds offering sporadic cooling, the overall temperature trend for the month anticipates higher-than-usual heat levels across Thailand.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: Don Mueang Airport Braces for Songkran Surge**

Section: General News - Don Mueang International Airport is gearing up for a busy Songkran holiday period, expecting a 10.58% increase in passenger numbers compared to last year. Wichit Kaewsaitiam, the airport's general manager, attributes the surge to the government's efforts to boost domestic spending and tourism.

From April 11-17, over 4,000 flights, divided into 2,432 domestic and the remainder international, are scheduled to arrive in Don Mueang, bringing an estimated 625,530 passengers to the capital.

In response, the airport has introduced several upgrades aimed at enhancing passenger experience and safety. These include self-service check-in counters, a common-use bag drop system, a new passenger validation system, and self-boarding gates.

For those arriving, the airport has streamlined the transfer process to the city with options, including Grab and Cabb available online, as well as the SRT Red Line and feeder buses for connectivity to Bangkok's electric train routes. With two car parks offering space for 3,508 vehicles and shuttle buses providing 24/7 service between car parks and terminals, officials said the airport is now well-prepared for the upcoming influx of holiday travelers.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: Probe Initiated into Deadly Crane Collapse in Rayong**

Section: General News - A House committee on industries has initiated an investigation into a crane collapse at a Chinese-owned steel factory in Rayong province, which resulted in the deaths of seven workers. The incident occurred at the Sin Ker Yuan Company Limited in Rayong's Pluak Daeng district, where a crane fell while workers were dismantling its base, killing one Chinese and six Myanmar nationals.

Following the tragedy, about 400 workers protested for compensation, leading to the employer agreeing to pay 1.6 million baht to each victim's family. Further protests by 200 workers called for improved welfare benefits from the Social Security Fund, concluding after assurances of eligibility for social security benefits were provided.

Akkaradej Wongpithakroj, chair of the House panel and MP for the United Thai Nation Party, expressed concern that this was not an isolated incident at the factory and noted that the investigation would extend to other reported violations by Chinese-owned firms in Thailand. These include unauthorized construction activities, engagement in unregistered business operations, pollution, and illegal transportation of mineral waste.

Pending the investigation's outcome, Akkaradej mentioned the possibility of recommending the government to revoke the investment visas of firms found guilty of such violations, underlining the seriousness with which Thai authorities are taking these allegations.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: Chinese EVs Dominate Bangkok Motor Show**

Section: Business News - China's electric vehicle (EV) manufacturers at the 45th Bangkok International Motor Show reportedly stand out with their high-quality, innovative designs and competitive pricing, drawing much attention from attendees. The event, spanning 12 days from March 27 to April 7, showcases 49 major auto brands, introducing at least 20 new models to the market.

New entrants to the Thai market, Geely's Zeekr and Xpeng, unveiled their latest EV models, signaling the growing acceptance and demand for EVs among Thai consumers. The expansion is in line with Thailand's ambition to transform into a major EV production hub in Southeast Asia, targeting 30 percent of its vehicle production to be EVs by 2030.

The event offers a space for car companies to show off their latest electric vehicles (EVs), pointing out the growing popularity of Chinese EV brands in Thailand, where they made up over 80 percent of new battery electric vehicle registrations last year.

Organizers said the increasing presence of Chinese EV makers in Thailand is also seen as a major step towards boosting the local job market, enhancing the supply chain, and reinforcing Thailand's position as a key player in the ASEAN EV sector.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

### **Thailand: Thai Traditions Take Center Stage in Prague Art Exhibit**

Section: General News - The Ministry of Commerce and Czech artist Ondřej Míšek have united to bring Thai traditions to the forefront of the European art scene through an exhibition in Prague, garnering admiration from art lovers across Europe.

Míšek, who has a deep connection with Thailand after living in Bangkok for several years, uses his art to narrate his experiences and admiration for Thai culture, especially Muay Thai. The exhibit is part of Thailand's broader strategy to leverage its cultural assets to strengthen international ties and promote its "soft power," as well as generate revenue from the country's cultural sector.

According to Department of International Trade Promotion Director-General Phusit Ratanakul Sereroengrit, supportive measures from the Thai government, including tax incentives for art purchases and duty exemptions on imported artworks, underscore a commitment to nurturing the art industry. The effort spearheaded by the National Soft Power Strategy Committee, led by Paetongtarn Shinawatra, showcases the role of art and culture in further enhancing Thailand's global presence and economic prosperity.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

## Thailand-Republic of Korea (South Korea): Thailand and South Korea Forge Stronger Defense Ties

Section: General News - Thailand is seeking to bolster its defense capabilities through closer cooperation with South Korea, as discussed in a recent high-level meeting between Thai Defence Minister Sutin Klungsang and South Korea's Defence Minister Shin Won-sik. The talks centered on potential collaboration with the Defence Acquisition Programme Administration (DAPA), South Korea's key agency for defense projects and industry development.

Sutin expressed Thailand's keen interest in tapping into South Korea's advanced defense industry, citing ongoing cooperative ventures such as the acquisition of South Korean frigates and combat aircraft, along with South Korea's participation in the Cobra Gold military exercises hosted by Thailand.

DAPA, established in 2006 under the South Korean Ministry of National Defence, plays a major role in enhancing defense capabilities, overseeing munitions procurement, and supporting the defense industry. Sutin's visit to South Korea, from March 27-30, included discussions on deepening these defense ties and exploring new areas of mutual benefit in the defense sector.

In a gesture of historical acknowledgment, Minister Shin expressed his gratitude for the valor of Thailand's Little Tigers battalion during the Korean War (1950-53). Their efforts, he noted, were instrumental in securing peace on the Korean peninsula and contributing to South Korea's subsequent prosperity. Thailand was one of 22 countries that supported South Korea under the United Nations flag during this conflict.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

## Thailand: Government Offers Tax Breaks for Forest Fire Fight Support

Section: General News - The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, in collaboration with the Board of Investment (BOI), is calling on the private sector to financially support its efforts in combating forest fires, especially in the country's northern regions where haze pollution is a major issue.

To incentivize donations, the ministry is offering tax reductions of up to 200% for contributions made towards purchasing fire-fighting equipment, training firefighters, and establishing forest fire-monitoring points. The program allows companies to contribute between 500,000 baht and 5 million baht annually from January to April.

Permanent Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Jatuporn Buruspat affirmed the government's commitment to tackling air pollution but acknowledged the limitations posed by budget constraints. He said the project is part of a broader strategy to improve air quality and environmental conditions in anticipation of the upcoming Songkran festival, with specific efforts focused on reducing hotspots in Mae Hong Son and Chiang Mai provinces.

BOI Deputy Secretary-General Suthiket Thatpitakkul, meanwhile, made clear the organization's dedication to promoting investments that contribute to a cleaner and healthier environment, citing previous incentives for cleaner technology investments in Rayong province.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

## Thailand: Thailand Vigilant Amid Japan's "Flesh-Eating" Disease Surge

Section: General News - The Department of Disease Control (DDC) has assured the Thai public that no instances of necrotizing fasciitis, a dangerous bacterial infection often referred to as a "flesh-eating" disease, have been reported in Thailand this year. The announcement comes amidst a concerning rise in cases in Japan, where health authorities are examining the potential link between the uptick and the recent relaxation of COVID-19 precautions.

The DDC highlighted the effectiveness of COVID-19 measures in also preventing such bacterial infections, noting that over 200 types of bacteria could cause necrotizing fasciitis, with Group A Streptococcus being the most prevalent.

Statistics from the DDC show that Thailand witnessed a total of 106,021 cases of necrotizing fasciitis from 2019 to the end of last year, resulting in 1,048 fatalities. Despite this, the incidence rate saw a decline to 27.35 per 100,000 people in 2023, with cases typically peaking between June and July. Treatment usually involves hospital care, antibiotics, and sometimes surgery to combat the swiftly spreading infection.

In monitoring diseases, Thailand's surveillance system includes scarlet fever, a symptom of Group A Strep infection, under the Communicable Diseases Act of 2015. While scarlet fever itself is not harmful, officials said it could signal more severe conditions such as necrotizing fasciitis or toxic shock syndrome, which can be deadly without prompt treatment.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)



## Thailand: TCC Urges Review of Yellow Line Issues

Section: General News - Thailand Consumers Council (TCC) is advocating for a comprehensive review of recent disruptions on Bangkok's Yellow Line monorail, proposing the involvement of independent experts alongside official agencies.

The call seeks to uncover the root causes of incidents, including a major incident where track components detached, leading to vehicle damage. The agency said its push for an independent probe is based on the need for transparency and expertise in addressing the system's vulnerabilities.

TCC's Transport Sub-committee Chairman, Dr. Anuchar Sethasathien, also urged responsible agencies to devise compensation mechanisms for affected parties and improve emergency response protocols. He suggested that future monorail construction contracts include preventive measures and emergency response drills to enhance overall safety and operational reliability.

Responding to the recent malfunctions, the Yellow Line's operator implemented temporary service adjustments and station closures to manage the impact on commuters.

The TCC's call for an independent investigation aligns with months-long efforts to ensure the safety and reliability of Bangkok's rapidly expanding urban transit systems.

(National News Bureau of Thailand)

**Thailand: Private sector wants interest rate cut, quicker fiscal budget disbursement**

Section: Business News - Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking (JSCCIB) has maintained the economic growth projection for 2024 for Thailand at 2.8%-3.3% as it urges the government to cut interest rates, stimulate the economy and accelerate the disbursement of the 2024 fiscal budget.

JSCCIB president Kriengkrai Thiennukul said that, even though the GDP growth forecast for this year remains unchanged, the Thai economy is facing significant risks posed by structural limitations, an export slowdown and weakening domestic consumption.

As such, the economy needs a big boost from the government, such as stimulus measures, an interest rate cut and speedy budget disbursement.

He pointed out that exports of hard drives, plastic products and automobiles are slowing down, while exports of car tyres and processed meats are picking up.

He said that there are, however, signs of economic recovery in the United States and China, two major export markets for Thailand, and this will help boost Thai exports.

Due to an increase in geo-political conflicts which, in the long term, may affect Thailand, Kriengkrai urged the government to maintain a balancing act to avoid any involvement which may hurt the country's interests.

He also urged the government to address aggressively the problem of substandard imported goods sold online by imposing VAT on online transactions of less than 1,500 baht, to protect Thai SMEs.

The government should also increase random checks on items in tax free zones, to ensure that the importers declare the volume and value of their imported goods correctly, especially substandard products which, according to Kriengkrai, are adversely affecting more than 20 industrial groups, mostly SMEs, in Thailand. - Thai PBS

## Thailand: Thai Air Force ready to evacuate Thais from Taiwan

Section: General News - The Thai Air Force (RTAF) has prepared a C-130 aircraft as part of a contingency plan to evacuate Thai nationals from Taiwan if necessary, its spokesperson AVM Boonlert Andara said today.

On Wednesday, the east coast of Taiwan was struck by a 7.4 magnitude earthquake, causing landslides and collapsing structures.

It is the strongest tremor to hit Taiwan for 25 years. At least nine people have died and more than 900 others have been injured, with over 100 buildings damaged.

There have been no reports of Thais affected by the quake so far.

Boonlert told reporters that the Air Force commander in chief, AM Punpakdee Pattanakul, has issued an order to prepare for the evacuation or transport of humanitarian assistance to Taiwan.

“We are ready in case the government requires us to extend assistance,” the spokesperson said.

The RTAF had previously flown its C-130 aircraft to evacuate Thai nationals from quake-hit Turkey and Sudan. - Thai PBS

## Thailand: Global diesel price jump worries Energy ministry

Section: Business News - The global diesel price jump of US\$2.74/barrel in a single day yesterday has caused serious concern at the Energy Ministry, to the extent that it may have to allow domestic diesel prices to rise above the Bt30/litre ceiling.

An informed source in the ministry said that they may have to decide whether to maintain domestic prices at about Bt30/litre, through increased subsidies by the Oil Fuel Fund, or allow them to rise above, as the global increase yesterday was substantial.

Shortly before rise, the Fuel Fund Executive Committee, chaired by Energy Minister Pirapan Salirathavibhaga, decided to maintain the domestic diesel pump price at no higher than 30 baht/litre, after global diesel price on Tuesday closed at US\$104.71/barrel, up US\$0.69.

At this price, the source said that oil traders receive 1.45 baht/litre in oil marketing cost, but the Oil Fuel Fund will have to increase the subsidy for diesel by another 40 satang/litre, to Bt4.57/litre.

The source said that the situation is much worse today after global price increased by 2.74 dollars per barrel yesterday, adding that, if the local pump price of diesel is to be pegged at not more than 30 baht/litre, the Oil Fuel Fund will have to contribute an additional 40 satang/litre.

Currently, the subsidies on diesel and LPG have put the Oil Fuel Fund in the red to the tune of over 100 billion baht.

The source also said that the Energy Ministry has been trying to maintain the diesel pump price at the current level as long as possible, particularly during the Songkran holiday period, with the expectation that global diesel prices may drop in the near future.

The Energy Ministry is also coordinating with the Finance Ministry to extend the excise tax cut on diesel by one baht/litre, which is due to expire on April 19. - Thai PBS

## **Thailand: Investigation ordered into tour boat blaze near Koh Tao**

Section: General News - The Marine Department has ordered an urgent investigation into the blaze which broke out this morning on a passenger boat floating near Koh Tao Island, off the coast of Surat Thani province.

An initial investigation has revealed that the fire started in the engine room, but its cause is still being investigated, said the department's Director General, Kritphet Chaihuay, today.

The boat, carrying 90 passengers and eight crew, left Surat Thani at about 9:30pm last night, heading to Tao Island, he said, adding that authorities were alerted about the accident at approximately 6:40am this morning.

The passengers and the crew jumped into the sea and rescue teams rushed to assist them. Other tour boats operating nearby also took part in the rescue effort.

There were no injuries reported and the fire was extinguished by about 8:20am.

Kritphet says that he has already ordered the tightening of safety measures, as we approach the long Songkran holidays. - Thai PBS

## **Thailand: PM says Move Forward's claims of graft in defence spending lack evidence**

Section: Government & Politics - Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin said today that he was disappointed with opposition MPs' criticisms of the Defence Ministry, particularly regarding bribery, which he described as a rerun of an old script which lacks supportive evidence.

He was responding to Move Forward MP Wiroj Lakkhanaadisorn's allegation during the debate, in parliament today, that someone had demanded commission from the Royal Thai Navy (RTN) in exchange for approving the 17 billion baht deal to procure a frigate from China, replacing the submarine deal.

The prime minister said allegations of graft had been raised on several occasions during the general debate, adding that he challenges the opposition to produce evidence to substantiate the allegations, because he wants to eliminate corruption as well.

He also said that he agrees with the idea that the frigate should be built in Thailand, so Thai people can learn how to build these ships and benefit from the transfer of knowledge and technology.

Nevertheless, he said that the issue of foreign relations must also be taken into consideration, as the frigate deal is between Thailand and China.

On the second day of the general debate, Wiroj said that military policy under Defence Minister Sutin Klungsang is a copy of the one initiated by his predecessor, General Prayut Chan-o-cha, with nothing new which could be considered as reform.

He claimed that the Move Forward party is supportive of the RTN's frigate deal, noting that the navy currently has four aging frigates in service with one to be decommissioned soon, leaving not enough in service to protect Thai maritime territory. Malaysia and Cambodia each has a larger naval fleet.

Wiroj said that the threat to cut the budget for the frigate project will deprive the RTN of the opportunity to benefit from the transfer of knowledge and technology and to build the ship domestically. - Thai PBS

**Thailand: Jakrapob Penkair - Red-shirt founder on mission to repatriate Thailand's political exiles**

Section: Government & Politics - Jakrapob Penkair, a former Prime Minister's Office minister and red-shirt leader, is back in Thailand after 15 years in self-imposed exile under the shadow of lese majeste and other accusations following coups in 2006 and 2014.

Jakrapob also served as spokesman in the government of Thaksin Shinawatra, who returned from exile last year after the Pheu Thai Party returned to power. Thaksin is regarded as Pheu Thai's patriarch.

Analysts say Jakrapob's homecoming could trigger an influx of political exiles allied with Thaksin later this year. Jakrapob told reporters shortly after returning on March 28 that he would help arrange the repatriation of these "political refugees" so they could fight the criminal charges against them.

Jakrapob, 56, was arrested upon return and handed over to the Crime Suppression Division to be notified of his remaining arrest warrant for alleged involvement in an illegal group and possession of unregistered firearms and ammunition. He denied all charges and was released on a bail guarantee of 400,000 baht, according to his lawyer.

In exile since 2009

Jakrapob was summoned by coup-makers following the May 2014 power seizure that ousted the government led by Thaksin's proxy Pheu Thai. He failed to answer the summons, having already fled the country in 2009 after being accused of lèse-majesté. A military court duly issued a warrant for his arrest.

In 2017, the junta accused Jakrapob of storing firearms and ammunition as part of an alleged plot to incite violence in the capital. The Criminal Court issued a warrant for his arrest to answer charges of possessing illegal weapons and involvement in an illegal group.

Upon landing back in Thailand, Jakrapob told reporters he decided to return after “several positive changes” in his homeland, with the “democratic camp” back in power and the political role of “democracy’s destroyers” reduced.

He said he had phoned Thaksin before making the decision to return.

Thaksin flew home last August after 15 years of self-imposed exile, spending six months of a one-year reduced prison term in a hospital before being released on parole in February.

Living in 5 countries

Jakrapob said both his parents had died during his exile, but he could not return despite “missing Thailand every day” in the five foreign countries where he stayed. He declined to name the countries, but his fellow former red-shirt leader Jatuporn Prompan said Jakrapob had stayed mostly in Cambodia but had flown back to Thailand from Dubai.

Born on October 21, 1967, Jakrapob obtained a bachelor’s degree in international relations from Chulalongkorn University’s Faculty of Political Science followed by master’s and doctoral degrees from Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies in the US.

He first rose to fame as a television talk-show host and political commentator before entering politics. His articulate personality and strong communication skills caught the attention of Thaksin, who made him his government’s spokesman in 2003.

Jakrapob contested general elections in 2005 and 2006 under Thaksin’s Thai Rak Thai Party but failed to win a seat. However, he was appointed deputy secretary-general to the prime minister after Thaksin returned to power.

Red-shirt founder

After Thaksin was ousted in the 2006 military coup and his party was dissolved, Jakrapob co-founded the People Television satellite TV station, which served as a mouthpiece for anti-coup activists loyal to Thaksin. He was also a founding member of the red-shirt movement before it



transformed into the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship. He led several protests against the post-coup government of General Surayud Chulanont.

In 2007-2008, Jakrapob served as the Prime Minister's Office minister in the administration led by Thaksin's proxy, Samak Sundaravej.

During his tenure, Jakrapob initiated reform that transformed the state-run TV Channel 11 into the National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT).

After 15 months in office, he was forced to resign in May 2008 when he was accused of slandering the monarchy in his talk on "Democracy and Thailand's Patronage System" at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand in August 2007.

He reportedly left the country in 2009 after a lèse-majesté lawsuit was filed against him, and did not return even after public prosecutors decided to not to indict him in 2011. - Thai PBS

#### **Thailand: Govt's back against the wall over digital wallet scheme – Move Forward MP**

Section: Government & Politics - The government now has its back against the wall over the the 500 billion baht needed to fund the "digital wallet" scheme, the timeline for which keeps moving back, said Move Forward MP Sirikanya Tansakul during the general debate on Wednesday.

After adjusting the details of the scheme five times, particularly relating to the source or sources of the funding, she said it appears that the government will resort the Central Fund of the 2024 fiscal year, the 2025 fiscal budget and borrowing from the Bank of Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives.

She noted that the cabinet revised the mid-term fiscal framework on Tuesday, to increase the 2025 fiscal budget to 3.75 trillion baht and to increase, by about 150 billion baht, the amount of borrowing needed to offset the budget deficit.

She said that the money from these two increases may be used to fund the “digital wallet” scheme.

Regarding the Central Fund for the 2024 fiscal year, which may be a source of digital wallet funding, the Move Forward MP said that the government may introduce a bill to get extra money through borrowing to offset the deficit, up to the ceiling of 100 billion baht, plus another 40 billion baht to be transferred from the Central Fund.

“Some people may wonder how the budget for 2024 fiscal year can be used in the next fiscal year. Sirikanya said the trick is to put the money into a Revolving Fund but, in this case, it is likely to be the State Welfare Fund which is intended for impoverished people.

Responding to Sirikanya’s remarks, Deputy Finance Minister Julapun Amornvivat urged opposition MPs to cease or reduce their speculation over the “digital wallet” scheme and wait until next Wednesday, when the scheme’s policy committee is scheduled to meet to finalise several key aspects of the scheme, such as the sources of funding and the application to be used in the disbursement of money among others. - Thai PBS

### **Thailand: Water shortages on Samui and Pha-ngan islands ahead of Songkran**

Section: General News - Tap water rationing has been in place on Pha-ngan Island since late March, to ensure there is enough water for the next two months for residents, hotels and other tourism-related businesses in the popular southern resort.

The rationing is on a rotation basis, with some areas receiving water on certain days while the others get it on the alternate days. Between 3,500m<sup>3</sup> and 4,000m<sup>3</sup> cubic metres of water are being supplied each day.

The raw water on the island comes from two reservoirs, which have a combined capacity of 740,000m<sup>3</sup> and the reverse osmosis water plant can produce 600m<sup>3</sup> of potable water per day from sea water.

The tap water shortage is also hitting Samui Island, which is expected to see about 2.4 million tourist arrivals this year.

Privately operated water trucks can be seen cruising around the island each day, delivering to hotels and resorts, especially those located on higher ground which have no access to tap water. The drought on the two islands is worse than the previous years.

Ratchaporn Poonsawat, president of the Koh Samui tourism promotion association, said that hotel operators are having to spend more to buy water from private suppliers, making their operating costs considerably higher than hotels elsewhere.

In the long run, the water shortages may discourage new investment in the tourism business on the island, he said, as he urged the government to address the problem on a sustainable basis.

Raw water on Samui Island is derived from three main sources, the wetlands of Phru Krajoed, Phru Na Muang and Phru Chaweng, which store a combined total of about 3,200,000m<sup>3</sup>.

Additionally, the island receives 22,000m<sup>3</sup> of water per day from mainland of Surat Thani through an undersea pipeline. This supply is increased by 5,000m<sup>3</sup> per day during the dry season.

Meanwhile, in the north-eastern province of Ubon Ratchathani, the Pak Mun Dam water management committee has resolved to discharge water into the Mekong River for tourism purposes from March 15 to April 17 during the Songkran festival.

The additional discharge of water will expose the Kaeng Saphue rapids, formerly a popular tourist destination in the province, which have been submerged since dam's construction.

The temporary reappearance of the rapids has attracted many tourists, cooling themselves in the Mun River. Children's laughter can be heard as vendors, food and souvenir shop-owners are all smiles with the return of the tourists, albeit temporarily.

Ubon Ratchathani Governor Suphasit Korcharoenyot said that the discharge of water from the reservoir into the Mekong River must be closely monitored, to ensure that it does not exceed 200,000,000m<sup>3</sup> during the period.

Some critics, however, wonder whether the temporary joy is worth the waste of such a huge volume of water at the start of the dry season. - Thai PBS

### **Thailand: Chon Buri to be featured in the Michelin Guide 2025**

Section: General News - The Michelin Guide Thailand is to feature Chon Buri in its 2025 edition, marking both its eighth year and the inclusion of Bangkok's nearest seaside province.

This expansion widens the guide's scope to encompass Thailand's diverse culinary landscape, highlighting unique regional offerings alongside established destinations like Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Phuket.

Chon Buri is the first province in the Eastern region to be featured in the upcoming guide, which started with Bangkok and its environs in 2018 before extending to Phuket and Phang-Nga (since 2019); Chiang Mai (since 2020); Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya (since 2022); Isan (since 2023); and Ko Samui and Surat Thani (since 2024).

The new addition comes as no surprise as Chon Buri has an outstanding character when it comes to food, culture, and landscape. Perhaps, many foodies and travelers familiar with the province would have expected Chon Buri to be included earlier.

Niche Seeprae, Deputy Governor for Marketing Communications of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), told reporters that the expansion to Chon Buri was solely the decision of The Michelin Guide. “I think Chon Buri has a strong identity as a new destination (in the guide),” he said.

Chon Buri, Bangkok’s closest coastal province, boasts more than just stunning beaches according to Gwendal Poullennec, International Director of the Michelin Guides.

In a video conference, he highlighted Chon Buri’s diverse attractions – from cultural experiences like The Truth of Sanctuary to family-friendly options like Khao Khiew Zoo.

The vibrant nightlife, fresh seafood, and beachfront dining further solidify Chon Buri’s appeal.

American food and travel vlogger Mark Wiens echoed this sentiment, praising Chon Buri’s unique offerings like the 130-year-old Aung Sila market with its dried seafood and rich, creamy Khao Lam (sticky rice baked in bamboo).

“I think about squid, Poo Mah and also dried seafood. There’s also a 130-year-old market Aung Sila where you can find dried seafood and also “Khao Lam” – sticky rice baked in bamboo.

You can find Khao Lam across the country, but the ones there are really rich and creamy,” said Wiens.

Just an 80-kilometer drive – less than two hours except during holidays – from Bangkok, Chon Buri offers something for everyone.

Pattaya, Ko Lan, and Bang Saen cater to beach lovers, while cultural enthusiasts can explore The Truth of Sanctuary. Families can have fun at Khao Khiew Zoo, and seafood enthusiasts will be in paradise.

TAT's Niche expects spending on food in Chon Buri province to increase at least by 20% following the publication of the Michelin Guide Thailand, while Wiens also believes that the guide will help visitors – foreign and Thai – to discover the gems of the province's culinary scene.

This inclusion in the Michelin Guide Thailand 2025 is lauded by Thapanee Kiatphaibool, Governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand.

She emphasizes the guide's role in promoting Thai cuisine globally, supporting Thailand's national soft-power strategy focused on the "5Fs" (Food, Fashion, Film, Fight, and Festival) to boost tourism competitiveness.

Thapanee echoed the government's focus on soft power, particularly food tourism. She mentioned a national plan to create "must-eat lists" for all 77 Thai provinces.

"Thailand's rich and diverse cuisine is a major draw for tourists," Thapanee continued. "The Michelin Guide, a trusted resource for food lovers globally, showcases this vibrant culinary scene, adding significant value to our tourism industry."

"Including Chon Buri in the guide benefits both the province and Thailand as a whole. We expect to see increased recognition of local gastronomy, use of regional ingredients, economic growth for communities, and elevated standards in food quality and service. These factors, aligned with Thailand's 'Sustainable Tourism' initiative, will contribute significantly to the country's overall economic well-being." - Thai PBS

**Thailand: A barrage of accusations against the government as general debate begins**

Section: Government & Politics - The general debate against the government began today with leader of the opposition Chaithawat Tulathon opening with a barrage of accusations against the administration, from its failure to keep its election promises, under-performance and lack of sincerity to undermining the justice system through double-standards and ignoring its policy statement presented to parliament over six months ago.

Citing a tangible example, Chaithawat said that the much-hyped “digital wallet” scheme, which the government claimed would stimulate the Thai economy, is yet to become a reality and may hurt the economy in the long run by increasing public borrowing.

He said the people had expected to see the justice system reformed, but what they got was unprecedented internal conflict involving top-level police officers and widespread corruption in government bureaucracy.

The people want to see a political system that can take the country forward, but what they have is completely different, said the Move Forward party leader, adding that democracy is heading backward, with political and economic power being wielded by just a handful of influential figures.

Chaithawat said the people expected Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin to be different from his predecessor, but they find him lacking in leadership and confusion over who is actually in charge in the government.

Responding to Chaithawat's accusations, the prime minister said he found the opposition leader's opening speech full of pessimism about the government, accusing it of such things as failure, incompetency, going backwards and being destructive, among others.

He explained that the government is transparent and genuine in driving the country forward economically, politically and socially and is ready to provide clarifications if the opposition doubts any of its policies.

He said the government has set up a committee to tackle informal debt, a committee to oversee energy and power prices and is determined to crack down on illicit drugs, as manifested in the seizures of large quantities of drugs by the police.

In the agricultural sector, the prime minister claimed that the prices of rubber and rice under his administration has increased substantially, while the Commerce Ministry has been trying to explore new markets for Thai agricultural products.

Then he defended his multiple overseas trips, saying that they were intended to put Thailand on the world's map, to explore trade and investment opportunities for Thailand, adding that the fruits of the government's efforts are not evident now and will take time to be realised.

Allocation of debate time between the government and opposition MPs remains unchanged, after a last-minute discussion today. The opposition will have 22 hours, the government will have eight during the two-day debate. There will not be a vote. - Thai PBS

### **Thailand: Even hotter days forecast until Monday**

Section: General News - People living in several northern and central provinces may already feel that the weather is hot enough, but even hotter days are forecast, peaking on April 8, warned Somkuan Tonjan, director of Meteorological Observation Division today.

Somkuan advised that it will be exceedingly hot, although there could be some rainfall from April 9th to 11th, which may provide some temporary relief before the long Songkran holidays.



He said that the current hot weather does not qualify as a heat wave, like the one originating in Nepal and India which struck Thailand in 2016, but is the result of the low pressure cell covering the country.

Yesterday's maximum temperatures were:

- Central region: 42.3°C in Muang district of Kanchanaburi.
- Northern region: 42.0°C in Muang district of Lampang.
- North-eastern region: 40.9°C in Sawang Wirawong district of Ubon Ratchathani and Muang district of Surin.
- Bangkok and vicinity: 40.7°C in Khlong Luang district of Pathum Thani.

The Meteorological Department, forecasts hot weather in all four regions today, with maximum temperatures ranging from 40°C-42°C, with isolated rain showers in the southern region.

In and around Bangkok, the maximum will be between 36°C to 40°C. - Thai PBS

### **Thailand: Surachate surrenders, freed on bail after questioning**

Section: General News - Deputy national police chief, Pol Gen Surachate Hakparn, reported to the enquiry officer at Taopoon police station on Tuesday afternoon, to acknowledge the money laundering charges filed against him. He was granted bail after about four hours of questioning.

Pol Gen Surachate told reporters as he left the police station at about 8pm that he has denied all the charges and vows to fight the case in the court.

He insisted that he is still regarded as innocent until he is found guilty by the court.

The embattled senior police officer decided to surrender after the Criminal Court issued a warrant for his arrest yesterday, as he had ignored three summonses issued by the Taopoon police.

Gen Surachate said that he is not worried that the charges against him may undermine his candidacy for national police chief, when Pol Gen Torsak Sukvimol retires at the end of September.

Responding to a reporter's question about a speculation that he may be temporarily relieved from his duty by the prime minister, because of the serious charges against him, Surachate said that it is not only him who is now facing criminal charges, Pol Gen Torsak is also facing criminal charges.

Both Surachate and Torsak have been transferred to the Prime Minister's Office, pending the outcomes of criminal cases against them, allegedly in connection with an online gambling platform.

- Thai PBS

### **United States: Trump reprises 'bloodbath' claim in immigration speeches**

Section: General News - Donald Trump doubled down on his heavily criticized warning of a coming American "bloodbath" Tuesday as he told supporters US communities faced "plunder, rape and slaughter" at the hands of illegal immigrants.

In some of his most inflammatory comments to date on border security, Trump accused President Joe Biden of unleashing "carnage, chaos and killing" in a country he said was flooded with drugs and besieged by foreign criminal gangs.

"I stand before you today to declare that Joe Biden's border bloodbath... it's a bloodbath, and it's destroying our country and it's a very bad thing happening," he said in an apocalyptic campaign speech in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

“It’s going to end on the day that I take office.”

The former president — who faces a rematch against Biden in November’s election — spoke out as the Republican National Committee launched BidenBloodbath.com, a website warning of an “invasion aided and abetted by Joe Biden.”

While addressing the potential loss of auto manufacturing jobs to foreign countries last month in Ohio, Trump warned if he wasn’t reelected, “it’s going to be a bloodbath for the country.”

Hours after Grand Rapids, he repeated his fierce messaging at a rally in Wisconsin, where he savaged Biden for allowing what Trump called “an invasion of our country.”

“We will liberate this nation from crooked Joe and his migrant armies of dangerous criminals once and for all,” he told supporters holding “Fire Biden” signs in Green Bay.

Biden’s campaign and Democrats accused him of fomenting “political violence,” prompting an indignant response from Trump aides who said it was clear the tycoon was using the term to describe economic devastation.

Trump is often criticized for using extreme language that experts fear increases the risk of violence, whether in social media posts about his multiple prosecutions or at his rallies.

– Violent crime dropping –

He referred to illegal immigrants accused of criminality as “animals” in his fire-and-brimstone Michigan speech, highlighting the killings of several young women, allegedly by foreign nationals.

“Under crooked Joe Biden every state is now a border state. Every town is now a border town,” Trump thundered.

“Because Joe Biden has brought the carnage, chaos and killing from all over the world and dumped it straight into our backyards.”

He vowed to stop the “plunder, rape, slaughter and destruction of our American suburbs, cities and towns,” comments he reiterated in Wisconsin.

While illegal border crossings hit record highs during Biden’s presidency, violent crime — in Michigan and nationwide — has been dropping since it spiked under Trump during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic.

The billionaire was aiming to jumpstart his campaign with back-to-back rallies in Michigan and Wisconsin, two swing states crucial to his bid to defeat Biden.

The Republican who faces more than 80 felony counts and has been in and out of court for much of the campaign, has pledged retribution against political enemies, and quipped he would be a dictator “on day one.”

But in his Green Bay speech Trump said it was Biden who imperils the democratic system.

“I’m not the threat to democracy. Joe Biden and the fascists that control him — and they do control him — are the real threat to democracy,” Trump said.

The Democratic National Committee accused Trump of hypocrisy on immigration, pointing to his pressure on Republicans in Congress to tank a recent cross-party deal that would have secured the most stringent border security measures in a generation.

– Swing states –

Tuesday’s first address was something of a homecoming for Trump, who closed out his successful 2016 campaign in Grand Rapids, winning Michigan on the way to claiming the White House.

Biden flipped the state back to Democratic in 2020, but polls currently have Trump leading, and the election is likely coming down to the wire.

It is also predicted to be tight in neighboring Wisconsin.

Biden has been on a blitz through the swing states in recent weeks, visiting Wisconsin and Michigan as well as Arizona, Nevada, North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

He holds a widening lead over his Republican rival in the fundraising stakes, while Trump is burning through money as he pays legal bills to battle multiple criminal and civil court cases. - Thai PBS

### **Thailand: NACC probes “tea money” demands to get children into Khon Kaen schools**

Section: General News - Eight secondary schools in the north-eastern province of Khon Kaen are under investigation by officials from the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC,) for allegedly demanding “tea money” of up to 100,000 baht from parents of students who fail the entrance examination.

Thirat Bangpetch, acting director of the NACC's office in Khon Kaen, told Thai PBS that they have received complaints from several parents about the alleged corruption by some decision-making figures in the eight high schools.

He said the NACC also conducted an independent probe and found there are grounds to believe that bribes were demanded from parents of students who failed entrance examinations or were put on the reservist list for each of the eight schools.

An audio clip of conversations between two parents on March 27th was presented to Thai PBS reporters. The transcript (translated from Thai) is as follows:

First parent: “Did they ask for 100,000 baht?”

Second parent: “Yes, 100,000 baht.”

First parent: “Did they demand that the payment be made by 4pm?”

Second parent: "Yes, not later than 4pm, otherwise the amount will be increased to 200,000 baht."

First parent: "They said, if we had paid 60,000 baht in down payment before the exam, we would definitely have been allowed to study at the school."

Second parent: "But I told them I would prefer to have my boy to try his best and, if he is put on the reservist list, we just wait for the school to summon him."

First parent: "Did they say there is no waiting?"

Second parent: "They said, for those who are on the reservist list and those who failed the exam, anyone who pays 100,000 baht will be enrolled."

Thirat said that the schools must clearly declare how many vacant seats there are, how many applicants and how many pass the entrance exam, because many parents don't know how many vacant places there are in a school or how their children scored in the exam.

He said he has asked for all documentation related to the exam from the administrators of the eight schools. Some of them refused to comply, claiming that they are not ready yet. - Thai PBS

### **Thailand: Constitutional Court accepts to consider disbanding Move Forward**

Section: Government & Politics - The Constitutional Court said today that it has accepted for consideration an application seeking the dissolution of the opposition Move Forward party.

The complaint and application were filed by the Election Commission (EC) after the same court ruled unanimously in January that the party and its then leader, Pita Limjaroenrat, were guilty of exercising their rights and liberties to overthrow the Constitutional Monarchy, through their

proposed amendment of Section 112 of the Criminal Code, or the lèse majesté law, and continuous campaigning for the amendment bill.

Move Forward has 15 days to submit its defence.

In its complaint filed to the court, the EC found sufficient evidence to believe that the party has attempted to overthrow Constitutional Monarchy, in accordance with Political Parties Act.

Commenting on the Election Commission's decision to ask the court to dissolve the party, Move Forward spokesman Parit Wacharasindhu told the media that the party and its legal team have been preparing for this moment.

He asked the media not to jump to the conclusion that the party will be dissolved, saying that their legal team will defend the party and prove its innocence.

The issue at stake, he said, is not just the fate of the party, but also to setting of a precedent for Thai politics in the future. - Thai PBS

### **Thailand: Thais received the most scam calls in Asia last year**

Section: General News - People in Thailand received more telephone scam calls than anywhere else in Asia last year, followed by the Philippines and Hong Kong, according to the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth).

Last year's data show that scammers sent messages or called Thais 79 million times, marking an increase of about 18% from 2022.

ThaiHealth based its information on the 2023 annual report of the Whoscall application, which is designed to identify callers and filter out unwanted calls, such as those from telemarketers, robocalls and scammers.

ThaiHealth revealed the data at a seminar on “International Fact-Checking Day 2024,” which falls on April 2 every year. The seminar was co-hosted by Collaborative Fact-Checking (COFACT) and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

Bangkok Governor Chadchart Sittipunt stated that his office places great importance on preventing all kinds of online threats and supports efforts to protect the public from fake news and scammers.

Meanwhile, a COFACT representative said the organisation is preparing to integrate its work with the government and private sectors with training aimed at enhancing skills in fact-checking for people throughout the country.

It is expected to introduce seven fact-checking centres around the country and hopes to encourage the public to become fact-checkers. - Thai PBS

#### **Thailand: Daughter sentenced to 12 years for stealing money from her mother**

Section: General News - The Supreme Court today upheld the ruling of the lower courts, confirming the sentencing of a 57-year-old woman to 12 years in prison after she was found guilty of stealing Bt24 million from her ailing mother.

Huay Srivirat, 86, told the court that her daughter, Mawadee, withdrew money from her bank accounts numerous times without her consent and while she was in a hospital for coronary artery disease in 2017.



The amount withdrawn from Huay's accounts totalled Bt24 million.

In Thailand, it is a criminal offense for a person to unlawfully take or misappropriate the property of their ascendants.

In January last year, a Civil Court ruled for Mawadee and ordered a Thai bank to pay compensation of Bt207 million with interest to the mother. The Court stated that the bank, whose name is withheld, allowed its employees to change the authorised signatures on Huay's bank account.

The court was informed that, while the mother was in hospital, Mawadee and two bank employees forged Huay's signature to authorise Mawadee to withdraw money from the accounts. - Thai PBS

#### **ASEAN: Joint Press Release Brunei Darussalam Central Bank (BDCB) And Bank Of The Lao PDR (BOL) Formally Join The Regional Payment Connectivity Initiative (RPC)**

Section: Business News - Brunei Darussalam Central Bank (BDCB) and Bank of the Lao PDR (BOL) have officially joined the Regional Payment Connectivity (RPC) after previously expressing their interest in joining the initiative. BDCB signed the second supplemental pages of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Regional Payment Connectivity (MOU RPC) on 29th February 2024. Meanwhile, BOL signed the third supplemental pages of MOU RPC on 3 April 2024, at the sidelines of the 11th ASEAN Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR.

The inclusion of BDCB and BOL brings the RPC group to a total of eight ASEAN central banks. Pioneered by the central banks of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand in late 2022, later joined by Vietnam in August 2023 and now Brunei Darussalam and Lao PDR, the RPC initiative is expected to be extended to other ASEAN countries and beyond.

RPC is an initiative that aims to promote faster, cheaper, more transparent, and more inclusive cross-border payments. Since its inception in 2022, the RPC has strengthened the central banks' ability to foster and accelerate the development of payment connectivity in the region through, among others, quick response (QR) code-based payment and fast payment modalities. The regional effort also allows participants to reap the benefits of cross-border economic activities, including providing small and medium-sized enterprises access to the international market, easing of trade, and facilitating worker remittance transactions.

Hajah Rokiah binti Haji Badar, the Managing Director of BDCB, expressed her contentment for BDCB in becoming a signatory to the MOU RPC alongside Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. She also stated that the scope and areas of cooperation in the MOU RPC will be beneficial, particularly in advancing cross-border payment connectivity. This will serve as a means to facilitate further trade, investments, and economic activities within the region and further foster close collaboration with fellow central banks.

Bounleua Xinxayvoravong, the Governor of BOL, emphasized that the signing up of the MOU RPC is a significant move toward enhancing future ASEAN regional cooperation. A faster and cheaper financial transaction as well as a secure and seamless payment system infrastructure will support the expansion and sustainability of our economy.

Bank Indonesia

Bank Negara Malaysia

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Monetary Authority of Singapore

Bank of Thailand

State Bank of Vietnam

Brunei Darussalam Central Bank

Bank of the Lao PDR

(Bank of Thailand)

## **Thailand-Laos: Joint Press Release Launch of the Cross-border QR Payment Linkage between Thailand and the Lao PDR**

Section: Business News - The Bank of Thailand (BOT) and the Bank of Lao PDR (BOL) announced the launch of the cross-border QR payment linkage between Thailand and the Lao PDR today, 3 April 2024, at the sidelines of the 11th ASEAN Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR. This marks the success of linking the instant retail payment systems of both countries to bolster trade, investment, tourism, and the use of local currencies under the ASEAN Payment Connectivity initiative.

The cross-border QR payment linkage will facilitate economic activities between Thailand and Lao PDR, particularly those related to the tourism sector. As close neighbors, both countries enjoy significant bilateral tourism, with the number of Thai and Lao tourists traveling between both countries reaching 2 million in 2023, and this is expected to increase in the future.

In the first phase from 3 April 2024, users from Lao PDR will be able to use mobile banking applications of participating commercial banks to scan Thai PromptPay QR Code displayed by merchants in Thailand.

In the second phase, beginning at the end of June 2024, users from Thailand will be able to use mobile banking applications of participating commercial banks to scan LAO QR Code displayed by merchants in Lao PDR.

Dr. Sethaput Suthiwartnarueput, Governor of the Bank of Thailand, said, “The Bank of Thailand recognizes the importance of implementing cross-border real-time payment linkages and has collaborated with five ASEAN countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam. The Lao PDR is our sixth linkage under the ASEAN Payment Connectivity initiative. The Bank of Thailand believes that cross-border QR payment service will be a safer, more efficient, and cost-attractive alternative for retail payments in ASEAN, thereby promoting economic growth in the region and supporting the transition towards a digital society.”

Mr. Bounleua Sinxayvoravong, Governor of the Bank of Lao PDR, said, “The collaboration between Laos and Thailand in the realm of financial services is a reflection of our shared vision for regional integration, economic development, and prosperity. Through initiatives such as this, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthening ties and fostering mutual growth as well as the regional growth.

The introduction of Cross-border QR Code Payment represents a leap forward in the realm of financial technology, promising greater convenience, efficiency, and security in cross-border transactions. By harnessing the power of digital innovation, we aim to overcome traditional barriers and facilitate seamless financial flows between our nations.”

This initiative is made possible through the collaboration from various stakeholders from both jurisdictions under the joint stewardship of the BOT and BOL. These include the National ITMX (NITMX) and Lao National Payment Network (LAPNet) as operators of the respective instant payment systems, as well as Kasikornbank (KBank) and Banque Pour Le Commerce Extérieur Lao (BCEL) as settlement banks responsible for cross-border settlements. The commercial banks which will offer cross-border QR payment service to their customers via their mobile payment applications include two commercial banks from Thailand and six commercial banks from Lao PDR. The list of participating commercial banks including the banks providing QR codes to the merchants supporting this service can be found in Appendix. More payment service providers are expected to participate in offering this service in the near future, thus broadening the network of users and merchants.

(Bank of Thailand, Bank of the Lao PDR)

## Thailand: Bank of Thailand reports on Business Sentiment Index in March 2024

Section: Business News - Key points:

In March, the Business Sentiment Index (BSI) slightly increased in both the manufacturing and the non-manufacturing sectors, hovering around the 50 -threshold since 2022. Over the next 3 months, BSI significantly declined in the non-manufacturing sector partly due to the start of the low tourism season.

In March 2024, the overall BSI rose slightly to 49.6 with increases in most components. In retrospect, the index has been fluctuating around the 50-threshold since 2022. The manufacturing index improved across various sectors, particularly in the rubber and plastic industries which were a result of China's restocking of rubber products and rising demand of packaging products for consumer goods. Additionally, respondents in the electrical appliance industry expressed improved confidence across almost all components, which was consistent with higher export confidence, particularly from home appliances producers. At the same time, the non-manufacturing index marginally increased, primarily driven by the wholesale trade sector's performance sub-index. However, the non – manufacturing sectors who continued to express lower confidence were the retail trade, the real estate, and the logistic sectors.

The 3-month expected BSI dropped to 51.9 from 53.5 last month, owing mainly to worsen confidence in production, total order books, and performance. The non-manufacturing index declined sharply across almost all sectors. This was led by the trade sector along with the hotel and restaurant sectors, where confidence in service, performance, and total order books fell

significantly as a result of the low tourism season. While the manufacturing index remained stable. Respondents in the food and beverage industries reported deteriorated confidence, especially in production, resulting from crop production constraints negatively affected by El Niño events. On the other hand, the electronic parts industries expressed greater confidence in almost sub-components due partly to gradual destocking of trading partners. However, the manufacturing indices in various sectors remained above the 50-threshold, except for the automotive industries, where the confidence index has been below the 50-threshold for 5 consecutive months on the back of declines in total order books and employment confidences.

Other sentiment indices:

- The current export sentiment index surged beyond the 50- threshold for the first month, driven by the electrical appliance, and the rubber and plastic industries. In addition, the total order books sentiment index reached the 50-threshold again. Although, over the next 3 month, the total order books sentiment index stayed above the 50-threshold continuously, it fell for 2 consecutive months.
- Despite being of less concern, high production cost has been the number one limitation for doing business for 31 months. Meanwhile, low domestic demand, being the second most significant impediment, was more concerned. The expected inflation for the next 12 months fell marginally from 2.7% last month to 2.6%.

(Bank of Thailand)

**Thailand: JCR affirms Thailand's credit ratings at a stable outlook**

Section: Business News - Government Spokesperson Chai Wacharonke disclosed that the Japan Credit Rating Agency (JCR) maintains Thailand's credit ratings at a stable outlook.

Public Debt Management Office reported that JCR affirmed the country's Foreign Currency Long-term Issuer Rating at A Outlook, and Local Currency Long-term Issuer Rating at A+ Outlook.

According to the report, the ratings mainly reflect the country's strong economic fundamentals, particularly its export industry, the stability of its financial system and its resilience to external shocks. The economy has been recovering since 2021 and is expected to maintain moderate growth in 2024, supported by services exports and private consumption. In the longer term, however, economic growth may slow down due to factors such as the falling birthrate and ageing population.

The current account balance returned to surplus in 2023. Factors that caused the current account deficit in 2021 and 2022, such as high fuel prices and a decline in foreign tourists, are being resolved and the current account surplus is expected to be maintained in 2024.

The Government Spokesperson stated that strong fiscal and financial position would be a booster for the Government's economic advancement endeavor. The Government places importance on reinforcing the economy towards sustainable future, together with restructuring, reforming, and enhancing capacity and national competitiveness. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Srettha Thavisin has ordered for more economic stimulus measures for the best interest of Thai economy against any future challenge.

(Royal Thai Government)

**Thailand: Tripartite Wage Committee to deliberate types of business and which districts/subdistricts eligible for increase of minimum wage in 10 tourist-destination provinces: PM**

Section: Government & Politics - April 2, 2024 at 1100hrs, at the Command Building I, Government House, following the weekly cabinet meeting, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Srettha Thavasin disclosed about Ministry of Labor's decision to increase the minimum wage in 10 tourist-destination provinces, which has been acknowledged by the cabinet, that a lot more meetings must be held to deliberate types of business and which districts/subdistricts to be eligible for the increase.

(Royal Thai Government)

**Thailand: Cabinet did not discuss purchase of Navy frigate from China: PM**

Section: Government & Politics - April 2, 2024 at 1100hrs, at the Command Building I, Government House, following the weekly cabinet meeting, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Srettha Thavasin affirmed that Minister of Defense Sutin Klungsang did not report to the cabinet, in its meeting today, on the talk with China to propose a purchase of Navy frigate from the Chinese Government as an alternative to a China-built submarine. He also did not know whether the issue would be proposed to the cabinet in its next meeting.

(Royal Thai Government)

**Thailand: PM wants tangible progress on cybercrime suppression within 30 days**



Section: Government & Politics - April 2, 2024 at 1100hrs, at the Command Building I, Government House, following the weekly cabinet meeting, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Srettha Thavisin disclosed that the cabinet has assigned Minister of Digital Economy and Society Prasert Chantararungthong to work in an integrative manner with the Royal Thai Police Cyber Crime Investigation Bureau on cybercrime suppression operation. He wanted a tangible progress of the matter by 30 days.

(Royal Thai Government)

**Thailand: Issues regarding Digital Wallet Scheme to be cleared after committee meeting on April 10: PM**

Section: Government & Politics - April 2, 2024 at 1100hrs, at the Command Building I, Government House, following the weekly cabinet meeting, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Srettha Thavisin disclosed that the cabinet has yet to discuss about a revision to the draft FY2025 Budget Expenditure to accommodate the digital wallet scheme. In order to avoid public confusion on the matter, he would rather talk about it after the digital wallet committee meeting on April 10, of which the resolution will later be put forward to the cabinet for its approval.

According to the Prime Minister, the issue of casino legalization was not discussed at the cabinet meeting as well.

(Royal Thai Government)

## Thailand: Govt Spokesperson highlights PM's vision on "IGNITE THAILAND, Aviation Hub"

Section: Government & Politics - Government Spokesperson Chai Wacharonke disclosed that the rapid growth of regional aviation is in line with Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Srettha Thavasin's vision on "Thailand Vision: IGNITE THAILAND" which sets to promote Thailand towards being a Premier Global Industrial Hub in 8 key areas within 2030, including an aviation hub.

Concerned agencies now proceed to enhance the country's aviation competitiveness in a comprehensive and continuous manner. A trilateral meeting has been held between Thailand, Lao PDR, and China to discuss a plan to open new air routes in a bid to accommodate an increasing demand in the future which is expected to be as high as 200,000 flights per year (as forecasted by the Aeronautical Radio of Thailand). The effort not only enhance connectivity between the 3 countries, it also provides air route options for airlines across the globe, as well as promotes economic opportunities for the people.

During the Prime Minister's visit to Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on February 3-4, 2024, he witnessed the signing of the Thailand - Sri Lanka Air Services Agreement, which will play a key role in facilitating bilateral tourism, trade, aviation services and rights, safety, customs services, etc., in line with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)'s standard. Consequently, THAI Airways International has resumed its commercial flight route Bangkok – Colombo from March 31, 2024 onward for 7 flights per week. The airline will also increase the number of flights for 61 routes across the globe during March 31 and October 26, 2024 (Route Bangkok – Colombo is one of the 61 routes) to promote Thai tourism in 2024.

According to the Government Spokesperson, with Thailand's geographical location as hub of the region, coupling with its competitive aviation services and the Prime Minister's clear vision on IGNITE THAILAND, Aviation Hub, the country is believed to advance as hub for transport and logistics, boosting the economy, and attracting people across the world.

(Royal Thai Government)

**Thailand: PM had interview with France 24 to emphasize Govt's focus on economic stimulation**

Section: Government & Politics - Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Srettha Thavisin had an interview with France 24, a French state-owned international news television network, on the Thai Government's economic policies, which focus on putting in place economic stimulus packages, while setting up the longer-term plans, such as promotion of inward foreign direct investment from various countries.

The Prime Minister also mentioned his meeting with the French President Emmanuel Macron during his official visit to France in early March. To him, President Macron has a great vision and cares so much about the world. They had also a chance to talk about the 300-year relations between Thailand and France, as France has been one of Thailand's longest trading partners. President Macron also supported exemption of Schengen visa for Thai nationals. The two leaders discussed preparation for a meeting on cross-border investment between businessmen of both countries. The delegation of Thai corporations will travel to France in mid-May to meet with the French counterparts.

The Prime Minister also disclosed the Government's policy to ban recreational cannabis, and stated that legalizing cannabis has posed negative repercussion to the Thai people rather than to the economy as a whole.

On a question whether he was worried to be overthrown by a coup just like several Thai Prime Ministers in the past, the Prime Minister stated that he was not worried for things that he could not control. Instead, he has focused more on what he has the control, and learnt from the mistakes by

the previous Governments. He also believed that the future of Thailand would become more democratic, otherwise he would not be here.

When asked about Thailand's humanitarian assistance to Myanmar, the Prime Minister disclosed that if there were people who need help Thailand would help them. At present, there are already a couple of thousands of Myanmar refugees in Thailand. In January, U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi had an unofficial meeting here.

Thailand has unofficially been asked to help out in playing a middleman between the conflicting parties. According to the Prime Minister, Thailand should focus on what role it can play so that the situation does not escalate into full civil war.

(Royal Thai Government)

#### **Thailand: The cabinet met on March 26, 2024**

Section: Government & Politics - Some of the resolutions are as follows:

Title: Draft Prime Minister's Office Ministerial Regulation on Climate Action (No. ...), B.E. ...

The cabinet approved in principle the draft Prime Minister's Office Ministerial Regulation on Climate Action (No. ...), B.E. ..., as proposed by Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

Gist

The draft Prime Minister's Office Ministerial Regulation on Climate Action (No. ...), B.E. ... is a revision to the Prime Minister's Office Ministerial Regulation on Climate Action, B.E. 2550 and additional amendment. Major revision is a change in the designation of committee member and

assistant secretary from “Secretary-General of the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning” to “Director-General of the Department of Climate Change and Environment”.

Title: Permission for migrant workers (Cambodia, Lao, and Myanmar nationals) to return to home country to celebrate Songkran Festival 2024

The cabinet approved the proposal of Ministry of Labor to allow migrant workers (Cambodia, Lao, and Myanmar nationals) to return to home country to celebrate Songkran Festival 2024, and ordered concerned agencies to do the followings:

Gist

1. Ministry of Interior is to issue a ministerial regulation to waive fees according to immigration law to travel out of the Kingdom for Songkran Festival and return to the Kingdom within the period between April 1 and May 15, 2024. The Ministry is also to issue an announcement to exempt a requirement on application of a re-entry Permit.
2. The Royal Thai Police through the Immigration Bureau, is to approve exit and entry of the migrant workers from and into the Kingdom during April 1 and May 15, 2024.
3. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Department of East Asia is to notify the Royal Thai Embassies in the aforementioned countries on the implementation of this measure for them to proceed accordingly.

Title: Overview of Economic and Trade Indices for February 2024

The cabinet acknowledged the Overview of Economic and Trade Indices for February 2024, as proposed by Ministry of Commerce.

Gist

According to the report,

- Consumer Price Index (CPI) in February 2024: 107.22 (+0.22%MoM)

- Headline inflation rate: -0.77 (YoY)
- Core inflation rate: +0.43% (YoY)
- Average CPI over the last 2 months (January – February 2024): - 0.94 (AOA)
- Consumer Confidence Index (CCI): 54.2
- Headline inflation rate for 2024 is estimated at (-0.3) - 1.7 (Median: 0.7%)

Title: Draft Minutes of the 4th meeting of Thai-Lao Joint Committee for Management of Mekong and Heung Rivers

The cabinet approved the draft Minutes of the 4th meeting of Thai-Lao Joint Committee for Management of Mekong and Heung Rivers. Should there be an amendment in parts that are not gist nor against national interest, Ministry of Interior may proceed and inform the cabinet later of the amendment. Permanent Secretary to Ministry of Interior or a representative is authorized as signatory of the draft Minutes. This is as proposed by Ministry of Interior.

Gist

Important agendas prescribed in the draft Minutes of the 4th meeting of Thai-Lao Joint Committee for Management of Mekong and Heung Rivers include revision of technical standards for the construction of embankment dams along the Mekong and Heung rivers and technical requirements regarding sand extraction along the Mekong and Heung rivers, to be in line with the current context.

Title: MOU on Bilateral Discussion between Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The cabinet approved the following proposals of Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

1. Approved the MOU on Bilateral Discussion between Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Should there be an amendment

in parts that are not gist nor against national interest, Ministry of Foreign Affairs may proceed without having to resubmit to the cabinet

2. Approved Minister of Foreign Affairs or a representative as signatory of the MOU

Gist

MOU on Bilateral Discussion between Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina is aimed to ceate a dialogue mechanism for bilateral relations on the issues of mutual interest, especially international peace and security. The MOU will enter into force from the date of signature, and will be effective for a period of 5 years.

Title: Nomination of “Chud Thai : The Knowledge, Craftsmanship and Practices of The Thai National Costume” and “Muay Thai : Thai Traditional Boxing” for UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

The cabinet approved the following proposals of Ministry of Culture:

1. Approved Nomination of “Chud Thai : The Knowledge, Craftsmanship and Practices of The Thai National Costume” and “Muay Thai : Thai Traditional Boxing” for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity
2. Approved for Director-General of the Department of Cultural Promotion, in his capacity as secretary to the Committee for Promotion and Preservation of Cultural Heritages, to sign the nomination documents which are to be submitted by the end of March.

Title: Request for Approval of the draft exchange letter for Thailand's hosting of the 10th Meeting of the Advisory Committee

The cabinet approved the following proposals of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment:

1. Approved the draft exchange letter for Thailand's hosting of the 10th Meeting of the Advisory Committee

2. Approved Director-General of Department of Marine and Coastal Resources or a representative as signatory of the exchange letter

3. Assigned Ministry of Foreign Affairs to issue the Full Powers to Director-General of Department of Marine and Coastal Resources or a representative

Should there be an amendment in parts that are not gist, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment may proceed without having to resubmit to the cabinet.

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) will hold its 10th Meeting of the Advisory Committee during March 31 and April 3, 2024 in Pattaya, Chonburi. In hosting the event, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources shall send a signed exchange letter to the CMS secretariat.

(Royal Thai Government)

#### **Thailand: Ambassador attached to the Ministry visited the three southern border provinces**

Section: General News - During 31 March - 2 April 2024, H.E. Mr. Sorut Sukthaworn, Ambassador attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Thanawat Sirikul, Acting Director-General of the Department of Information, visited southern border provinces (SBPs) of Thailand to exchange views with government agencies and academic institutes and youths on the current situation, as well as how to amplify SBPs potential in education, economy, culture, and tourism internationally.

Ambassador Sorut called on Maj. Gen. Pramote Prom-in, Deputy Commander of Army Area 4 and Deputy Director of Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC)'s Area 4 Forward Command, Pol. Lt. Col. Wannapong Kotcharak, Secretary-General of Southern Border Provinces Administration



Centre (SBPAC), and Pol. Maj. Gen. Piyawat Chalerm Sri, Provincial Police Region 9 Commissioner. The delegation learned the current situations from the security agencies and exchanged views on how to forge a better understanding among international friends and partners.

During the 3-day visit, Ambassador Sorut discussed with various stakeholders to understand the potential and the needs of the area. He met Deans and Faculties of Princess of Naradhiwas University, Fatoni University, Yala Rajabhat University, and Prince of Songkla University to exchange on how international relations can boost education. He was inspired by various youth empowerment programs by the Mayor of Yala City Municipality, the Association of Children and Youth for the Peace in the Southernmost Provinces of Thailand, the Fasai Association, and the Assalam Graduate & Student Association. The delegation also had the opportunity to visit Krue Se Mosque in Pattani, and the Islamic Cultural Heritage Museum and Al-Quran Learning Centre in Narathiwat, which will soon move to the new building.

The visit was a great opportunity to strengthen the Ministry's collaboration with the academic institutes, local administrations, and civil society in the SBPs. The delegation took back many ideas to further advocate for development of the SBPs in addition to its continued efforts in supporting youths through tailor-made training programs as well as upskilling workshops for Thai students abroad in Muslim countries. The Ministry hopes that the youths' participating in these activities will become a key driving force that will help develop the economy and the society of their hometown, and contribute to returning a lasting peace to the southern border provinces.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand)

**Thailand: Director-General of American and South Pacific Affairs Department held discussions with the U.S. Congressional staff delegation**

Section: General News - Mr. Chettaphan Maksamphan, Director-General of American and South Pacific Affairs Department, held discussions with the U.S. Congressional staff delegation led by Ms. Mary Vigil, Majority Staff Director, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations Subcommittee, U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. This meeting took place during the delegation's visit to Thailand from 30 March to 3 April 2024.

On this occasion, both parties reaffirmed their commitment to promote cooperation between Thailand and the U.S. in areas of security and law enforcement, enhancing partnership to address trafficking in persons, which is becoming a transnational challenge, particularly those related to cyber scams. They also exchanged views on Thailand's efforts to combat human trafficking, as well as significant legislative developments in Thailand and in the region regarding human rights protection.

Furthermore, Director-General also requested support from the delegation to encourage members of the U.S. House of Representatives to consider joining the U.S.-Thai Alliance Caucus, which was established in the U.S. Congress to support Thailand-U.S. cooperation.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand)

**Thailand: Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to Thailand paid a courtesy call on Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs**

Section: General News - H.E. Ms. Wong Siow Ping Catherine, Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to Thailand, paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Sihasak Phuangketkeow, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon her assumption of duty.

Both sides discussed ways to further enhance the multi-faceted bilateral cooperation, especially in future-oriented areas, such as digital and green economy, deep technology, smart city and future-ready human resource development. They also discussed the preparation of the 14th CSEP meeting to be held in Bangkok between 25-26 June 2024 and possible activities to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Thailand - Singapore diplomatic relations in 2025.

In addition, both sides exchanged views on regional issues, including the situation in Myanmar. Singapore reiterated full support for Thailand's ongoing efforts and welcomed the successful pilot project of humanitarian initiative to provide assistance to the Myanmar people affected by conflict along the Thai-Myanmar border.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand)

**Thailand/Myanmar (Burma): Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs appreciates UNHCR's commendation for Thailand's humanitarian initiative for Myanmar**

Section: General News - Mrs. Eksiri Pintaruchi, Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, met Ms. Hai Kyung Jun, the Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR) who recently assumed her position in Bangkok.

The two sides also exchanged views and assessments on the situation of displaced persons in the region and reaffirmed continued commitment to work together to provide assistance to those displaced persons.

On this occasion, UNHCR regional director expressed appreciation to Thailand as the host of both UNHCR's Regional Bureau and Multi-Country Office in Bangkok. She also congratulated Thailand

for the initiative and the successful delivery of humanitarian assistance along the Thai-Myanmar border.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand)

### **Thailand: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs delivers remarks on “Thailand Net Zero Strategy 2065”**

Section: General News - H.E. Mr. Parnpree Bahiddha-Nukara, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, delivered opening remarks on “Thailand Net Zero Strategy 2065” at the event “Thailand Net Zero 2024 Now or Never,” hosted by The Bangkok Insight.

In his remarks, the Deputy Prime Minister emphasized the importance of international cooperation to tackle the global climate crisis, and Thailand’s need to drive national energy transition, develop the carbon credit market, implement green economic policies, and foster diplomatic relations that are human-centered and balanced between trade and sustainable development guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He also stressed the need to strengthen cooperation among all sectors in order to advance Thailand’s goal of Net zero emission within the year 2065.

On this occasion, at the dinner talk on “Net Zero Target: Readiness and Challenges,” representatives from the public and private sectors shared their knowledge and experience on ways to accelerate climate action.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand)

## **Thailand-France: The entry into force of the Agreement between Thailand and France on Visa Exemption for Holders of Official/Service Passports**

Section: General News - The Ministry is pleased to announce that both sides have completed all necessary internal legal procedures for the entry into force of the above-mentioned Agreement and the Agreement will be effective on 1 April 2024, following the signing ceremony of the Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the French Republic on Visa Exemption for Holders of Official/Service Passports convened at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand on 15 September 2023.

This Agreement will allow exemption of visa for holders of valid Thai official passports (with a validity of not less than 6 months) that were issued from 1 July 2020 for an uninterrupted stay or multiple entries with a total period not exceeding 90 days in any 180-days period from the date of their entry.

The entry into force of this Agreement will strengthen and expand cooperations between the two countries and peoples at all levels through encouraging exchanges of official contacts including the facilitation of official visits between both sides. Furthermore, it is one of the accomplishments as stated in the Thailand-France Roadmap (2022-2024).

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand)

## **Thailand: Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPC pays a courtesy call on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Section: General News - H.E. Mr. Liu Jianchao, Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Panpree

Bahidda-Nukara, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, during Minister Liu's visit to Thailand on 29 – 31 March 2024.

During the discussions, both sides reaffirmed the close and cordial ties between Thailand and China at all levels. They agreed to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in wide-ranging areas such as trade, investment, future industries, connectivity, tourism, as well as exchanges between all sectors, including people-to-people. Both sides also agreed to jointly arrange activities to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 2025, at a scale that reflected this milestone in their relations.

Furthermore, both sides exchanged views on regional and international developments, including the situation in Myanmar, and reiterated the need to deepen the partnership between Thailand and China to address economic and geopolitical challenges in the region. The talks were frank and constructive and both looked forward to the next opportunity to meet and continue their discussions in the future.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand)

**Thailand: Fiscal Policy Office announces Government's Fiscal Balance Report in first 5 months of fiscal year 2024 (October 2023 - February 2024)**

Section: Business News - Mr. Pornchai Thiraveja, Director General of the Fiscal Policy Office and Spokesperson of the Ministry of Finance, stated that in the first 5 months of fiscal year 2024 (October 2023 – February 2024), the government has received 979,981 million baht of revenue on cash basis and disbursed 1,365,674 million baht of expenditure. To finance such deficit, the

government has borrowed 55,750 million baht. Therefore, the treasury reserve at the end of February 2024 was at 178,500 million baht.

(Fiscal Policy Office, Ministry of Finance)

#### **Thailand: Fiscal Policy Office - Monthly Economic Report in February 2024)**

Section: Economy - "The economic situation in Thailand in February 2024 showed signs of adjustment, primarily driven by continuous expansion in exported goods for the seventh consecutive month. Both international tourists and domestic visitors increased during this period. Additionally, indicators for private consumption and investment exhibited stability compared to the previous month. However, it crucial essential to closely monitor domestic and international economic conditions as they continue to influence Thailand's manufacturing sector."

Mr. Pornchai Theravej, Director General of the Fiscal Policy Office, revealed the Thai economic situation in February 2024 that "The economic situation in Thailand in February 2024 showed signs of adjustment, primarily driven by continuous expansion in exported goods for the seventh consecutive month. Both international tourists and domestic visitors increased during this period. Additionally, indicators for private consumption and investment exhibited stability compared to the previous month. However, it crucial essential to closely monitor domestic and international economic conditions as they continue to influence Thailand's manufacturing sector" The details were summarized as follows:

Economic indicators for the private consumption sector remained stable from the previous month. In February 2024, the Value Added Tax (VAT) at a constant price increased by 5.7% compared to the same period the previous year and also rose compared to the preceding month after seasonal

adjustment by 5.7%. The Consumer Confidence Index in February 2024 increased from 62.9 to 63.8 in the previous month, marking a continuous seven-month upward adjustment and reaching its highest level in 48 months. This reflects consumers' confidence in the continuously improving economic conditions. However, durable goods consumption reflected a decrease, with passenger car sales and newly registered motorcycle figures decreasing by -20.1% and -10.0%, respectively, compared to the same period the previous year. Additionally, actual income for farmers in February 2024 decreased by -1.7% compared to the same period the previous year.

Economic indicators for private sector investment remained stable from the previous month. Private sector investment in machinery and equipment reflected an increase in February 2024, with capital goods imports rising by 27.1% compared to the same period the previous year and increasing by 16.4% compared to the preceding month after seasonal adjustment. However, commercial vehicle sales decreased by -29.4% compared to the same period the previous year. Investment in the construction sector reflected a decrease in February 2024, with cement sales within the country decreasing by -7.7% compared to the same period the previous year and further decreasing by -0.5% compared to the preceding month after seasonal adjustment. Additionally, property transaction taxes decreased by -15.4% compared to the same period the previous year.

Value of exported goods continued to expand compared to the same period of the previous year. In February 2024, the total export value in US dollars amounted to \$23,384.9 million, increasing by 3.6% compared to the same period the previous year. Excluding oil, gold, and defense-related products, the export value increased by 2.3%, marking the seventh consecutive month of expansion. This expansion was partly due to the expansion of products in the categories of electrical transformers and components, computer equipment and components, and iron, steel, and products, with expansions of 35.0%, 24.9%, and 18.0%, respectively. Moreover, exports of rice, rubber, milk and dairy products, and animal feed expanded by 53.6%, 31.7%, 26.5%, and 21.5%, respectively. Analyzing export values by Thailand's main trading partners revealed positive adjustments in the markets of Australia, the United States, and Indo-China-4, with expansions of



26.4%, 15.5%, and 4.5%, respectively. Additionally, other market, such as Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), showed a substantial expansion of 46.4%.

Supply-side indicators showed positive adjustments compared to the same period the previous year, particularly in the service sectors. In February 2024, the tourism sector saw a continuous expansion, with the number of foreign tourists visiting Thailand reaching 3.35 million, marking a consecutive growth rate of 58.6% compared to the same period the previous year. This number increased further compared to the previous month, with a growth rate of 39.7% after seasonal adjustments. The majority of these tourists were from China, Malaysia, Russia, South Korea, and India, respectively. Similarly, domestic tourism, with Thai visitors traveling within the country, also expanded, reaching 22.2 million in February 2024. This represented a growth rate of 9.1% compared to the same period the previous year and an additional increase compared to the previous month after seasonal adjustments, with a growth rate of 6.9%. Meanwhile, the agricultural sector reflected a decline, with the agricultural product index in February 2024 decreasing by 7.5% compared to the same period the previous year. Additionally, there was a decrease compared to the previous month after seasonal adjustments, with a decline of 0.6%. This decline was mainly due to decreased production in key agricultural categories such as rubber, sugarcane, and oil palm. However, corn production continued to expand. For the industrial sector, the industrial confidence index in February 2024 decreased to 90.0 from 90.6 in the previous month. This decline was influenced by economic slowdowns both domestically and among Thailand's main trading partners. Internal economic stabilities remained favourable. Headline and core inflation in February 2024 were at -0.77 and 0.43 percent per year, respectively. Meanwhile, public debt to GDP at the end of January 2024 stood at 62.2 percent of GDP lower than the Fiscal Sustainability Framework. External economic stability remained robust reflecting the resilient ability to risk from the volatilities in the global economy as the international reserves at the end of February 2024 were high at 251.8 billion USD.

(Fiscal Policy Office, Ministry of Finance)

## Thailand: EXIM Thailand Participates in Grand Opening of SO/ Maldives, Holistic Tourism Destination Prototype Committed to ESG and Sustainable Development Goals

Section: Business News - Dr. Rak Vorrakitpokatorn, President of Export-Import Bank of Thailand (EXIM Thailand), along with EXIM Thailand executives, recently participated in the official grand opening of the high-end lifestyle resort “SO/ Maldives” at the CROSSROADS Maldives project. This venture, jointly developed by S Hotels and Resorts Public Company Limited, and Wai Eco World Developer (WEWD), received syndicated loan from Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited, Bank of China (Thai) Public Company Limited, and EXIM Thailand, through Dream Islands Development 3 Pvt. (DID3), totaling 48.16 million US dollars or approximately 1,734 million baht.

EXIM Thailand’s financial support, alongside its alliances for the CROSSROADS Maldives project, aims to promote prospective Thai entrepreneurs to invest in and develop world-class tourism and hotel business models within the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) framework. The project highlights cultural showcases, rigorous environmental conservation, including reef and endangered marine species protection, wastewater and waste management, and renewable energy utilization, certified by Green Globe™, the highest global standard for sustainable tourism and service providers. This endeavor also promotes the Blue Economy, fostering sustainable development based on marine and coastal resources. With a specific focus on the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water, it aims to conserve and sustainably use oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development, improving local livelihoods and simultaneously creating benefits for nature. The employment of Efficient Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) ensures streamlined processes and minimizes environmental impacts effectively.

The CROSSROADS Maldives project is a comprehensive tourist destination developed by Thai entrepreneurs on a newly constructed island near the international airport and Male, the capital of Maldives. CROSSROADS Maldives consists of three prominent resorts: Hard Rock Hotel Maldives, SAii Lagoon Maldives, and SO/ Maldives, along with integrated tourism facilities including beach clubs, marinas, and facilities for conferences and exhibitions. EXIM Thailand provides long-term loan support to Dream Islands Development 2 Pvt. (DID2) and Dream Islands Development 3 Pvt. (DID3), subsidiaries of S Hotels and Resorts Public Company Limited, aligning with the strategies and goals of EXIM Thailand towards becoming the Green Development Bank, driving sustainable development in the dimensions of economy, society, and the environment globally.

(Export-Import Bank of Thailand)

### **Thailand: EXIM Thailand and Banque Pour Le Commerce Exterieur Lao Public Collaborate to Advance Thailand's Investment in Lao PDR Promoting Sustainable Development**

Section: Business News - Dr. Bounleua Sinxayvoravong, Governor of Bank of the Lao PDR (BOL), Dr. Sethaput Suthiwartnarueput, Governor of Bank of Thailand (BOT), Ms. Morakot Sriswasdi, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Lao PDR, and Mr. Aloun Bounyong, Director General, BOL's Bank Supervision Department, witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Export-Import Bank of Thailand (EXIM Thailand) and Banque Pour Le Commerce Exterieur Lao Public (BCEL) in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR on April 3, 2024, on the occasion of attending the 11th ASEAN Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting (AFMGM) held during April 2-5, 2024. Dr. Rak Vorrakitpokatorn, President of EXIM Thailand and Mrs. Saysamone Chanthachack, Managing Director of BCEL, served as signatories. The MOU aims to support Thai businesses investing in Lao PDR, particularly those relying on Lao kip (LAK) as their

primary operating currency and requiring LAK liquidity for business operations, thereby mitigating risks from foreign exchange volatility.

In this regard, EXIM Thailand, a specialized financial institution under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance, is expanding its collaboration with BCEL in line with EXIM Thailand's goal to become the Green Development Bank. This aims to enhance the competitiveness of Thai entrepreneurs on the global stage in the long term, foster the growth of new industries and sustainable development.

With CLMV countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam) as Thailand's strategic partners, EXIM Thailand has established representative offices in all CLMV nations, working closely with Thailand Team to engage with both public and private sectors. The EXIM Thailand's Vientiane Representative Office has been officially operational since 2018.

EXIM Thailand is ready to strengthen partnerships between public and private sectors in Lao PDR, boosting trade and investment between the two countries, and driving Thai investment projects in Lao PDR, which serves as a Land Link hub connecting transportation routes between Thailand, China, and Vietnam through bridges over the Mekong River. Furthermore, Lao PDR's monthly minimum wage rate of 1.6 million LAK or approximately 2,700 baht, abundant natural resources, ASEAN Battery Hub policy, special tax privileges, and investment incentives in special economic zones all contribute to attracting investors, particularly from Thailand, making Thailand the second-largest investor after China. Thai investment projects primarily focus on energy, agriculture, livestock, tourism, and service industries. In 2023, trade between Thailand and Lao PDR exceeded 7,634.39 million US dollars, with Thai exports totaling 4,647.38 million US dollars and imports from Lao PDR amounting to 2,987.01 million US dollars. Key Thai exports to Lao PDR include refined oil, sugar, automobiles, chemicals, cosmetics, soap, and skincare products, while imports from Lao PDR comprise fuel, fruits and vegetables, electrical machinery and components, fertilizers, pesticides, and cement.

"The partnership between EXIM Thailand and BCEL focuses on offering extensive support in knowledge, opportunities, and financing to strengthen the trade and investment Supply Chain

between Thailand and Lao PDR, integrating with the global supply chain. With a focus on advancing businesses within the environmental, social, and governance framework, EXIM Thailand and BCEL actively advocate for sustainable development at national, the Greater Mekong Subregion, ASEAN and global levels. The collaboration fosters business expansion opportunities across all sectors, while also prioritizing the well-being of the people and the sustainable preservation of natural resources,” said Dr. Rak.

(Export-Import Bank of Thailand)

#### **Thailand: SEC revises regulations on sustainability-themed bonds, giving opportunities for SMEs and startups to access funding and contribute to sustainable development**

Section: Business News - The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has revised the regulations related to issuance and offering for sale of sustainability-themed bonds through crowdfunding and private placement, enabling small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups to access funding and contribute to sustainable development. Effective on 1 April 2024, the regulations also enhance information disclosure in line with international standards.

The SEC has endorsed the concept of regulatory enhancement regarding issuance and offering for sale of sustainability-themed bonds\* to give opportunities for businesses of all sizes including SMEs and startups to raise fund through crowdfunding and private placement. This approach also aims to promote SMEs and startups to strengthen their adaptability and participate in business development in the realm of sustainability, which is crucial to the strategy and business operations to mitigate sustainability risk, enhance competitiveness, and contribute to the country’s goal of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions. The SEC has incorporated feedback and

suggestions from stakeholders into the drafting process of the regulations and conducted a public hearing on the draft regulations in December 2023.

Subsequently, the SEC has issued the amended regulations on issuance and offering for sale of sustainability-themed bonds, effective on 1 April 2024, with the following key points:

(1) revising the rules for private placement of convertible bonds by small and medium-sized enterprises and private limited companies (PP-SME)\*\* to accommodate issuance and offering for sale of green bonds, social bonds, or sustainability bonds;

(2) revising the rules for bond offering through crowdfunding to accommodate issuance and offering for sale of sustainability-themed bonds of all types.

In addition, issuers of sustainability-themed bonds are required to disclose information and report to investors regarding sustainability aspects such as use of proceeds of the bond for environmental and social projects, project selection criteria, project progress reporting, alignment of business strategy with sustainability goals, and reporting progress towards established sustainability goal. This is to align with international standards and provide investors with decision-making information, thereby increasing confidence in the offering of sustainability-themed bonds.

Interested parties can download the Sustainability-themed Bond Offering Manual as well as notifications of related regulations from the SEC website:

<https://www.sec.or.th/TH/Pages/LawandRegulations/ResourceCenter-SustainabilityBond.aspx>

Remarks:

\* Sustainability-themed bonds include green bond, social bond, and sustainability bond (GSSB) and sustainability-linked bond (SLB).

\*\* PP-SME means an offering for sale of securities through private placement by small and medium-sized enterprises and private limited companies.

(The Securities and Exchange Commission, Thailand)

## Thailand: Vision of “Ignite Tourism Thailand 2025” Moving Thailand toward Becoming Tourism Hub

Section: Business News - Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Srettha Thavisin has announced the vision “Ignite Tourism Thailand 2025,” with the goal of moving Thailand toward becoming a tourism hub and attracting tourist arrivals from all parts of the world.

The announcement was made at an event held at Santi Maitri Building, Government House, on 2 April 2024, when the Prime Minister cited the vision of becoming a tourism hub as one of the major goals Thailand aims to achieve in order to bring prosperity to the country.

He said that the Government had set a target to generate 3.5 trillion baht in tourism income for Thailand in 2024 and much more in coming years. Toward this aim, the top five “Must do in Thailand” have been set for tourists visiting Thailand. They include (1) Must Beat (Muaythai), (2) Must Eat (Thai food), (3) Must Seek (Thai culture), (4) Must Buy (Thai fabric), and (5) Must See (Thai shows).

The Prime Minister stated that emphasis would be placed on distributing tourism to various cities that are regarded as “hidden gems” and on linking Thailand’s tourism with CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam).

He urged all sectors of society to be part of the Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2024, scheduled for 11-15 April in Bangkok. The festival should be the starting point leading to the upcoming “great year for Thailand’s tourism.” He said that, in the next three to six months, world events would take place in Thailand and more would continue to come. In this regard, the Thailand Board of Investment recently approved incentives to encourage investment in organizing world-class events in Thailand.

Minister of Tourism and Sports Sudawan Wangsuphakijkosol said that, from 1 January to 1 April 2024, Thailand welcomed 9.4 million international tourists. The number represents an increase of 42 percent over the same period of 2023. Thailand is ready to welcome all groups of tourists, especially older persons and people with disabilities, under the concept of “Tourism for All.”

She said that travelers in Thailand would be provided with meaningful experiences, and that safety measures would be stepped up to create confidence among visitors. The call center 1155 operates around the clock, linking with police stations and relevant agencies. Thailand has also granted visa exemptions to many countries and territories to encourage more tourist arrivals.

(Government Public Relations Department)

### **Thailand: Thailand Offers Incentives to Attract World-Class Events**

Section: Business News - The Thailand Board of Investment (BOI) has approved incentives to encourage investment in organizing world-class events in Thailand, such as large international concerts, sporting activities, and festivals.

Speaking on 28 March 2024, BOI Secretary General Narit Therdsteeerasukdi referred to the incentives, which were approved by the BOI meeting to support the Government’s vision to strengthen Thailand as a tourism hub and allow the country’s tourism and entertainment sectors to fully recover from the COVID-19 crisis.

Organizers of large international events eligible for the incentives require an investment, or expenses, of not less than 100 million baht (USD 2.8 million). They will be granted an import duty exemption on equipment used for the organizing of the events. The operations of their staff will be facilitated, such as issues concerning entry visas and work permits.



Applicants will need to prove their ownership of the rights to organize the event or project they are applying to promote. This measure does not cover the organizing of conferences and trade shows.

The BOI Secretary General said, “By unlocking the tax and regulatory issues, the BOI will facilitate the organization of world-class events, as that will significantly reduce the costs, lead time, and obstacles for organizers.”

He said, “In doing so, we are playing our part in helping the next stage of development of the tourism sector, which is an important economic driver for Thailand, accounting for around 20 percent of GDP, and reaffirming the BOI’s mission to consistently emphasize the ease of doing business.”

(Government Public Relations Department)

### **Thailand: AOT Opens Grab Taxi Service at Suvarnabhumi Airport**

Section: General News - Airports of Thailand Public Company Limited (AOT) has joined hands with Grab Thailand to inaugurate the Grab service center in Suvarnabhumi airport as a pick-up point for passengers and anyone using the Grab application to call a taxi. The new service also gives arriving travelers more choices in transportation.

The project is expected to improve seamless transport connectivity, aligning with the Government’s target to make Suvarnabhumi Airport one of the top 20 airports in the world. Earlier, the AOT launched Grab service centers at Don Mueang airport, Chiang Mai, and Phuket.

The Grab service center is available 24 hours a day and is located at Gate 4, on the first floor of the airport. The AOT is also planning to extend the public transportation service via mobile applications with other service providers.

(Government Public Relations Department)

#### **Thailand: SEC Check First now available on Citizen Portal**

Section: Business News - The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has made available the SEC Check First mobile application on the Citizen Portal or the Digital Government Development Agency (DGA)'s central portal system. This app integration allows the public and investors to verify individuals, products, and intermediaries in the capital market licensed by the SEC and further facilitates access to information to prevent the public from falling victim to investment scams by fraudsters.

The SEC has collaborated with the DGA to integrate the SEC Check First, a mobile application for searching service providers in the capital market under the SEC's supervision, including products (both securities and digital assets) approved by the SEC into the DGA's Citizen Portal to support investment decision-making. This government's super app consolidates various government services into one platform for easy, convenient, and secure access to information. Currently, there are over 140 government services available, providing the public with convenient, fast, and secure information access. The SEC Check First is now available on the Citizen Portal under the New Service Icon, allowing users to check and search for approved products and individuals and licensees.

SEC Secretary-General Pornanong Budsaratragoon said: “Accessing the SEC Check First app through the Citizen Portal further facilitates and provides an additional channel for investors and the public to verify individuals, products, and intermediaries in the capital market. This makes information search easier and more diverse, aligning with the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan 2024 – 2026, which aims to promote the use of digital technology to create benefits, mitigate disparity in information access, prevent investment scams and protect individuals from fraudulent investment solicitation.”

Mrs. Airada Luangvilai, DGA Senior Executive Vice President and Acting President & CEO, said: “The DGA would like to thank the SEC for bringing the SEC Check First application to the Citizen Portal in line with the government's policy to facilitate the public's more convenient and efficient use of digital services provided by the government sector. Currently, this Citizen Portal offers more than 149 government services, with a cumulative download total exceeding 959,702 and usage totaling over 13,736,823 times (as of 31 March 2024). Popular services in the past month include checking vehicle registrations and driver's licenses, summarized credit bureau checks, traffic fine payments, childcare subsidy checks, and citizen registration information. The Government Applications Portal is downloadable to mobile devices.”

The SEC Check First application (<https://market.sec.or.th/LicenseCheck/Search>) serves as an investment support tool in the capital market, providing easy and convenient access to information that helps to verify individuals, juristic entities or products whether they are approved or licensed by the SEC to prevent the public from falling victim to various investment scams. The SEC Check First has received the 2022 Public Sector Excellence Awards in the Service Innovation Category. For further inquiries or reports on suspicious investment scams, please contact the SEC Complaint Center via Hotline 1207, extension 22 or the SEC website at [www.sec.or.th/scamalert](http://www.sec.or.th/scamalert).

(The Securities and Exchange Commission, Thailand)

**Thailand: A, A268A - A informs to exercise partial call option on its debenture (A268A)**

Section: Bond Market - AREEYA PROPERTY PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (A) informs to exercise partial call A268A 100.00 Baht per unit on May 09, 2024.

The remaining principal amount will be 900.00 Baht per unit on May 09, 2024.

Therefore, the cash flows will be adjusted on ThaiBMA's system on April 04, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: A, A275A - A informs to exercise partial call option on its debenture (A275A)**

Section: Bond Market - AREEYA PROPERTY PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (A) informs to exercise partial call A275A 50.00 Baht per unit on May 13, 2024.

The remaining principal amount will be 950.00 Baht per unit on May 13, 2024.

Therefore, the cash flows will be adjusted on ThaiBMA's system on April 04, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (YUANTA, YUANTA24430B) - Bill of Exchange of YUANTA to be registered on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - The Bill of Exchange issued by YUANTA SECURITIES (THAILAND) COMPANY LIMITED to be registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024; consist of

According to the company, intent to request for registration with Thai Bond Market Association (ThaiBMA) as following details;

YUANTA24430B is 26 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 200.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is April 30, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: A, A258A - A informs to exercise partial call option on its debenture (A258A)**

Section: Bond Market - AREEYA PROPERTY PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (A) informs to exercise partial call A258A 240.00 Baht per unit on May 13, 2024.

The remaining principal amount will be 760.00 Baht per unit on May 13, 2024.

Therefore, the cash flows will be adjusted on ThaiBMA's system on April 04, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (CWTTH, CWTTH264A) - CWTTH264A has been registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - CWTTH264A is issued by CHEWATHAI PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (CWTTH) has been registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024, details are as follows;

CWTTH264A is a CHEWATHAI PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED Debenture with the issue size of THB 350.00 million.

It has fixed rate of 7.40 % per annum.

Interest is payable quarterly.

The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is April 04, 2026.

BLUEBELL SECURITIES CO., LTD., is assigned as the bondholder representative.

CIMB THAI BANK PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED, is assigned as the registrar.

ASIA PLUS SECURITIES COMPANY LIMITED, BLUEBELL SECURITIES CO., LTD., DAOL SECURITIES (THAILAND) PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED, GLOBLEX SECURITIES COMPANY LIMITED, KRUNGTHAI XSPRING SECURITIES COMPANY LIMITED, MERCHANT PARTNERS SECURITIES PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED, UOB KAY HIAN SECURITIES (THAILAND) PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED, are assigned as the underwriter.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: KTC - TRIS Rating Affirms Company & Senior Unsecured Debt Ratings On “KTC” At “AA-”, And Assigns “AA-” Rating To Senior Unsecured Debt Worth Up To THB16 Billion, With “STABLE” Outlook**

Section: Bond Market - TRIS Rating affirms the company rating on Krungthai Card PLC (KTC) and the ratings on its outstanding senior unsecured debentures at “AA-”, with a “stable” outlook. At the

same time, TRIS Rating assigns a “AA-” rating to KTC’s proposed issue of up to THB16 billion senior unsecured debentures due within 10 years. The proceeds from the new debentures will be used for debt refinancing, business expansion, investments, or funding for its subsidiaries.

The company rating on KTC incorporates a rating enhancement from its standalone credit profile (SACP) of “a-” to reflect the company’s status as a “strategically important” entity of Krungthai Bank PLC (KTB, rated “AA+/Stable”<sup>\*\*</sup>).

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (BANPU, BANPU24D24A) - Bill of Exchange of BANPU to be registered on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - The Bill of Exchange issued by BANPU PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED to be registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024; consist of

According to the company, intent to request for registration with Thai Bond Market Association (ThaiBMA) as following details;

BANPU24D24A is 264 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 1,500.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is December 24, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (EA, EA24703A) - Bill of Exchange of EA to be registered on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - The Bill of Exchange issued by ENERGY ABSOLUTE PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED to be registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024; consist of

According to the company, intent to request for registration with Thai Bond Market Association (ThaiBMA) as following details;

EA24703A is 90 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 200.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is July 03, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

#### Thailand: BOT, CBF24O07A - Central Bank Bill Auction Results

Section: Bond Market - The auction results of Central Bank Bill on April 04, 2024 details are as follows;

CBF24O07A

Auction Amount (THB mln.)	35,000.00
Accepted Amount of CB (THB mln.)	35,000.00
Lowest Yield (%)	2.48025
Highest Yield (%)	2.51925
Weighted Average Accepted Yield (%)	2.51163
Bid Coverage Ratio	2.06



Grand Total (Mil. Baht) 35,000.00

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (SENA, SENA24930A) - Bill of Exchange of SENA to be registered on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - The Bill of Exchange issued by SENA DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED to be registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024; consist of

According to the company, intent to request for registration with Thai Bond Market Association (ThaiBMA) as following details;

SENA24930A is 179 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 230.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is September 30, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (SIRI, SIRI24D25A) - Bill of Exchange of SIRI to be registered on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - The Bill of Exchange issued by SANSIRI PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED to be registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024; consist of

According to the company, intent to request for registration with Thai Bond Market Association (ThaiBMA) as following details;

SIRI24D25A is 265 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 350.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is December 25, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (MST, MST24704A, MST24O04A) - Bill of Exchange of MST to be registered on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - The Bill of Exchange issued by MAYBANK SECURITIES (THAILAND) PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED to be registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024; consist of

According to the company, intent to request for registration with Thai Bond Market Association (ThaiBMA) as following details;

MST24704A is 91 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 450.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is July 04, 2024.

MST24O04A is 183 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 500.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is October 04, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (PL, PL24806A) - Bill of Exchange of PL to be registered on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - The Bill of Exchange issued by PHATRA LEASING PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED to be registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024; consist of

According to the company, intent to request for registration with Thai Bond Market Association (ThaiBMA) as following details;

PL24806A is 124 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 100.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is August 06, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

**Thailand: New Registered Bonds (BSRC, BSRC24604A) - Bill of Exchange of BSRC to be registered on April 04, 2024**

Section: Bond Market - The Bill of Exchange issued by BANGCHAK SRIRACHA PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED to be registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024; consist of

According to the company, intent to request for registration with Thai Bond Market Association (ThaiBMA) as following details;

BSRC24604A is 61 - day, bill of exchange worth of THB 2,000.00 million. The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is June 04, 2024.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

Thailand: YUANTA, YUANTA24430A - YUANTA informs the partial redemption of YUANTA24430A on April 04, 2024

Section: Bond Market - YUANTA SECURITIES (THAILAND) COMPANY LIMITED (YUANTA) informs the partial redemption YUANTA24430A worth THB 10.00 million on April 04, 2024.

Therefore, the outstanding has been reduced on ThaiBMA's system accordingly.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

Thailand: New Registered Bonds (BAM, BAM264B, BAM274B, BAM294B, BAM344A) - BAM264B, BAM274B, BAM294B and BAM344A has been registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024

Section: Bond Market - BAM264B, BAM274B, BAM294B and BAM344A is issued by BANGKOK COMMERCIAL ASSET MANAGEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (BAM) has been registered with ThaiBMA on April 04, 2024, details are as follows;

BAM264B is a BANGKOK COMMERCIAL ASSET MANAGEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED Debenture with the issue size of THB 240.00 million.

It has fixed rate of 3.24 % per annum.

Interest is payable semi-annually.

The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is April 04, 2026.

BAM274B is a BANGKOK COMMERCIAL ASSET MANAGEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED  
Debenture with the issue size of THB 1,535.00 million.

It has fixed rate of 3.36 % per annum.

Interest is payable semi-annually.

The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is April 04, 2027.

BAM294B is a BANGKOK COMMERCIAL ASSET MANAGEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED  
Debenture with the issue size of THB 845.00 million.

It has fixed rate of 3.41 % per annum.

Interest is payable semi-annually.

The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is April 04, 2029.

BAM344A is a BANGKOK COMMERCIAL ASSET MANAGEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED  
Debenture with the issue size of THB 1,240.00 million.

It has fixed rate of 3.85 % per annum.

Interest is payable semi-annually.

The issue date is April 04, 2024 and the maturity date is April 04, 2034.

BANK OF AYUDHYA PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED, is assigned as the bondholder representative  
and the registrar.

BANK OF AYUDHYA PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED, CIMB THAI BANK PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED,  
KASIKORNBANK PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED, are assigned as the underwriter.

(Thai Bond Market Association)

## Thailand: PM Srettha Thavisin outlines vision to 'Ignite Tourism Thailand'

Section: General News - Highlighting five strategies to ignite the country's tourism potential to secure a tourism hub status in 2025.

Prime Minister and Finance Minister, H.E. Mr. Srettha Thavisin, outlined his vision to 'Ignite Tourism Thailand' in 2025 with a multifaceted approach to establish the country as a tourism hub.

Prime Minister Srettha reiterated the government's commitment to boosting Thailand as a tourism hub to drive the economy and bring prosperity to the country. "The goal is to establish Thailand as a leading destination for tourists from around the world."

He stated that the government's target of 3.5 trillion Baht in tourism revenue this year, with an aim to earn much more in the coming years, would be achieved through five strategies.

Conceptualised at the "Ignite Thailand's Tourism Workshop" held in Bangkok on 15 March 2024 with participation from public and private agencies, the strategies include elevating the tourist experience, promoting must-do activities, raising awareness of hidden-gem destinations, developing intra-regional travel linkage with neighbouring countries, and hosting more world-class events.

Tourism and Sports Minister, Ms. Sudawan Wangsuphakijkosol said the five strategies aligned with the government's policy to make Thailand a global aviation hub, handling more than 150 million air travellers annually by 2030.

"In 2025, Thailand's tourism is set to experience growth on an unprecedented scale. The new 'Up Level, Add Story, Create Value' concept will enhance every step of the tourist journey across all touchpoints," Minister Sudawan said.

Outlines for the five strategies include:

#### 1: Elevating tourist experience

Steps will be taken to promote Thailand's tourism information and promotion to allow tourists to plan an informed trip to the country.

Existing measures will be strictly enforced to ensure tourist safety and convenience, including accessible 'Tourism for All', one-stop Tourist Police Hotline 1155, and universal coverage for emergency patients.

Travel facilitation will be further enhanced in the next three months. This includes improving queue management in airports, raising hotel standards, extending visa-free entry to more countries, enhancing tourist safety and security measures, and ensuring good maintenance and hygiene in public restrooms.

In the next six months, the government plans to push for the amendment of related tourism laws, including hotel regulations, alcohol restrictions, import duties on mega-event equipment, and VAT refund requirements.

#### 2: Five must-do activities

Must Beat (Muay Thai) highlights four unique styles of ancient Thai boxing and presents the sport as a form of cardio exercise.

Must Eat (Thai food) promotes Thai kitchen to the world with 77 local dishes and 77 local desserts.

Must Seek (Thai culture) tells the story of a faith-based journey, cultural superstitions, and folklore culture.

Must Buy (Thai fabric) partners with world-renowned designers to turn Thai fabrics into fashion items.

Must See (Thai shows) showcases impressive traditional and contemporary performances.

### 3: Travel linkage between major and hidden-gem destinations

Promotion of travel linkage between well-established cities and hidden gems in lesser-known destinations is set to better balance the distribution of tourist arrivals and tourism income between urban and rural areas.

Recommended routes include Lanna Culture (Chiang Mai – Lamphun – Lampang), UNESCO Heritage Trail (Sukhothai – Kamphaeng Phet – Nakhon Ratchasima), NAGA Legacy (Nakhon Phanom – Sakon Nakhon – Bueng Kan), Paradise Islands (Trang – Satun), and The Wonder of Deep South (Pattani – Yala – Narathiwat).

### 4: Hub of ASEAN

Plans include promoting intra-region travel and helping to enhance the development and promotion of ASEAN as a single tourism destination, introducing the ASEAN Pass in partnership with airlines, and raising awareness of cross-border QR payment.

### 5: World Class Event Hub

Incentives will be launched to attract major festivals, concerts, and events to Thailand, thus establishing the country as a centre of world-class events.

Upcoming world-class events include Summer Sonic Bangkok 2024, KAWS Arts, Moto GP, and Volleyball World Championship.

Minister Sudawan said, “These five strategies are planned to ignite Thailand to a tourism hub status to attract more tourists to the country and spending more time and budget, further boosting Thailand as the number one tourist destination.”

From 1 January to 1 April 2024, Thailand recorded 9.4 million visitor arrivals, representing a 42 per cent increase over the same period in 2023.

(Tourism Authority of Thailand)



## Thailand: Upcoming MICHELIN Guide Thailand 2025 to include Chon Buri

Section: General News - The expansion of reach marks another significant milestone, further highlighting Thailand's diversity and vibrancy of cuisine, as well as gastronomic landscape unique to each destination.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is delighted to announce that the upcoming MICHELIN Guide Thailand 2025 will expand its reach to cover Chon Buri, a seaside province located some 80 kilometres from Bangkok.

TAT Governor, Ms. Thapanee Kiatphaibool, said "The Guide's coverage expansion to Chonburi is convinced to yield benefits to both the province itself and the country. Among them are increasing the market value of local gastronomy, generating income for local communities, and stimulating national economic growth."

Chon Buri is a vibrant coastal province popular among not only Bangkokians who seek the nearest escape from hectic work schedules, but also domestic and foreign visitors who travel from far and wide.

The tourist attractions in Chon Buri can serve many types of visitors. Besides local traditions, regional specialities, and fresh seafood, Chon Buri is a beach lover's paradise, with well-known destinations including Bang Saen, Pattaya, and Ko Lan.

Gwendal Poullennec, International Director of the MICHELIN Guides, said "Chon Buri has enough to keep travellers occupied during their stays – from beautiful beaches, peaceful temples, local cultural performances, varied festival activities to diverse eateries, stalls, and even a fascinating night life.

“The fresh seafood, unique local delicacies, and beachfront dining experiences are also great features. All these shape Chon Buri into a lively tourist destination. Our inspection team can’t wait to explore its gastronomic scene!”

The MICHELIN Guide Thailand has played a crucial role in promoting Thai food to the world in a way that affirms the country as a top gastro-tourism destination.

This substantially supports the government’s national soft-power strategy focusing on the 5Fs of Food, Fashion, Film, Fight, and Festival, which aims to accelerate Thailand’s global competitiveness in terms of tourism.

“Rich and diverse cuisine, or “Food”, is one of the soft-power foundations attracting tourists from all over the world to Thailand,” Ms. Thapanee said. “As an influential gastronomic reference to food enthusiasts worldwide, The MICHELIN Guide showcases Thailand’s dynamic and captivating culinary landscape that adds more meaningful value to the country’s tourism industry.”

The MICHELIN Guide in Thailand 2025 is scheduled to be released at the end of 2024.

In this eighth edition, Chon Buri becomes the latest destination, joining Bangkok (since 2018); Bangkok’s surrounding provinces, Phuket and Phang-Nga (since 2019); Chiang Mai (since 2020); Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya (since 2022); Isan (since 2023); Ko Samui and Surat Thani (since 2024).

Bangkok’s surrounding provinces consist of Nakhon Pathom, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Samut Prakan and Samut Sakhon.

Isan is represented by four distinctive provinces of Khon Kaen, Nakhon Ratchasima, Ubon Ratchathani and Udon Thani.

To learn more about The MICHELIN Guide, please visit [guide.michelin.com/th/en](https://guide.michelin.com/th/en), or follow updates regarding the 2025 MICHELIN Guide Thailand on Facebook: [facebook.com/MichelinGuideThailand](https://facebook.com/MichelinGuideThailand).

(Tourism Authority of Thailand)

## Thailand: TAT launches 'Air-mazing Thailand - The Amazing Airline fam trip'

Section: General News - The dynamic four-day programme showcases the extensive network of airports that provides convenient domestic and international air access to tourist destinations across the country.

angkok, 2 April 2024 – The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has taken steps to show support for the government's vision to elevate Thailand as a key aviation hub in the Asia-Pacific region with the launch of the 'Air-mazing Thailand: The Amazing Airline FAM trip' project.

Ms. Thapanee Kiatphaibool, TAT Governor, said "Thailand's thriving tourism industry relies heavily on convenient air access to tourist destinations across the country. The fam trip reflects our mission to promote tourism growth and aligns with our Partnership 360 strategy. Through cooperation with aviation authorities and airlines, we hope to increase flight capacity to reach our target of 35 million international visitors and 1.92 trillion Baht in revenue this year."

Organised in partnership with local and international aviation bodies, the dynamic programme from 2-5 April comprises today's Air-mazing Thailand Reception and Presentation in Bangkok, an airport inspection, and the Air-mazing Thailand Workshop and Networking event.

At the Air-mazing Reception and Presentation, officials and figures from the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand, Airports of Thailand, U-Tapao Rayong-Pattaya International Airport, the Department of Airport, Tourist Police, and the International Air Transportation Association highlighted the country's extensive network of airports and investments in aviation infrastructure, technology, and security measures as well as convenient accessibility to representatives from 22 airlines.

Following the reception, airline representatives will be given a tour of Suvarnabhumi Airport's Midfield Satellite Building, known as SAT-1, before embarking on two separate routes for an inspection of regional gateways.

Each route showcases how Suvarnabhumi Airport is a key hub for domestic and international travel, connecting cities and regions across the country. Route 1 highlights U-Tapao Rayong-Pattaya International Airport and Chiang Mai Airport, while route 2 presents Krabi and Surat Thani Airports for route 2. The itineraries also include visits to local attractions.

The FAM trip will conclude with the Air-mazing Thailand Workshop and Networking in Bangkok.

The project underscores TAT's commitment to stimulate more travel to major cities and secondary destinations with proactive marketing and promotion in the long-haul markets.

"TAT has been working with airlines to promote local and international air travel to Thai destinations. We also leverage the government's various initiatives to streamline aviation processes and visa regulations to facilitate travel and tourism, fostering strong demand for air travel to Thailand," Mr. Siripakorn Cheawsamoot, TAT Deputy Governor for International Marketing – Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas, concluded.

(Tourism Authority of Thailand)

### **Thailand: Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2024 officially launched**

Section: General News - The festival from 11-15 April in Bangkok is in celebration of UNESCO's inscription of 'Songkran in Thailand, Traditional Thai New Year Festival' on the prestigious Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity List.

Bangkok, 2 April 2024 – The Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2024 was officially launched at the 42nd Thailand Tourism Festival in Bangkok, promising a grand celebration of the traditional Thai New Year, a UNESCO-listed Intangible Cultural Heritage. The festival is scheduled from 11-15 April in Bangkok.

Tourism and Sports Minister, Ms. Sudawan Wangsuphakijkosol, said “The Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2024 marks the global recognition of the vibrant celebration of Thai New Year. The five-day spectacle is a part of the government’s soft power promotion policy to boost the country’s cultural significance on the global stage.”

The opening ceremony offered a prelude into the epic spectacle as preparations begin for the five-day event, which has been planned by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) under the Ministry of Tourism and Sports in celebration of UNESCO’s inscription of ‘Songkran in Thailand, Traditional Thai New Year Festival’ on the prestigious Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity List.

The vibrant parade of distinctive Songkran processions from five regions, including a stunning procession of the Nang Songkran goddess of 2024, exhibited only a part of the epic parade of 20 processions planned for 11 April.

The 11 April parade will march along the Ratchadamnoen Klang Avenue, starting from the Phan Fa Lilat Bridge and concluding at Sanam Luang, and will remain there until 15 April.

Heading the stretch of 20 exquisite processions will be the procession of Buddha image, followed by the procession of Mahodhara Devi – the Nang Songkran goddess of 2024, the processions of distinctive Songkran traditions of 16 provinces along with cultural performances from over 1,000 performers, the processions of unique Songkran traditions of five other provinces, and the processions of Thai soft power.

Songkran in Thailand is celebrated nationwide as a three-day Thai New Year holiday from 13-15 April. Songkran is on 13 April, which is also National Elderly Day. April 14 and April 15 were declared later as National Family Day and Thai New Year Day, respectively.

The five-day festival features a packed schedule of events to offer tourists a delightful glimpse into the nationwide celebrations of Songkran and for Thais to be proud of the nation's cultural heritage.

Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office, Mrs. Puangpet Chunlaiad, said "Songkran for Thais is a time for people who have moved to other cities or towns to travel back home for family reunions, pay respects to the elders and ask for blessings, as well as visiting temples for merit-making activities. People are advised always to be careful when travelling during this celebratory time."

The Ministry of Culture is inviting everyone to participate in Songkran festivities in Bangkok and five other unique locations, namely Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Samut Prakan, Chon Buri, and Phuket, to celebrate the UNESCO 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' status of Songkran in Thailand.

"Thais are also encouraged to visit temples to make offerings and to pray for good luck in provinces with the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including Sukhothai, Kamphaeng Phet, Ayutthaya, Udon Thani, and Phetchabun, as well as exploring local experiences at the 10 model tourism communities of 2023," Culture Minister, Mr. Sermsak Pongpanit, said.

The 10 model tourism communities announced by the Ministry of Culture are located in Kanchanaburi, Chumphon, Chiang Saen, Phrae, Yasothon, Ranong, Ratchaburi, Lamphun, Samut Sakhon, and Udon Thani.

TAT is also using the opening ceremony as a centre stage to launch 72 faith-based tourism routes in different locations across five regions.

Some of the routes include the journey to pay homage to Buddha relics, the trip in the footprints of high-revered monks, and the travel itinerary to visit famous temples. Each route comprises tourism communities, local attractions, temples and monasteries, and distinctive culinary experiences.

The "Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2024" as well as Songkran festivities across the country during 12-16 April are expected to inspire more travel and tourism activities, resulting in 24.42 billion Bath in overall tourism revenue.

This constitutes 8.76 billion Baht from international tourism and 15.66 billion Baht from domestic tourism with, 510,000 visitor arrivals and 4.29 million domestic trips.

Songkran celebrations in Bangkok are expected to generate 3.69 billion Baht in revenue and attract 653,590 domestic trips.

(Tourism Authority of Thailand)

### Thailand: NEX - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 17-May-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 10-Nov-2023

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 28,712,871

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 1.42

#### 1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 380,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 9.55

Lowest price (THB per share) : 9.50

Total paid (THB) : 3,632,026.80

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 21,589,400

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 1.07

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 210,508,978.22

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: SFLEX - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 27-Sep-2024

Share repurchase plan



Date of Board resolution : 25-Mar-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 19,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 2.32

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 2,060,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 3.26

Lowest price (THB per share) : 3.18

Total paid (THB) : 6,684,016.37

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 6,595,100

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 0.80

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 21,266,320.41

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: TLHPF - Notification of the 2024 Two-way Communication of Thailand Hospitality Property Fund (Edit headline and update meeting agenda)**

Section: SET Filing - Schedule of Two-way communication

Date announced : 20-Feb-2024

Two-way communication date : 24-Apr-2024

Beginning time of meeting (h:mm) : 14 : 00

Record date for the right to attend two-way communication : 05-Mar-2024

Ex-meeting date : 04-Mar-2024

The report topic(s) :

- Fund management

- Financial position and performance

- Appointment of auditors and audit costs

- Dividend payment for the year 2023 - Proposal for Rent Payment Restructuring and Payments for Outstanding Rent by the Lessee

Venue of the meeting (Update) : At Work Meeting Room, 3rd floor, THE OFFICES @  
CENTRAL WORLD No. 999/9 Rama I Rd, Pathumwan, Bangkok

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: TAPAC - Calling for AGM Year 2024, Cash Dividend Payment**

Section: SET Filing - Schedule of Annual General Meeting of Shareholders

Date of Board resolution : 04-Apr-2024

Shareholder's meeting date : 30-Apr-2024

Beginning time of meeting (h:mm) : 10 : 00

Record date for the right to attend the meeting : 18-Apr-2024

Ex-meeting date : 17-Apr-2024

Significant agenda item :

- Cash dividend payment

- Changing the director(s)

Venue of the meeting : Electronic Meeting method (e-AGM)

Cash dividend payment

Date of Board resolution : 03-Apr-2024

Type of dividend payment : Cash dividend payment

Record date for the right to receive dividends : 18-Apr-2024

Ex-dividend date : 17-Apr-2024

Payment for : Common shareholders

Cash dividend payment (baht per share) : 0.04

Par value (baht) : 1.00

Payment date : 29-May-2024

Paid from : Operating period from 01-Nov-2022 to 31-Oct-2023

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: BTS - Report on the results of the Exercise of BTS-W7 and BTS-W8 (F53-5)

Section: SET Filing - The results of the exercise of Warrants/TSR (F53-5)

Report date of securities allocation : 04-Apr-2024

Exercised Securities

Warrants

Common shares

Warrant of trading symbol : BTS-W7

Name of warrant : Warrants to Purchase the Newly Issued Ordinary Shares of BTS  
GROUP HOLDINGS PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 7

Number of exercised warrants (units) : 0

Number of unexercised warrants (units) : 1,316,161,142

Ratio (Warrant : shares) : 1.00 : 1.036

Exercise Price (baht/share) : 11.49

Exercise Date : From 29-Mar-2024

Number of shares derived from exercised warrants (shares) : 0

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 1,388,550,005

Warrant of trading symbol : BTS-W8

Name of warrant : Warrants to Purchase the Newly Issued Ordinary Shares of BTS  
GROUP HOLDINGS PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 8

Number of exercised warrants (units) : 0

Number of unexercised warrants (units) : 2,632,331,938

Ratio (Warrant : shares) : 1.00 : 1.036

Exercise Price (baht/share) : 14.387

Exercise Date : From 29-Mar-2024

Number of shares derived from exercised warrants (shares) : 0

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 2,777,110,195

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: UKEM - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 05-Jun-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 30-Nov-2023

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 80,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 6.88

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 600,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 0.89

Lowest price (THB per share) : 0.89

Total paid (THB) : 534,000.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 34,475,400

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 2.97

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 28,776,675.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: QHOP - List of the top 10 unitholders of Quality Hospitality Leasehold Property Fund**

Section: SET Filing - UOB Asset Management (Thailand) Company Limited, the Management Company to Quality Hospitality Leasehold Property Fund (QHOP), would like to submit the name list of the top 10 unitholders of QHOP entitled to close the register book for Disclosure of information of Quality Hospitality Leasehold Property Fund (QHOP) for year 2024 at the book closing date of 3 April 2024 , detail as follows:

1	Quality Inn Co.,Ltd.	63,766,600.0000 Units	33.33%
2	SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE	63,000,000.0000 Units	32.93%
3	Mr. Thanapark Yongpipatwong	5,200,000.0000 Units	2.72%
4	Mr.Taranint Kongkatong	2,213,700.0000 Units	1.16%
5	Mr.Piphob Veraphong	2,000,000.0000 Units	1.05%
6	Mr.Santi Sansaneeyakiat	1,706,900.0000 Units	0.89%
7	Mr.Chirasak Laowong	1,633,000.0000 Units	0.85%
8	Mr.Kachen Benjakul	1,594,400.0000 Units	0.83%
9	Mrs.Patama Laowong	1,340,000.0000 Units	0.70%
10	Mr. Suchart Chokpipatkul	1,018,900.0000 Units	0.53%

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: TU-PF - List of the top 10 unitholders TU Dome Residential Complex Leasehold Property Fund**

Section: SET Filing - UOB Asset Management (Thailand) Company Limited, the Management Company to T.U. Dome Residential Complex Leasehold Property Fund (TU-PF), would like to submit the name list of the top 10 unitholders of TU-PF entitled to close the register book for Disclosure of information of T.U. Dome Residential Complex Leasehold Property Fund (TU-PF) for year 2024 at the book closing date of 3 April 2024, detail as follows:

1	SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE	80,000,000.0000 Units	76.75%
2	Mr.Tuan Phatihattakorn	2,012,000.0000 Units	1.93%
3	Government Permanent Employee Registered Provident Fund Units	1,563,400.0000	1.50%
4	FWD LIFE INSURANCE PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED by SCB ASSET MANAGEMENT CO.,LTD.4	1,317,000.0000 Units	1.26%
5	Mr.Kuanchai Kerdkaewfah	1,075,600.0000 Units	1.03%
6	Mr.Somkiat Saleepatana	1,063,200.0000 Units	1.02%
7	Mr. Suchart Chokpipatkul	896,900.0000 Units	0.86%
8	Mr.Sithichoke Taebunpakul	815,000.0000 Units	0.78%
9	Ms.Mintra Monsereenusorn	700,000.0000 Units	0.67%
10	Mr.Mek Monsereenusorn	700,000.0000 Units	0.67%

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### Thailand: DIF - Dissemination of the invitation to the 2024 Two-way Communication

Section: SET Filing - Re: Dissemination of the invitation to the 2024 Two-way Communication of Digital Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (DIF)

SCB Asset Management Company Limited (the "Management Company") as the management company of Digital Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (the "Fund") has notified to the Stock



Exchange of Thailand on 15 February 2024, Notification of the 2024 Two-way Communication to be held on 19 April 2024 from 9.30 a.m. onwards (Registration will be commenced at 8.30 a.m.) via electronic communication in accordance with the Capital Market Supervisory Board Notification No. Tor Jor 33/2566. The Management Company would like to invite the unitholders to attend the Two-way Communication as per the aforementioned date and time.

In this regard, the Management Company hereby informs that unitholders can download the invitation letter of the 2024 Two-way Communication on the Management Company's website from 4 April 2024 onwards at <https://www.scbam.com/medias/fund-doc/two-way-communication-letter/DIF-Two-way-EN.pdf>

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### **Thailand: DIF - Amendment of Digital Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund's Fund Scheme**

Section: SET Filing - Referred to

1. The Capital Market Supervisory Board Notification No. Tor Nor 38/2562 Re: Criteria, Conditions and Procedures of the Establishment and Management of Infrastructure Fund (Codified) ("Tor Nor 38/2562")
2. The Capital Market Supervisory Board Notification No. Tor Nor 38/2564 Re: Criteria, Conditions and Procedures of the Establishment and Management of Infrastructure Fund (No.2) ("Tor Nor 38/2564")

3. The Capital Market Supervisory Board Notification No. Tor Nor 30/2566 Re: Criteria, Conditions and Procedures of the Establishment and Management of Infrastructure Fund (No.4) ("Tor Nor 30/2566")

4. The Capital Market Supervisory Board Notification No. Tor Jor 20/2561 Re: Criteria, Conditions and Disclosure information of Property Fund and Real Estate Investment Trust or Infrastructure Fund (Codified) ("Tor Jor 20/2561")

5. The Capital Market Supervisory Board Notification No. Tor Jor 33/2566 Re: Criteria, Conditions and Disclosure information of Property Fund and Real Estate Investment Trust or Infrastructure Fund (No.2) ("Tor Jor 33/2566")

Enclosure Summary Table of the Amendments of Fund Scheme

SCB Asset Management Company Limited (the "Management Company") as the Management Company of Digital Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund ("DIF") wishes to announce that the Management Company intends to notify about the amendments of Fund Scheme in accordance with the Capital Market Supervisory Board Notification, as Referred to. Therefore, the Management Company intends to notify the amendments of Fund Scheme to unitholders. The details of the aforementioned amendments, are provided in the Enclosure. The effective date for the amendment of Fund scheme is 7 March 2024.

In this regard, the Unitholders may view the details of the amendments of Fund Scheme and download the amended prospectus of PPF on the website [www.scbam.com](http://www.scbam.com) or for further inquiries, please contact the Customer Relations Department of the company Tel: 02-777-7777 during business hours from 8.30 hrs. to 17.00 hrs. on business days.

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: ASW - Notification the exercise of ASW-W2**

Section: SET Filing - Notification the exercise of securities

Date announced : 04-Apr-2024

Name of securities : ASW-W2

Exercise date : 24-Apr-2024

The notification period for the exercise of the securities : From 17-Apr-2024 to 23-Apr-2024

Exercise price (baht per share) : 12.00

Exercise ratio (Warrants : common shares) : 1 : 1

Exercise Procedure :

<https://investor.assetwise.co.th/th/shareholder-info/information-for-the-warrant-holders>

Contact Persons and Place to Exercise : Assetwise Public Company Limited No. 9 Soi Ramintra 5

Intersection 23, Anusawari Sub-district, Bang Khen District, Bangkok 10220

Phone : 02-521-9533-35 ext. 340

Fax : 02-551-2089

Website : <http://www.assetwise.co.th>

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: ASW - Notification the final exercise and request for suspension of ASW-W1**

Section: SET Filing - Notification the Final Exercise of securities

Date announced : 04-Apr-2024

Name of securities : ASW-W1

Exercise date : 17-May-2024

Book closing date of warrant registration : From 26-Apr-2024 to 17-May-2024

Date of request to post "SP" sign : From 24-Apr-2024 to 17-May-2024

The notification period for the exercise of the securities : From 02-May-2024 to 16-May-2024

Exercise price (baht per share) : 12.00

Exercise ratio (Warrants : common shares) : 1 : 1

Delisting date : 18-May-2024

Exercise Procedure :

<https://investor.assetwise.co.th/th/shareholder-info/information-for-the-warrant-holders>

Contact Persons and Place to Exercise : Assetwise Public Company Limited

No. 9 Soi Ramintra 5 Intersection 23, Anusawari Sub-district, Bang Khen District, Bangkok 10220

Phone : 02-521-9533-35 ext. 340

Fax : 02-551-2089

Website : <http://www.assetwise.co.th>

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: CHEWA - Notification of the issuance and offering of Chewathai Public Company Limited's Debentures No. 1/2024

Section: SET Filing - With reference to the 2019 Annual General Meeting of Shareholders of Chewathai Public Company Limited ("the Company") held on 2 April 2019, which resolved the issuance of debentures within the limit of Baht 4,500 million to repayment bond. The Company would like to present the details of the issuance and offering the debenture No. 1/2024 offered through the Institution Investor and/or High Net Worth are as follow:

Type of Debentures    Unsubordinated and secured Debentures, there is a

Debenture holders'    Representative in the Name-Registered with the issuer right of early redemption

Issue size            Up to 350 million baht

Issue term            2 years

Interest rate        Fixed rate 7.40% per annum

Interest payment date    Every 3 months

Issue date            April 04th , 2024

Maturity date        April 04th , 2026

Underwriter

Bluebell Securities Co .,Ltd

Asia Plus Securities Co.,Ltd.

Krungthai Xspring Securities Co.,Ltd.

Globlex Securities Co.,Ltd.

Daol (Thailand) PCL

UOB Kay Hian Securities Thailand PCL

Merchant partners Securities PCL

Debenture's Registrar CIMB Thai Bank Public Company Limited

Debenture holders' Representative Bluebell Securities Co.,Ltd

However, the Company has remaining amount of 2,036 million baht.

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### **Thailand: WAVE - Notification the exercise of WAVE-W3**

Section: SET Filing - Notification the exercise of securities

Date announced : 04-Apr-2024

Name of securities : WAVE-W3

Exercise date : 04-Apr-2024

The notification period for the exercise of the securities : From 23-Apr-2024 to 29-Apr-2024

Exercise price (baht per share) : 0.15

Exercise ratio (Warrants : common shares) : 1 : 1

Exercise Procedure :

<https://investor-th.wave-groups.com/home.html>

Contact Persons and Place to Exercise : Corporate Finance Division

Wave Exponential Public Company Limited

14th Floor, Tararom Business Tower,

No. 2445/19 New Petchaburi Road, Bang Kapi Subdistrict,

Huai Khwang District, Bangkok 10310

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. James Andrew Moore

Position : CEO

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: TRITN - Notification the final exercise and request for suspension of TRITN-W5  
(Revised)**

Section: SET Filing - Notification the Final Exercise of securities

Date announced : 02-Apr-2024

Name of securities : TRITN-W5

Exercise date : 31-May-2024

Book closing date of warrant registration : From 10-May-2024 to 31-May-2024

Date of request to post "SP" sign : From 08-May-2024 to 31-May-2024

The notification period for the exercise of the securities (Update) : From 16-May-2024 to 30-May-2024

Exercise price (baht per share) : 0.25

Exercise ratio (Warrants : common shares) : 1 : 1

Delisting date : 01-Jun-2024

Exercise Procedure :

<https://www.triton.co.th/investor-relations/shareholder-information/>

Contact Persons and Place to Exercise : Mr.Tharakorn Junkerd, Miss Pariyapat Chimput

Triton Holding Public Company Limited

60 Soi Pradit Manutham 19, Pradit Manutham Road, Lat Phrao, Lat Phrao Bangkok

Tel: 02-553-5000 # 333, 332

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Miss Lousie Taechaubol

Position : Authorized Director

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. Worapong Woottipruk

Position : Authorized Director

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: GUNKUL - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes



Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 15-May-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 31-Oct-2023

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 380,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 4.28

#### 1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 3,000,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 2.70

Lowest price (THB per share) : 2.70

Total paid (THB) : 8,100,000.00

#### 2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 212,963,100

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 2.40

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 597,547,218.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: SSP - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 16-May-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 13-Nov-2023

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 90,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 6.55

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 1,418,600

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 8.00

Lowest price (THB per share) : 7.95

Total paid (THB) : 11,280,870.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 66,042,000

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares: 4.81

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 530,067,245.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: TH - Report on the results of the Exercise of TH-W3 (F53-5) No.7**

Section: SET Filing - The results of the exercise of Warrants/TSR (F53-5)

Report date of securities allocation : 04-Apr-2024

Exercised Securities

Warrants

Common shares

Warrant of trading symbol : TH-W3

Name of warrant : Warrant of TONG HUA HOLDING PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No.

3

Number of exercised warrants (units) : 0

Number of unexercised warrants (units) : 207,954,656

Ratio (Warrant : shares) : 1.00 : 1.00

Exercise Price (baht/share) : 1.00

Exercise Date : From 28-Mar-2024 to 28-Mar-2024

Number of shares derived from exercised warrants (shares) : 0

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 207,954,656

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### Thailand: LEE - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 17-Sep-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 12-Mar-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 80,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 8.68

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 86,600

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 2.42

Lowest price (THB per share) : 2.40

Total paid (THB) : 209,002.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 2,610,000

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 0.28

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 6,334,370.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: NEWS - Notification of the Resolutions of the Board of Directors' Meeting No. 4/2024 regarding the amendment to the list of persons being allocated with the newly issued ordinary shares through Private Placement (Revised)**

Section: SET Filing - Schedule of Annual General Meeting of Shareholders

Date of Board resolution : 19-Mar-2024

Shareholder's meeting date : 30-Apr-2024

Beginning time of meeting (h:mm) : 14 : 00

Record date for the right to attend the meeting : 04-Apr-2024

Ex-meeting date : 03-Apr-2024

Significant agenda item :

- Omitted dividend payment

- Capital increase

- Connected transaction

- Acquisition and disposition of assets

- The issuance of convertible securities

Venue of the meeting : by virtual meeting via electronic media

Omitted dividend payment

Date of Board resolution : 28-Feb-2024

Omitted dividend payment from : Operating period from 01-Jan-2023 to 31-Dec-2023

Increasing Capital

Specifying the purpose of utilizing proceeds

Date of Board resolution : 19-Mar-2024

Number of additional common shares (shares) : 117,407,070,112

Total of additional shares (shares) : 117,407,070,112

Par value (baht per share) : 1.00

Type of allocated securities : Common shares

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) : Super Trader Holding Company Limited

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 45,497,269,500

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 23.14

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) : Alpine Blue Syndicate Limited

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 24,497,251,200

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 12.46

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) : Mr. Pakorn Mongkoltada

Number of allotted shares (shares) (Update) : 3,750,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase (Update) : 1.91

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Mr. Sithipong Netiphat

Number of allotted shares (shares) (Update) : 3,750,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase (Update) : 1.91

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Mrs. Kamolrat Chansangavej

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 2,500,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 1.27

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Mr. Siriwat Vongjarukorn

Number of allotted shares (shares) (Update) : 1,500,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase (Update) : 0.76

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Mr. Piyasak Bhumichitra

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 1,500,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 0.76

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Mr. Nataphat Kuansataporn

Number of allotted shares (shares) (Update) : 1,000,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase (Update) : 0.51

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)



Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Miss Piyapat Suwannasang

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 1,000,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 0.51

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Miss Linna Phunpruch

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 1,000,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 0.51

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Mr. Pailin Boondet

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 1,000,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 0.51

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Mr. Natthi Suramethakul

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 1,000,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 0.51

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Dr. Noppavee Bukkamana

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 1,000,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 0.51

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Dr. Pannawit Chottechathammanee

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 1,000,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 0.51

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Allocated to : Private placement (PP)

Person(s) receiving allotment(s) (Update) : Miss Pattamavadee Chumsang

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 1,000,000,000

% of Paid Up Capital after capital increase : 0.51

Subscription price (baht per share) : 0.01

Subscription period : From 01-May-2024 to 30-Jun-2024

Total shares allocated to Private Placement (Shares) : 90,994,520,700

Allocated to : Reserved shares for the exercise of convertible securities

Number of allotted shares (shares) : 26,412,549,412

Issued convertible securities

Date of Board resolution : 19-Mar-2024

Type of allocated securities : Warrants

Allocate to : All common shares' shareholders

Number of allotted warrants (units) (New) : 26,412,549,412

Reserved shares for the exercise of warrants (New) : Common shares

Number of additional shares (shares) (New) : 26,412,549,412

Ratio (Existing shares : Warrant) (New) : 4.00 : 1.00

Offering price (baht per unit) (New) : 0.00

Description of warrants

Warrant Symbol (New) : NEWS-W8

Name of warrant (New) : Warrants to Purchase Newly Issued Ordinary Shares of the  
Company No. 8

Exercise ratio (warrant : share) (New) : 1.00 : 1.00

Exercise price (baht per share) (New) : 0.012

Term of warrants (New) : 2 years from the date of the issuance of the NEWS-W8 Warrant  
(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: TKS - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 28-Aug-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 22-Feb-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 30,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 5.90

#### 1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 564,400

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 7.55

Lowest price (THB per share) : 7.40

Total paid (THB) : 4,218,295.00

#### 2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 2,381,300

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares: 0.47

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 17,232,060.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: SORKON - Resignation of CFO and Chief Accountant

Section: SET Filing - Change in CFO / Chief Accounting

Appoint

Position of CFO : Accounting Director

Title : Miss

Name : Nattida

Surname : Techavoraprasert

Effective Date of Appointment : 01-Apr-2024

Position of Chief Accountant : General Manager - Consolidation and Subsidiaries

Accounting Division

Title : Miss

Name : Nathamon

Surname : Opaskriengchai

Effective Date of Appointment : 01-Apr-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: VIBHA - Reporting Share Repurchase from for financial management purposes

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 04-Sep-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 29-Feb-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 540,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 3.98

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 1,500,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 2.06

Lowest price (THB per share) : 2.04

Total paid (THB) : 3,084,766.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 33,500,000

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 0.25

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 67,602,850.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: WORLD - Disposal of assets of investment 48.99% in subsidiaries and related transactions and schedule of the Extraordinary General Meeting of Shareholders (Revised)**

Section: SET Filing - Schedule of Extra-General Meeting of Shareholders

Date of Board resolution : 27-Mar-2024

Shareholder's meeting date : 07-May-2024

Beginning time of meeting (h:mm) : 13 : 30

Record date for the right to attend the meeting : 11-Apr-2024

Ex-meeting date : 10-Apr-2024

Significant agenda item :

- Connected transaction

- Acquisition and disposition of assets

Venue of the meeting : Electronic Meeting (Yealink)

Connected transaction

Disposal of assets of investment 48.99% in subsidiaries and related transactions and related transactions.

Acquisition or disposition of assets

Disposal of assets of investment 48.99% in subsidiaries and related transactions and related transactions.

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: PRM - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 27-Jun-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 13-Mar-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 175,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 7.00

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 1,150,000



Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 7.90

Lowest price (THB per share) : 7.85

Total paid (THB) : 9,050,000.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 108,189,300

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 4.33

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 714,486,925.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: VGI - Report on the results of the Exercise of VGI-W3 (F53-5)**

Section: SET Filing - The results of the exercise of Warrants/TSR (F53-5)

Report date of securities allocation : 04-Apr-2024

Exercised Securities

Warrants

Common shares

Warrant of trading symbol : VGI-W3

Name of warrant : Warrant of VGI PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 3

Number of exercised warrants (units) : 0

Number of unexercised warrants (units) : 2,583,348,212

Ratio (Warrant : shares) : 1.00 : 1.00

Exercise Price (baht/share) : 11.90

Exercise Date : From 29-Mar-2024 to 29-Mar-2024

Number of shares derived from exercised warrants (shares) : 0

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 2,583,348,212

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### Thailand: SORKON - Resignation of CFO and Chief Accountant

Section: SET Filing - Change in CFO / Chief Accounting

Resign

Position of CFO : Acting Chief Financial Officer

Title : Mr.

Name : Kusoom

Surname : Sakda-apinan

Effective Date of Termination : 01-Apr-2024

Position of Chief Accountant : Acting Accounting Manager

Title : Miss

Name : Ruchadaporn

Surname : Yindeelerk

Effective Date of Termination : 01-Apr-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: BRRGIF - Decreasing of the company's paid-up capital of BRRGIF

Section: SET Filing - Decreasing of the company's paid-up capital of BRRGIF

Company name : BURIRAM SUGAR GROUP POWER PLANT INFRASTRUCTURE  
FUND (BRRGIF)

Par value (THB) - old : 7.18

Par value (THB) - new : 6.75

Effective date : 10-Apr-2024

Remarks :- No change in the number of investment units

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: BR - Report on the results of the Exercise of BR-W1 (F53-5)

Section: SET Filing - The results of the exercise of Warrants/TSR (F53-5)

Report date of securities allocation : 04-Apr-2024

Exercised Securities

Warrants

Common shares

Warrant of trading symbol : BR-W1

Name of warrant : Warrant of BANGKOK RANCH PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 1

Number of exercised warrants (units) : 0

Number of unexercised warrants (units) : 456,607,635

Ratio (Warrant : shares) : 1.00 : 1.00

Exercise Price (baht/share) : 5.00

Exercise Date : From 29-Mar-2024 to 29-Mar-2024

Number of shares derived from exercised warrants (shares) : 0

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 456,607,635

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: TOA - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes.

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 17-May-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 14-Nov-2023

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 60,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 2.96

#### 1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 700,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 21.40

Lowest price (THB per share) : 21.40

Total paid (THB) : 14,980,000.00

#### 2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 4,621,900

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 0.23

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 96,284,450.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: DEMCO - Report on the results of the Exercise of DEMCO-W7 (F53-5)

Section: SET Filing - The results of the exercise of Warrants/TSR (F53-5)

Report date of securities allocation : 04-Apr-2024

Exercised Securities

Warrants

Common shares

Warrant of trading symbol : DEMCO-W7

Name of warrant : Warrant of DEMCO PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 7

Number of exercised warrants (units) : 0

Number of unexercised warrants (units) : 137,140,064

Ratio (Warrant : shares) : 1.00 : 1.00

Exercise Price (baht/share) : 3.50

Exercise Date : From 29-Mar-2024 to 29-Mar-2024

Number of shares derived from exercised warrants (shares) : 0

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 137,140,064

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: SDC - Report on the results of the Exercise of convertible debentures (F53-5)

Section: SET Filing - Report on the result of exercise of other convertible securities (F53-5)

Report date of securities allocation : 04-Apr-2024

Exercised securities

Convertible debentures

Common shares

Name of Convertible debentures : Samart Digital Public Company Limited's long-term convertible debentures No. 1/2024 Due 2025

Number of converted convertible debentures (shares) : 2,000

Number of non converted convertible debentures (shares) : 27,000

Ratio (Convertible debentures : shares) : 1 : 23,255.8135

Conversion Price (baht/share) : 0.043

Exercise Date : From 04-Apr-2024

Number of shares derived from conversion (shares) : 46,511,627

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 2,835,530,618

Remark :

Name of the Debenture holders who exercise the rights: Advance Opportunities Fund 1

Conversion ratio: Principle amount of the Convertible Debentures divided by the conversion price

Conversion price: Baht 0.043 per share. The weighted average price of the Company's shares trading on the Stock Exchange of Thailand for not less than 7 consecutive business days but not exceeding 15 consecutive business days prior to the date that the Debenture holders exercised their conversion rights during Mar 20-Apr 3, 2024 are Baht 0.048 per share. The conversion price is not less than 90 percent of the said weighted average price. Therefore, it does not meet the criteria to prohibit the sale of shares within 1 year from the date of receiving the convertible securities (Silent Period).

From the resolution of the EGM 1/2023 on November 28, 2023, the weighted average price is calculated from the volume weighted average price of the Company's shares for each consecutive business days (Floating Conversion Price). The market price and the conversion price will be calculated with three digit decimals.

The Company offered and issued the Convertible Debentures No. 1-6/2023 and 1-4/2024 on May 17, 2023 -Mar 22, 2024 at the amount of Baht 100 million (100,000 units). The Debenture holders exercised their conversion rights during Jun 6, 2023 - Apr 4, 2024 amounting to Baht 73 million (73,000 units). Total remaining Convertible Debentures No. 6/2023 and 1-4/2024 of Baht 27 million (27,000 units) has not been exercised.

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: SABUY - Explanation on short-term significant development**

Section: SET Filing - SET requests to clarify news or information

Subject : Explanation on short-term significant development



Description :

Referring to the trading price of the company's shares has experienced a dramatic decrease in the price level between April 3, 2024, till this morning. The Company, now, has no business development which takes effect to the Company's share price.

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: SET - New shares of CV to be traded on April 5, 2024**

Section: SET Filing - Additional listed shares

Company name : CLOVER POWER PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (CV)

Old capital (baht) : 703,183,435.00

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 1,406,366,870

Number of additional shares :

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 10,000,000

New capital (baht) : 708,183,435.00

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 1,416,366,870

Par value (baht per share) : 0.50

Allocated for : Advance Opportunities Fund 1 exercise its convertible debentures  
5,000 units to 10,000,000 common shares

Ratio (Convertible security : share) : 1 : 2,000

Conversion ratio (baht per share) : 0.50

Conversion date : 25-Mar-2024

Trading date : 05-Apr-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: SET - Trading Suspension and termination of listing status of ERW-W3**

Section: SET Filing - Delisting

Company name - Warrant of THE ERAWAN GROUP PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 3 (ERW-W3)

Delisted date : 15-Jun-2024

Reason : - Expiration of warrant

Sign posted

Suspend (SP) sign posted due to last exercise

Security Symbol - Warrant of THE ERAWAN GROUP PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 3 (ERW-W3)

Sign posted : SP

Reason :

Last exercise of warrant

Book closing date : From 24-May-2024 to 14-Jun-2024

Last exercise date : 14-Jun-2024

Date of post "SP" sign : From 21-May-2024 to 14-Jun-2024

Notification period for the exercise : From 30-May-2024 to 13-Jun-2024

Delisting date : 15-Jun-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: SET - New shares of JMART to be traded on April 5, 2024

Section: SET Filing - Additional listed shares

Company name : JAYMART GROUP HOLDINGS PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED  
(JMART)

Old capital (baht) : 1,457,625,158.00

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 1,457,625,158

Number of additional shares :

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 284,394

New capital (baht) : 1,457,909,552.00

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 1,457,909,552

Par value (baht per share) : 1.00

Allocated for : Warrants (JMART-W4) 250,389 units

exercise to 284,394 common shares

Ratio (Warrant : share) : 1 : 1.13582

Exercise price (baht per share) : 13.20649

Exercise date : 29-Mar-2024

Trading date : 05-Apr-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: SET - New shares of CREDIT to be traded on April 5, 2024**

Section: SET Filing - Additional listed shares

Company name : THAI CREDIT BANK PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (CREDIT)

Old capital (baht) : 6,146,446,110.00

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 1,229,289,222

Number of additional shares :

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 1,000,000

New capital (baht) : 6,151,446,110.00

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 1,230,289,222

Par value (baht per share) : 5.00

Allocated for : Warrants (MSOP) 500,000 units

exercise to 1,000,000 common shares

Ratio (Warrant : share) : 1 : 2

Exercise price (baht per share) : 11.625

Exercise date : 29-Mar-2024

Trading date : 05-Apr-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: mai - New shares of GCAP to be traded on April 5, 2024**

Section: SET Filing - Additional listed shares

Company name : G CAPITAL PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (GCAP)

Old capital (baht) : 225,163,281.00

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 450,326,562

Number of additional shares :

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 4,000,000

New capital (baht) : 227,163,281.00

- Common stock (Unit: shares) : 454,326,562

Par value (baht per share) : 0.50

Allocated for : Advance Opportunities Fund 1 has exercised the convertible debentures No. 9/2023 in the amount 2,000 units to 4,000,000 common shares.

Ratio (Convertible security : share) : 1.00 : 2,000.00

Conversion ratio (baht per share) : 0.50

Conversion date : 02-Apr-2024

Trading date : 05-Apr-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: mai/ECF - Trading Suspension and termination of listing status of ECF-W4**

Section: SET Filing - Delisting

Company name - Warrant of EAST COAST FURNITECH PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 4 (ECF-W4)

Delisted date : 01-Jun-2024

Reason : - Expiration of warrant

Sign posted

Subject : Suspend (SP) sign posted due to last exercise

Security Symbol - Warrant of EAST COAST FURNITECH PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 4 (ECF-W4)

Sign posted : SP

Reason :

Last exercise of warrant

Book closing date : From 10-May-2024 to 31-May-2024

Last exercise date : 31-May-2024

Date of post "SP" sign : From 08-May-2024 to 31-May-2024

Notification period for the exercise : From 16-May-2024 to 30-May-2024

Delisting date : 01-Jun-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### Thailand: FVC - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 04-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 20-May-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 14-Nov-2023

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 22,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 3.89

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 03-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 90,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 0.84

Lowest price (THB per share) : 0.83

Total paid (THB) : 74,900.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 10,763,500

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 1.90

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 8,686,012.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: PICO - Notification of resolution of the Board of Directors Meeting No. 3/2024 and the amendment to the report of resolution of the Board of Directors Meeting No. 4/2024 to the SET by cancelling the postponement of the date of the EGM No.1/2024 (Revised)

Section: SET Filing - Schedule of Extra-General Meeting of Shareholders

Date of Board resolution (Update) : 19-Mar-2024

Shareholder's meeting date (Update) : 22-Apr-2024

Beginning time of meeting (h:mm) : 14 : 00



Record date for the right to attend the meeting (Update) : 04-Apr-2024

Ex-meeting date (Update) : 03-Apr-2024

Significant agenda item : - Changing the director(s)

Venue of the meeting : Crystal Design Center, CDC Ballroom 3, 888 Pradit Manutham Road, Klongjan, Bangkok, Bangkok 10240

Change of director/Executive

Agenda 3 to consider and approve the appointment of directors to replace those retiring by rotation namely,

1.1 Mrs. Vachira Na Ranong to replace Mr. Thanomphong Pathomsak as the independent director

1.2 Mr. Silchai Kiatpapan to replace Mr. Chaijit Tehasuwanarat as the director

1.3 Mr. Amornyot Panich or Mr. Nithivat Dhambhirasing to replace Mr. Chaiyod Bunyagidj as the independent director

Agenda 4 To consider and approve the appointment of three new directors namely, Mr. Pised Chungyampin, Mr. Thanomphong Pathomsak, and Mr. Chaijit Tehasuwanarat

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: BMSCG - Report Net Asset Value**

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Subject : Report NAV

Name : BCAP MID SMALL CG ETF (BMSCG)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 9.4819

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 303,421,314.12

Balance Units (Units) : 32,000,000.0000

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. Ekkaluk Kanchanaroek

Position : Senior Vice President

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: BSET100 - Report Net Asset Value**

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Subject : Report NAV

Name : BCAP SET 100 ETF (BSET100)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 8.9790

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 1,167,270,956.57

Balance Units (Units) : 130,000,000.0000

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. Ekkaluk Kanchanaroek

Position : Senior Vice President

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: BMSCITH - REPORT Net Asset Value**

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Subject : Report NAV

Name : BCAP MSCI THAILAND ETF (BMSCITH)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 9.6991

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 911,719,741.72

Balance Units (Units) : 94,000,000.0000

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. Ekkaluk Kanchanaroek

Position : Senior Vice President

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: TPS - Report on the results of the Exercise of TPS-W1 (F53-5)-The 3rd Exercise**

Section: SET Filing - The results of the exercise of Warrants/TSR (F53-5)

Report date of securities allocation : 03-Apr-2024

Exercised Securities

Warrants

Common shares

Warrant of trading symbol : TPS-W1

Name of warrant : Warrant of THE PRACTICAL SOLUTION PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 1

Number of exercised warrants (units) : 61,580,470

Number of unexercised warrants (units) : 3,704,292

Ratio (Warrant : shares) : 1.00 : 1.00

Exercise Price (baht/share) : 1.20

Exercise Date : From 29-Mar-2024

Number of shares derived from exercised warrants (shares) : 61,580,470

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 3,704,292

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: CHINA - Report NAV

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Subject : Report NAV

Name : W.I.S.E. KTAM CSI 300 China Tracker (CHINA)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 5.7928

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 353,951,697.50

Balance Units (Units) : 61,101,400.0000

Offer price : 5.8229

Bid price : 5.7628

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr.Therdsak Saengwimol

Position : Vice President of Fund Operations Department for President

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: ENY - Report NAV**

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Subject : Report NAV

Name : KTAM SET ENERGY ETF TRACKER (ENY)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 5.0142

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 50,142,885.82

Balance Units (Units) : 10,000,000.0000

Offer price : 5.0142

Bid price : 5.0142

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr.Therdsak Saengwimol

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### Thailand: GLD - Report NAV

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Subject : Report NAV

Name : KTAM GOLD ETF TRACKER (GLD)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 3.3524

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 384,447,001.63

Balance Units (Units) : 114,676,200.0000

Offer price : 3.3699

Bid price : 3.3351

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr.Therdsak Saengwimol

Position : Vice President of Fund Operations Department for President

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: PICO - Notification of the resolution of the Board of Directors Meeting No. 3/2024 and No.4/2024 and the Postponement of the Date of the Extraordinary General Meeting of Shareholders No.1/2024 (Revised)

Section: SET Filing - Schedule of Extra-General Meeting of Shareholders

Date of Board resolution (Update) : 03-Apr-2024

Shareholder's meeting date (Update) : 07-May-2024

Beginning time of meeting (h:mm) : 14 : 00

Record date for the right to attend the meeting (Update) : 23-Apr-2024

Ex-meeting date (Update) : 22-Apr-2024

Significant agenda item : Changing the director(s)

Venue of the meeting : Crystal Design Center, CDC Ballroom 3, 888 Pradit Manutham Road, Klongjan, Bangkok 10240

Change of director/Executive

Agenda 3 to consider and approve the appointment of directors to replace those retiring by rotation namely,

1.1 Mrs. Vachira Na Ranong to replace Mr. Thanomphong Pathomsak as the independent director

1.2 Mr. Silchai Kiatpapan to replace Mr. Chaijit Tehasuwanarat as the director

1.3 Mr. Amornyot Panich or Mr. Nithivat Dhambhirasing to replace Mr. Chaiyod Bunyagidj as the independent director

Agenda 4 To consider and approve the appointment of three new directors namely, Mr. Pised Chungyampin, Mr. Thanomphong Pathomsak, and Mr. Chaijit Tehasuwanarat

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: SFLEX - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 27-Sep-2024

Share repurchase plan



Date of Board resolution : 25-Mar-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 19,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 2.32

#### 1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 03-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 1,608,200

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 3.28

Lowest price (THB per share) : 3.22

Total paid (THB) : 5,239,641.05

#### 2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 4,535,100

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 0.55

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 14,582,304.04

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: UHERO - Report NAV As of 02 April 2024

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Subject : Report NAV

Name : UNITED HERO ETF (UHERO)

NAV as of : 02-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 7.2930

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 199,147,998.74

Total Assets Value (Baht) : 200,725,400.76

Balance Units (Units) : 27,306,639.6770

Offer price : 7.3296

Bid price : 7.2930

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Miss Suranchana Lohasuwan

Position : Vice President (2)

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: STOWER - Notification the final exercise and request for suspension of STOWER-W4**

Section: SET Filing - Notification the Final Exercise of securities

Date announced : 03-Apr-2024

Name of securities : STOWER-W4

Exercise date : 14-Jun-2024

Book closing date of warran registration : From 24-May-2024 to 14-Jun-2024

Date of request to post "SP" sign : From 21-May-2024 to 14-Jun-2024

The notification period for the exercise of the securities : From 30-May-2024 to 13-Jun-2024

Exercise price (baht per share) : 0.60

Exercise ratio (Warrants : common shares) : 1.00 : 0.10

Delisting date : 15-Jun-2024

Exercise Procedure : <https://skytower.co.th>

Contact Persons and Place to Exercise : Sky Tower Public Company Limited 247 Romklao Rd.,

Sansap, Minburi, Bangkok 10510 Telephone 02-543-9020

Ext.283 Khun Rungnapa Suwannachart

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr.Chalothorn Leelamali

Position : Director

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: SCBSET - Report NAV 03/04/2024**

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Name : SCB SET INDEX FUND (SCBSET)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 18.5189

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 12,102,216,877.21

Total Assets Value (Baht) : 12,102,484,012.92

Balance Units (Units) : 653,504,448.5024

Offer price : 18.5190

Bid price : 18.5189

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mrs.Wanida Assawapayukul

Position : Associate Director

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: ALPHAX - Notification of the resolutions of the Board of Directors' Meeting No. 1/2024, on the date of Schedule for the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders for the year 2024 and Omission of Dividend Payment. (Revised)

Section: SET Filing - Schedule of Annual General Meeting of Shareholders

Date of Board resolution : 02-Apr-2024

Shareholder's meeting date : 29-Apr-2024

Beginning time of meeting (h:mm) : 10 : 00

Record date for the right to attend the meeting : 17-Apr-2024

Ex-meeting date : 11-Apr-2024

Significant agenda item :

- Omitted dividend payment

- To consider and approve the proposal to increase the number of Company directors from 9 people to 11 people.

- To consider ratification changes the purpose of using the additional capital received from fundraising from the offering of shares to private placement (Private Placement) and existing shareholders in proportion to their shareholding (Rights Offering).

Venue of the meeting : Electronic Meeting (E-AGM) at the meeting room of Alpha Divisions Public Company Limited, No. 98 Attakawi Building 1, 5th Floor, Soi Aree, Sukhumvit 26 Road, Klongton Subdistrict, Klongtoey District, Bangkok 10110

Omitted dividend payment

Date of Board resolution : 28-Feb-2024

Omitted dividend payment from : Operating period from 01-Jan-2023 to 31-Dec-2023

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: 1DIV - Report NAV 03/04/2024**

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Name : ThaiDEX SET High Dividend ETF (1DIV)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 9.7003

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 164,905,172.23

Balance Units (Units) : 17,000,000.0000

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. Krit Pattamavichaiporn

Position : Chief Operating Officer

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: TDEX - Report NAV 03/04/2024**

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Name : THAIDEX SET50 EXCHANGE TRADED FUND (TDEX)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 8.1813

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 3,575,230,310.33

Balance Units (Units) : 437,000,000.0000

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. Krit Pattamavichaiporn

Position : Chief Operating Officer

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: ABFTH - Report NAV As of 3 April 2024

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Name : THE ABF THAILAND BOND INDEX FUND (ABFTH)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 1,285.4501

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 11,303,666,654.40

Total Assets Value (Baht) : 11,307,099,049.78

Balance Units (Units) : 8,793,547.0000

Offer price : 1,288.0211

Bid price : 1,282.8792

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Ms.Chanathip Rungkunanon

Position : First Senior Vice President

Remark : Offer and Bid price (reference for Major Investor)

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: UBOT - Report NAV As of 02 April 2024

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Name : UNITED ROBOTICS & ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ETF (UBOT)

NAV as of : 02-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 13.7272

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 46,829,083.46

Total Assets Value (Baht) : 48,220,481.83

Balance Units (Units) : 3,411,403.8338

Offer price : 13.7959

Bid price : 13.7272

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr.Prayad Tansuebchusai

Position : Director

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: SET - Decreasing of the company's paid-up capital of AQUA**

Section: SET Filing - Decreasing of the company's paid-up capital of AQUA

Company name : AQUA CORPORATION PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (AQUA)

Number of shares - old : 5,912,456,522

Number of shares - new : 5,712,456,522

Effective date : 05-Apr-2024



Remarks :- Decreasing of the company's paid-up capital by writing-off the treasury stocks is equal to 200,000,000 shares.

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### Thailand: ENGY - Report NAV

Section: SET Filing - Report on Net Assets Value (NAV) per unit

Name : MTRACK ENERGY ETF FUND (ENGY)

NAV as of : 03-Apr-2024

Net Assets Value (Baht per unit) : 5.2145

Net Assets Value (Baht) : 67,789,320.32

Balance Units (Units) : 13,000,000.0000

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

#### Thailand: A5 - Notification the final exercise and request for suspension of A5-W2

Section: SET Filing - Notification the Final Exercise of securities

Date announced : 03-Apr-2024

Name of securities : A5-W2

Exercise date : 07-Jun-2024

Book closing date of warrant registration : From 17-May-2024 to 07-Jun-2024

Date of request to post "SP" sign : From 15-May-2024 to 07-Jun-2024

The notification period for the exercise of the securities : From 23-May-2024 to 06-Jun-2024

Exercise price (baht per share) : 5

Exercise ratio (Warrants : common shares) : 1 : 1

Delisting date : 08-Jun-2024

Exercise Procedure :

<https://investor.assetfive.co.th/th/shareholders/warrants>

Contact Persons and Place to Exercise : Company Secretary

199 S-OASIS Building, 12th Floor, Unit 1210, 1211, 1212, Vibhavadi-Rangsit Rd., Chomphol,  
Chatuchak Bangkok 10900

Telephone: 02-026-3512 ext. 508 /

Email: [sasiprapha@assetfive.co.th](mailto:sasiprapha@assetfive.co.th)

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. Supachoke Panchasarp)

Position : Chief Executive Officer

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: KGI - Right adjustment of SCC13C2405A

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC13C2405A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY KGI SECURITIES (THAILAND) PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN MAY 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 380.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 374.764

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 20 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 19.72387 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.05070

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : MR. CHIH - HUNG LIN

Position : CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: KGI - Right adjustment of SCC13C2408A

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC13C2408A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY KGI SECURITIES (THAILAND) PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN AUGUST 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 320.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 315.591

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 25 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 24.65483 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.04056

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : MR. CHIH - HUNG LIN

Position : CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: KGI - Right adjustment of SCC13C2407A

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC13C2407A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY KGI SECURITIES (THAILAND) PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN JULY 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 360.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 355.039

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 21 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 20.70822 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.04829

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : MR. CHIH - HUNG LIN

Position : CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: KGI - Right adjustment of SCC13P2408A

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC13P2408A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE PUT WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY KGI SECURITIES (THAILAND) PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN AUGUST 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 180.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 177.520

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 12 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 11.83572 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.08449

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and

Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : MR. CHIH - HUNG LIN

Position : CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: VIBHA - Reporting Share Repurchase from for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 04-Sep-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 29-Feb-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 540,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 3.98

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 03-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 2,800,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 2.10

Lowest price (THB per share) : 2.06

Total paid (THB) : 5,822,252.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 32,000,000

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 0.24

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 64,518,084.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: TKS - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange



Last date for repurchasing shares : 28-Aug-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 22-Feb-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 30,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 5.90

#### 1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 03-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 300,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 7.65

Lowest price (THB per share) : 7.49

Total paid (THB) : 2,269,750.00

#### 2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 1,816,900

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 0.36

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 13,013,765.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: NOK - Changing of CFO

Section: SET Filing - Change in CFO / Chief Accounting

Resign

Position of CFO : Acting Chief Financial Officer

Title : Mrs.

Name : Kanya

Surname : Ruengprateepsang

Effective Date of Termination : 01-Apr-2024

Appoint

Position of CFO : Chief Financial Officer

Title : Miss

Name : Saranyaporn

Surname : Tantisookvalkul

Effective Date of Appointment : 01-Apr-2024

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: SSP - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 16-May-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 13-Nov-2023

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares): 90,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 6.55

#### 1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 03-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 570,400

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 8.00

Lowest price (THB per share) : 7.95

Total paid (THB) : 4,536,680.00

#### 2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 64,623,400

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 4.70

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 518,786,375.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: BLS - Resolution of the Exercise of 5 Derivative warrants issued by BLS

Section: SET Filing - Report on the results of exercise of DW

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Maturity date : 02-Apr-2024

DW symbol : SET5001C2403F

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5001C2403G

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5001P2403F

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5001P2403G

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5001P2403H

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr.Pichet Sithi-Amnuai

Position : President

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: JPM - Resolution of the Exercise of 12 Derivative warrants issued by JPM

Section: SET Filing - Report on the results of exercise of DW

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Maturity date : 02-Apr-2024

DW symbol : SET5041C2403A

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041C2403B

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041C2403C

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041C2403D

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041C2403E

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041C2403F

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041C2403G

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041C2403H

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041C2403I

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041P2403A

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041P2403B

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5041P2403C

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Tosapol Kerdphol

Position : Head of Listed Structured Products

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: PRM - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 27-Jun-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 13-Mar-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 175,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 7.00

#### 1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 03-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 930,000

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 7.80

Lowest price (THB per share) : 7.80

Total paid (THB) : 7,254,000.00

#### 2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 107,039,300

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 4.28

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 705,436,925.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: BLS - Right adjustment of SCC01C2405A

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC01C2405A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY BUALUANG SECURITIES PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN MAY 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 339.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 334.329

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 38.55059 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 38.02281 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.02630

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : Mr. Bannarong Pichyakorn



Position : Senior Managing Director of Sales & Trading Business

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: BLS - Right adjustment of SCC01C2408A

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC01C2408A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY BUALUANG SECURITIES PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN AUGUST 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 279.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 275.156

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 42.28129 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 41.70142 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.02398

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : Mr. Bannarong Pichyakorn

Position : Senior Managing Director of Sales & Trading Business

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

Thailand: BLS - Right adjustment of SCC01C2407A

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC01C2407A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY BUALUANG SECURITIES PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN JULY 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 355.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 350.108

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 23.40571 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 23.08403 : 1

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : Mr. Bannarong Pichyakorn

Position : Senior Managing Director of Sales & Trading Business

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: YUANTA - Right adjustment of SCC19C2408A**

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC19C2408A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY YUANTA SECURITIES (THAILAND) COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN AUGUST 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 323.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 318.549

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 21.35 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 21.05706 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.04749

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and

Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : Mr. Hsuan-Yi Chen

Position : Deputy Managing Director

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: YUANTA - Right adjustment of SCC19C2406A**

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC19C2406A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY YUANTA SECURITIES (THAILAND) COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN JUNE 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 360.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 355.039

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 15.98 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 15.76044 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.06345

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : Mr. Hsuan-Yi Chen

Position : Deputy Managing Director

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: YUANTA - Right adjustment of SCC19C2405A**

Section: SET Filing - Right adjustment of DW

Symbol : SCC19C2405A

The Full name : DERIVATIVE CALL WARRANTS ON THE SIAM CEMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED ISSUED BY YUANTA SECURITIES (THAILAND) COMPANY LIMITED LAST TRADING IN MAY 2024 # A

Before Exercise Price (THB/share) : 362.00

After Exercise Price (THB/share) : 357.012

Before Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 25.16 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (DW : share) : 24.80774 : 1

After Adjustment Exercise Ratio (Calculate) : 0.04031

The reason for adjustment : To ensure that the benefits of the Derivative Warrant holders are not less than the existing status according to formula which is specified in the Term and Condition of Derivative Warrant issuers and Derivative Warrant holders. The reasons for adjustment of this event are as follows:

- dividend payment

Effective Date : 04-Apr-2024

Authorized Persons to Disclose Information : Mr. Hsuan-Yi Chen

Position : Deputy Managing Director

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: YUANTA - Resolution of the Exercise of 11 Derivative warrants issued by YUANTA**

Section: SET Filing - Report on the results of exercise of DW

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Maturity date : 02-Apr-2024

DW symbol : SET5019C2403A

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019C2403B

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019C2403C

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019C2403D

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019C2403E

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019C2403F

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019P2403A

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019P2403B

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019P2403C

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019P2403D

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

DW symbol : SET5019P2403E

Number of subscribed DW (unit) : 0

Authorized to sign on behalf of the company : Mr. Hsuan-Yi Chen

Position : Deputy Managing Director

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: GUNKUL - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 15-May-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 31-Oct-2023

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares) : 380,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 4.28

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 03-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 273,300

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 2.72



Lowest price (THB per share) : 2.72

Total paid (THB) : 743,376.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 209,963,100

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 2.36

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 589,447,218.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: LEE - Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes**

Section: SET Filing - Form for Reporting share repurchases

Subject : Reporting Share Repurchase form for financial management purposes

Report date : 03-Apr-2024

Procedure used for share repurchase : Buy on the Exchange

Last date for repurchasing shares : 17-Sep-2024

Share repurchase plan

Date of Board resolution : 12-Mar-2024

Total number of shares to be repurchased (shares): 80,000,000

Total shares to be repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 8.68

1. Results of share repurchase

Date of repurchase : 03-Apr-2024

Number of shares repurchased (shares) : 128,400

Repurchase or highest price (THB per share) : 2.44

Lowest price (THB per share) : 2.40

Total paid (THB) : 311,212.00

2. Cumulative number of shares repurchased

Cumulative number of shares repurchased until present date (shares) : 2,523,400

Total shares repurchased as % of paid-up shares : 0.27

Total value of shares repurchased (THB) : 6,125,368.00

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Thailand: JSP - Report on the results of the Exercise of JSP-W1 (F53-5) (Revised)**

Section: SET Filing - The results of the exercise of Warrants/TSR (F53-5)

Report date of securities allocation : 29-Mar-2024

Exercised Securities

Warrants

Common shares

Warrant of trading symbol : JSP-W1

Name of warrant : Warrant of JSP PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING  
(THAILAND) PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED No. 1

Number of exercised warrants (units) : 0

Number of unexercised warrants (units) : 207,943,898

Ratio (Warrant : shares) : 1.00 : 1.00

Exercise Price (baht/share) : 2.50

Exercise Date : From 29-Mar-2024 to 29-Mar-2024

Number of shares derived from exercised warrants (shares) : 0

Number of remaining shares reserved (shares) : 207,945,100

(Stock Exchange of Thailand)

**Vietnam: Three-month FDI inflow into Vietnam up 13.4%**

Section: Business News - Vietnam had attracted 6.17 billion USD in foreign direct investment (FDI) as of March 20, a year-on-year rise of 13.4%, according to the Foreign Investment Agency under the Ministry of Planning and Investment.

Specifically, in the period, 644 new projects with total registered capital of 4.77 billion USD were granted investment certificates, up 23.4% in the number of projects, and 57.9% in value year-on-year.

A total of 934.6 million USD was registered to be added to 248 existing projects and 466.2 million USD earmarked for stake purchase and capital contribution.

The disbursed foreign investment rose by 7.1% in the first quarter to reach 4.63 billion USD, a signal that the disbursement will continue the positive trend, the agency said.

Foreign investors poured capital into 17 out of 21 economic sectors, among which, the manufacturing and processing industry took the lead with total registered capital of 3.93 billion USD, a slight decrease of 1.3% from the same period last year.

The real estate sector came second with total registered capital of 1.58 billion USD, 2.1 times higher than the figure of the same period last year, followed by the wholesale and retail industry and science and technology with investment of 224.8 million USD and 190.2 million USD, respectively.

The foreign investment influx came from 62 countries and territories. Singapore was the biggest investor in Vietnam in the period with total registered capital of over 2.55 billion USD, up by 51.3%, followed by Hong Kong (China) with 1.05 billion USD, 2.3 times higher.

The capital city of Hanoi was the top FDI destination with an influx of 970.8 million USD, rising by 6.1 times over the same period last year, followed by northern Bac Ninh province with 745.2 million USD. - VNA

**ASEAN-Republic of Korea (South Korea): ASEAN, RoK agree on transposition of AKFTA product specific rules**

Section: General News - ASEAN member states and the Republic of Korea (RoK) have reached a consensus on the transposition of ASEAN-RoK Free Trade Agreement (AKFTA) Product Specific Rules from the Harmonised System Codes HS 2017 to HS 2022.

The agreement was reached at a three-day joint session of ASEAN and Korean experts, which wrapped up in the northern province of Quang Ninh on March 27.

This was an important conference towards the goal of converting nearly 7,000 tariff lines of the product specific rule (PSR) transposition list in the AKFTA from codes HS 2017 to HS 2022.

Min Ho Son, head of the RoK delegation, said that ensuring goods have a clear origin will help facilitate import and export and enjoy preferential tax rates.

Trinh Thi Thu Hien, Coordinator of the ASEAN-Korea PSR Transposition Project, said that the countries reviewed chapters 1 to 97 of the PSR list and agreed on the origin criteria for the majority of tariff lines.

On that basis, the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade will develop and issue a circular guiding the implementation of AKFTA rules of origin to update the PSR list, thereby creating favourable conditions for taking advantage of the agreement's special preferential tax rates.

Tran Minh Trang, head of the Vietnamese delegation, stressed that the transposition work requires high concentration and consensus of the ASEAN countries and the RoK.

According to the World Customs Organisation, the HS code is regularly updated every 5 years to ensure compatibility with international commercial types and needs. - VNA

**Vietnam: Business environment reform needs further promotion: expert**

Section: Business News - Ministries, sectors and localities need to drastically improve the business environment, including bettering the efficiency in implementing reform.

That was the message from Nguyen Thi Minh Thao, head of the Business Environment and Competitiveness Research Department at the Central Institute for Economic Management (CIEM).

In addition, improving the business environment should be associated with responsibility of the leaders of organisations, she said.

Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment Tran Duy Dong said this year had already seen a number of difficulties for businesses. In January alone, the number of businesses withdrawing from the market nearly doubled compared to those entering.

On January 5, the Government issued Resolution 02 to promote further this reform, Dong said, to strengthen confidence of investors and enterprises and arouse entrepreneurial spirit to enhance the economic recovery and development.

Resolution 02 requires ministries, sectors and localities to focus on removing legal inadequacies in implementing investment projects. They need to improve the quality of reform for the list of conditional business investment industries and business conditions, and effectively deploy the national single-window information portal.

They also have to complete policies on promoting investment, production and business associated with innovation and digital transformation, sustainable development and the quality of business development services.

According to Thao from CIEM, the resolution is an encouragement to the business community, creating a driving force to continue carrying out business investment activities. This resolution also creates pressure for the ministries, sectors and localities to make changes for the business community as well as the socio-economic development.

She believed that, to successfully implement Resolution 02, the participation of the association and business community is necessary to identify challenges, thereby finding appropriate solutions to improve the business environment.

According to Dau Anh Tuan, Deputy General Secretary of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), in Resolution 02, the Government focuses on the capacity and competitiveness of domestic private enterprises, with the goal of increasing the number of newly established private enterprises and minimising the number of enterprises leaving from market. Besides removing market difficulties, the difficulties from mechanisms and policies should be reduced.

Among the solutions, the Government requires ministries, branches and localities to proactively and regularly review the existing regulations and procedures and then propose the removal of contents that are not beneficial to the production and business activities of enterprises.

The policy at this resolution is that Vietnamese goods, businesses and economy can only have more competitiveness if the legal system is simpler, more convenient and more competitive than other regional countries.

Another new point in this resolution is to require the businesses to hold proactively periodic dialogues with VCCI and business associations to point out inadequacies in legal regulations that need to be overcome.

To achieve high growth momentum for the whole year, cutting barriers to the business environment and institutional reform are important tasks.

Authorities need to carry out many other solutions to continuously increase the competitiveness of the business environment, such as improving quality of infrastructure and human resources, and promoting domestic industrial production.

In particular, they should focus on two main groups of solutions on reducing business costs along with reforming law enforcement.

The authorities at all levels need to step up to improve the quality of policy enforcement, because if the policy is good but not implemented well, the efficiency of that policy is not high, according to the VCCI official.

The Phap Luat TP.HCM (HCM City Law Newspaper) quoted Deputy Minister Dong as saying that many localities had dialogues with the businesses so the latter can directly report and make recommendations to the local leaders.

The ministry always wants business associations, commodity associations and the business community to actively participate in having criticism, building policies and reporting on problems and difficulties, according to Dong.

They need to proactively propose recommendations relating to policies and policy enforcement to ensure effective state management, while creating convenience and safety for production and business activities of enterprises.

The ministry will coordinate closely with ministries, sectors, localities, the business community and relevant parties to promote institutional reform, create an open, favourable and safe business environment to create quick changes in the economic recovery and development. - VNA

**Vietnam: Vietnam - Japan joint initiative in new era launched**

Section: General News - A meeting was held in Hanoi on March 27 to launch the first phase of the Vietnam - Japan joint initiative in the new era.



In his remarks, Vietnamese Minister of Planning and Investment Nguyen Chi Dung said the Vietnam - Japan joint initiative, which began in April 2003, is special cooperation between the two governments.

Via the establishment of a policy dialogue forum between Japanese investors and related Vietnamese ministries and sectors, it has contributed to building a transparent and conducive business climate in the Southeast Asian nation, and offered policy recommendations as reference serving the law and policy refinement processes by local agencies.

Japanese Ambassador to Vietnam Yamada Takio said after two decades, the initiative completed eight phases, with 84% of the workload finished on time, giving a boost to foreign capital inflows in Vietnam, particularly from Japan.

The Vietnam - Japan joint initiative in the new era consists of five major groups of issues. They involve the promotion of the Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC), green transition, innovation, and digital transformation, the strengthening of the supply chain, the training of high-quality IT, AI, and semiconductor human resources, and the reform of mechanisms to improve the business climate.

Participating Vietnamese and Japanese delegates agreed that the first phase will last for 19 months, with a mid-term review meeting slated for December this year and a summit to assess the entire process in October 2025.

The sides pledged cooperative efforts and active implementation of commitments in the action plan to meet the set goals, for mutual prosperity of the Vietnamese and Japanese business communities and the enhancement of the two countries' relations.

As of February 20, Japanese investors had channeled 74.3 billion USD into 5,288 projects in Vietnam. In the first two months of 2024, their registered investment amounted to 422.4 million USD, soaring by 290% year-on-year. - VNA

## Vietnam: An Giang province exports first batch of acacia mangoes to RoK

Section: Business News - The Mekong Delta province of An Giang on March 27 exported 18 tonnes of acacia mangoes to the Republic of Korea (RoK).

This was the first batch of mangoes exported to the RoK under a contract signed between Long Binh Agriculture Cooperative in An Phu district and Hoang Phat Fruit Ltd. Co.

Chairman of the An Phu district People's Committee Trang Cong Cuong said that it took local authorities and farmers more than 10 years to open the doors for local mangoes to demanding markets like the RoK.

The official emphasised that the district will increase support for enterprises and farmers to build stable material areas, develop sustainable value chains, and accelerate the issuance of codes of remaining mango growing areas to boost exports while coordinating with fruit exporting companies to survey other mango orchards to sign export contracts to choosy markets.

An Giang province has more than 12,000 ha of mango, of which An Phu district accounts for 1,860 ha. The district has over 354 ha of mango farming in line with VietGAP standards in Khanh An and Phu Huu communes. The district has issued 61 area codes for planting acacia mangoes for export to New Zealand, the US, the RoK, Japan, Australia and China. - VNA

## Vietnam: VCCI calls for greater support for R&D costs of FDI firms

Section: Business News - The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) has proposed increasing the support for research and development (R&D) costs to over 50% for foreign direct investment (FDI) businesses, it said in policy feedback requested by the Ministry of Planning and Investment.

The VCCI said as Vietnam is to impose additional corporate income tax under the global minimum tax, it would be a good time to upgrade the country's investment support policies as well, saying they would provide both challenges and opportunities for the Southeast Asian country.

According to the VCCI, investment support policies offer flexibility, allowing the state to select the target, form and content of support to guide enterprises in investment activities, aimed at producing positive outcomes for society. Therefore, while designing investment support policies, it is essential to choose options that can realise more than one objective, those that support business enterprises and produce positive, long-term impacts on Vietnam's socio-economic development.

The chamber said the current 50% limit on R&D costs for FDI businesses should be reviewed and reconsidered. The VCCI advised that the support level could go up as high as 75%, given that the FDI would employ a sufficient number of local talents for the job. In addition to the spill-over effect on the economy, the new incentive would help encourage closer collaboration among businesses and research institutions, enhancing their capabilities and contributing to the scientific and technological development of the country.

In addition, the chamber recommended adding criteria concerning the nationality of directly employed researchers to promote the recruitment of Vietnamese researchers and scientists to conduct R&D activities.

Regarding support for fixed asset investment costs, up to a 40% maximum, both movable and immovable assets must be made available to high-tech sector R&D for at least three years.

Meanwhile, the chamber suggested a more detailed classification of support levels based on asset types with a clear preference for immovable assets.

"Such policies help incentivise businesses to make and spend in Vietnam, instead of moving production elsewhere," said the chamber in a statement. - VNA

### **Vietnam: Large livestock businesses are likely to benefit from new regulations**

Section: Business News - Large livestock enterprises are expected to benefit greatly when the regulation on locations not permitted to run livestock farms takes effect from 2025.

But it's feared the same regulation will cause problems for small households running pig farms.

The Law on Livestock that was effective from 2020 has an article on prohibiting to conduct livestock production in areas not allowed for livestock production in cities, towns and living quarters; except raising ornamental animals and raising animals in the laboratory without polluting the environment.

According to the law, that regulation will come into effect from January 1, 2025 with localities given five years to relocate unsuitable livestock facilities.

Tens of thousands of livestock facilities nationwide will have to move out of residential areas or cease operations. This is considered a great change of the livestock sector.

According to analysts, the new regulation will force small livestock farms to leave, making way for large-scale facilities. This is also an inevitable trend for the livestock industry to be standardised.

According to the January 2024 report released by Agribank Securities Joint Stock Company (Agriseco), many livestock households will have to stop their production. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has a draft to support those livestock households in the relocation of their farms. But, up to now it has not been approved.

With this change, large listed enterprises of the livestock industry have actively invested in expansion to increase capacity.

Notably, Dabaco Vietnam Group Joint Stock Company (stock code: DBC) and BaF Vietnam Agriculture Joint Stock Company (stock code: BAF) have invested in a series of new livestock farms to increase capacity.

Dabaco has invested in increasing capacity with a series of large-scale livestock farm projects. They include a livestock project with capacity of 5,600 sows and 77,400 commercial pigs in Thanh Hoa, and Dabaco Phu Tho pig breed project's Phase 3 with a capacity of 4,800 sows and more than 70,000 commercial pigs. The total capacity of the two projects increases by nearly 25 per cent.

The large businesses also have an advantage of having food supply chain from farm to table, being less affected by diseases than the supply from livestock households, thanks to ensuring hygiene and safety in production.

In addition, the large businesses will not sell off due to having the disease, reducing price fluctuations in the market.

According to experts, to have stable development in the livestock industry, localities need to actively implement the Livestock Law and livestock development strategies. They need to focus on developing a market-oriented livestock industry, promoting the strengths of each region and each key livestock to improve production efficiency.

They should also promote a high-tech livestock industry, develop key products associated with brand construction and development, and continuously expand livestock production applying VietGAP standards.

In the Livestock Development Strategy until 2030, Vietnam strives to have a total pig herd of 30 million, produce about 6 million tonnes of meat (pork accounting for 60%), and export 15-20% of pork output total.

In 2024, the livestock industry aims to increase production value by about 4-5% compared to 2023, and the proportion of livestock in the overall agricultural production is estimated to reach 28-30%. - VNA

### **Vietnam: Carriers asked to develop fleet operation plan to meet summer travel demand**

Section: General News - The Ministry of Transport has asked carriers to develop aircraft fleet operation plans to meet the rising travel demand for the upcoming national holidays and summer peak.

In a document sent to the Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam (CAAV), the ministry said that the restructuring of some airlines' fleet and flight networks, coupled with the recall of PW1100 engines by Pratt & Whitney for repair, have affected the load on both international and domestic flight routes, causing difficulties to passengers in terms of prices and schedules.

Statistics showed that the aircraft fleet in operation in Vietnam has been reduced by 25%, from 223 in 2023 to 173 in the first quarter of this year.

The request is raised in the context that the upcoming national holidays of South Vietnam Liberation Day on April 30 and Labour Day on May 1, and summer holidays, will push up air travel demand.

Accordingly, airlines must develop aircraft fleet operation plans to meet the demand as well as raise solutions to reduce flight cancellations or delays and improve service quality.

The ministry asked the Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam to enhance supervision over the air transportation services, ticket listings and sales to prevent illegal increases in air tickets. Any violations must be promptly handled.

In addition, flight operation plans and adjustments must be made public so that passengers can be active with their travel plans.

Pratt & Whitney's recall of its PW1100 engines affects several Airbus A321 NEO operated by Vietnam Airlines and Vietjet, meaning that these planes will be grounded in 2024 and 2025.

According to Vietnam Airlines' General Director Le Hong Ha, the shortage of aircrafts caused by engine repair and maintenance poses significant difficulties to airlines in 2024.

The problem is that it takes up to 250-300 days for maintenance of an engine, compared to the previous average maintenance time of 100-120 days due to the disruption in supply chains.

Vietnam Airlines currently operates around 60 A321, 12 of which must be grounded for the engine maintenance.

Other airlines are struggling with restructuring.

Starting from March 18, Pacific Airlines (part of the Vietnam Airlines Group) suspends flight operations to restructure its fleet and flight network in an effort to ensure operational efficiency. After returning the aircrafts to clear debt, the airline will not operate any aircraft but rent from Vietnam Airlines.

Bamboo Airways is also undergoing a major restructuring. It has been shutting down all international flight routes and low-performing domestic routes since the end of last year, including routes from Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi to Con Dao starting from April.

Bamboo reached an agreement to terminate a lease contract on three Embraer E190 jets, narrow-body aircraft accommodating up to 114 passengers, by the end of March. The aircraft fleet of Bamboo will be reduced from the peak of 30 to only 8 from April 2024.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam said that the reduction in the number of aircraft in operation would affect the air transport load this year.

The authority asked air carriers to have plans to make up for the shortage of jets, especially in peak periods such as summer holidays.

Airlines must announce adjustments of flight schedules daily and keep passengers updated. - VNA

### **Vietnam: Hanoi faces difficulties in developing organic agriculture**

Section: General News - Although several organic agriculture models have been developed in Hanoi, generating positive results, the city still faces some obstacles in expanding the models to large-scale commercial production.

The city has over 197,000 ha of agricultural land but organic farming has just been practiced on about 2,000 ha of crops and over 10 ha of aquacultural areas.

Vu Thi Huong, director of the Hanoi Agriculture Promotion Centre said that the economic efficiency of organic agricultural production models is usually 10- 20% higher than conventional production.

By participating in the models, farmers have their knowledge and skills improved. They also change the way of thinking and working to better meet consumers' demand, she said, noting that qualified organic products can enter supermarkets, convenience stores, and collective kitchens more easily.

Talking about the difficulties that organic agriculture is facing, Trinh Thi Nguyet, director of Dong Phu Organic Agriculture Cooperative in Hanoi's suburban district of Chuong My said that the costs of organic agriculture production remain high, making organic products less competitive than conventional ones.



Moreover, organic products don't look good or yet have differences to attract consumers, which results in instable consumption.

General Director of Bao Minh Agricultural Processing and Trade Joint Stock Company Bui Thi Hanh Hieu said that to overcome difficulties and expand organic agricultural areas, farmers need support in accessing scientific and technological applications and meeting organic production standards.

Authorities also need to pay more attention to building brands for local organic products and helping farmers connect with businesses and boost trade promotion.

In efforts to limit the negative impacts of agricultural production on the environment, Hanoi has been implementing a project on organic agriculture development in the 2021-2025 period, under which organic agriculture will be combined with eco-tourism and hi-tech organic production.

Deputy Director of the city's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Nguyen Manh Phuong said that to promote organic agriculture, localities need to strengthen communications to raise public awareness of organic products, particularly among producers, businesses and consumers.

Meanwhile, localities need to focus on developing concentrated organic agricultural production areas and key products, creating favourable conditions to attract investors to organic agricultural models in closed chains from production, processing to distribution. - VNA

### **Vietnam: Thai Binh boosts investment, trade cooperation with Germany**

Section: Business News - A delegation from the northern province of Thai Binh, led by Deputy Secretary of the provincial Party Committee Nguyen Khac Than, visited several localities and

business organisations in Germany from March 25 to 27, in a bid to enhance trade cooperation with and attract direct investment from the European nation.

While in Germany, the delegation held a working session with the authorities of Hanover, the capital and largest city of Lower Saxony state.

Speaking at the event, Than, who is also Chairman of the Thai Binh People's Committee, expressed his wish to promote cooperation between the province and Hanover in the coming time.

Thai Binh also seeks to attract German investment in such fields as healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and labour cooperation, he noted, adding that the province plans to establish the first biopharmaceutical industrial park in Vietnam.

Than and Mayor of Hanover Thomas Hermann also witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding on cooperation between the provincial Department of Planning and Investment and Hannoverimpuls GmbH – the economic development agency of the city and Hanover region.

Accordingly, both sides agreed to collaborate in supporting companies from the Hanover region to expand business activities in Thai Binh, and vice versa. They also concurred to cooperate in exchanging information and business delegations, organising and participating in conferences and seminars, providing consulting services on the current situation and prospects of industries, and supporting the search for partners in marketing, science, and technology.

The delegation then worked with the Chamber of Commerce Hannover to introduce the province and its investment opportunities.

They also organised a forum for investment and business connection between Thai Binh and Lower Saxony, attended by about 30 German companies. - VNA

## Vietnam: VinFast introduces comprehensive electric vehicle lineup at Bangkok show

Section: Business News - At the Bangkok International Motor Show (BIMS) 2024, VinFast Auto has introduced a diverse range of green mobility solutions to Southeast Asia's leading auto market, including electric scooters, cars and electric pickup truck concept - VF Wild.

The Vietnamese auto maker has also introduced its industry-leading after-sales policy, reaffirming its ambitious determination to expand in Thailand.

Vu Dang Yen Hang, General Director of VinFast Thailand, said the modern and intelligent, green mobility solutions VinFast has brought to BIMS 2024 include the mini-SUV VF 3; the VF 5, VF e34, VF 6, VF 7, VF 8, and VF 9, spanning from A-SUV to E-SUV segments.

The VF Wild, an electric pickup truck concept that has garnered global attention upon its debut at CES 2024, is also on display.

Among these vehicles, the VF 5, VF e34, VF 6, VF 7, VF 8, and VF 9 are all right-hand drive (RHD) versions, tailored for the Thai market. Additionally, VinFast displays its entire range of electric scooters, from entry-level to premium options, including Evo200 and Evo200 Lite, Feliz S, Klara S, Vento S, and Theon S.

By introducing a green mobility ecosystem of high-quality EVs with modern design and innovative technology to the leading electric vehicle market in the region, VinFast strongly affirms its global manufacturing capability and ability to fully cater to the diverse demand for sustainable mobility.

To make green mobility more accessible to Thai customers, VinFast also has introduced its unparalleled after-sales policy. Specifically, VinFast's electric vehicles will be covered by a 7-10 year or 160,000-200,000 km warranty (whichever comes first), and an 8-10 year warranty with unlimited miles for the battery.

Hang asserted that with outstanding after-sales service, VinFast will bring exciting electrified experiences, committing to accompany Thai consumers in the green transport revolution.

Addressing the launching ceremony on March 26, Temmy Wiradjaja, a representative of VinFast's distribution network in Asia, stated that VinFast has signed letters of intent with 15 dealerships across Thailand, demonstrating the company's dedication to providing comprehensive sales and service support to Thai consumers, ensuring a smooth and convenient customer experience.

He also mentioned that the newly established global charging station development company V-Green of VinFast, will serve as a partner in expanding VinFast's charging network worldwide, including Thailand.

Expressing her pleasure at the presence of another Vietnamese brand in Thailand, Charge d'Affaires of the Vietnamese Embassy in Thailand Bui Thi Hue stated that the embassy will always act as a bridge to connect and accompany domestic businesses in general and VinFast in particular, to bring more Vietnamese products to the Thai and international markets.

As scheduled, VinFast will expand its operations to at least 50 countries worldwide in 2024. In addition to key markets such as the US, Canada, and Europe, VinFast vigorously makes inroads into neighbouring countries in Asia such as India, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, as well as the Middle East and Africa. - VNA

#### **Vietnam/United Kingdom: Vietnam attends largest food and beverage expo in UK**

Section: Business News - Eight Vietnamese enterprises are showcasing their food and beverage products at the International Food and Drink Expo (IFE) 2024 in London, the UK from March 25 – 27.

Considered the most successful event in the UK for connecting businesses operating in the hospitality; restaurant services; and wholesale, retail, distribution, and import - export of food, the expo serves as a venue for enterprises to explore new business opportunities, directly meet potential customers, assess demand and consumer trends in the food industry in the UK and international markets.

Vietnam's booths at the expo attracted visitors with a variety of products including fresh fruit, frozen seafood, dried noodles, different kinds of coffee and tea, and products from coconut and ginger.

Hoang Le Hang, First Secretary at the Vietnamese Trade Office in the UK, said that the UK is a highly promising market for Vietnamese exporters, evidenced by the continuous growth in Vietnamese exports to the UK over the past three years, with projections indicating that this growth trend will persist. She stressed that Vietnamese firms should seize opportunities to take part in expos like IFE to affirm their capability to supply stable, high-quality, environmentally friendly products.

Marina Stewart, International Sales Manager at the IFE's organising board said for companies looking to penetrate the UK market, IFE is an essential destination as it acts as a crucial link between manufacturers and retailers, distributors, including major UK supermarket chains.

IFE is also the only trade fair where participating businesses cover the entire food supply chain, from raw material production and product manufacturing to packaging and food service, creating opportunities for firms to find partners in every sector of the food industry, she noted.

Stewart expressed her hope that in the future, Vietnamese products will have a stronger presence at IFE, given the increasing demand for Vietnamese goods in the UK, especially products sourced from plants, organic products, and healthy items.

Nguyen Thi Hanh Huong, CEO of Ben Tre Betrimex said that IFE is an opportunity for her company to access potential customers, including large retail chains in the UK.

Huynh Van Tan, General Director of Camimex - a seafood export company in the Mekong Delta province of Ca Mau said he hopes to receive additional support from the Vietnamese Trade Office in the UK in connecting Canimex in particular and firms in Ca Mau in general with distributors in the UK.

In January, Vietnam's export turnover to the UK reached nearly 780.5 million USD, up over 57% year-on-year. Most export items experienced stable growth, particularly agricultural products, with coffee increasing by 218.5%, cashew nuts (nearly 61%), pepper (over 60%), fruits and vegetables (over 56%), and seafood (over 26%).

As the largest annual international F&B trade fair in the UK, IFE 2024 attracted nearly 1,000 exhibitors from 102 countries worldwide, along with 27,000 domestic and international business visitors. - VNA

#### **Vietnam: SSC issues security warning following VNDirect system breach**

Section: Business News - The State Securities Commission (SSC) on late March 25 issued a security warning regarding the online securities trading system of VNDirect Securities Company (VNDirect).

The document, signed by Doan Thanh Tung, Director of the Information Technology Department of the State Securities Commission, stated that a securities company recently experienced an attack on its information technology system, resulting in the temporary suspension of its securities trading system.

To ensure the safe, stable and smooth operation of the securities market, the State Securities Commission has instructed the company to ensure the security and continuous operation of its

information technology systems and backup databases in accordance with Article 89, Clause 10 of the Securities Law 2019.

Additionally, the company is urged to proactively review and examine security measures for its information technology systems, particularly the securities trading system and internet-connected systems, to promptly address any security vulnerabilities.

The State Securities Commission emphasised the importance of conducting online transaction process checks, risk control procedures, system and data backup procedures, as well as implementing measures to mitigate potential security risks.

"In the event of any signs of compromised security, the company must take immediate and focused action to resolve and rectify the situation, promptly reporting to the State Securities Commission, stock exchanges and relevant authorities for coordination and resolution," the document stated.

The State Securities Commission further requested the company to diligently and expeditiously conduct a review, examination and provide a plan for remedial actions (if necessary) to the State Securities Commission and related entities before April 1.

As previously reported, on March 25, the VNDirect Securities Company submitted a report to the State Securities Commission regarding the incident.

According to the report, the incident occurred at 10am on March 24 at the DC Fornix Duy Tan. The system was attacked by an international hacker organisation, resulting in the temporary inability to log in to the entire trading platform.

The company confirmed that the incident caused disruption in trading activities but assured that it did not affect the status of customer securities accounts.

Assessing the risks, VNDirect stated that the incident impacted the market, customers, the trading system, and related systems. Customers were unable to log in for online transactions. However, the company affirmed that no actual damages have been incurred.

To address the incident, on the morning of March 25, VNDirect collaborated with partners FPT and Viettel to handle and rectify the situation, ensuring the safety of customer information and assets.

As of the morning of March 26, the trading system was still not reconnected.

On the afternoon of March 25, the HCM Stock Exchange (HOSE) temporarily suspended VNDirect's trading connection with HOSE until the company fully resolves the incident.

Similar incidents also affected Post and Telecommunication Joint Stock Insurance Corporation (PTI), which is related to VNDirect. PTI announced on their official website that their system was attacked starting from 10am on March 24.

Additionally, I.P.A Securities Investment Fund Management Limited Company (IPAAM), also connected to VNDirect, experienced a similar issue of being unable to access their system.

Both PTI and IPAAM have significant shareholders, including VNDirect and authorised shareholders (accounting for 42.33%), as well as DB Insurance Company from the Republic of Korea (accounting for 37.32%).

IPAAM was established in 2008 and was wholly owned by VNDirect. However, as of December 2023, VNDirect completed the transfer of 100% of its capital contribution in IPAAM to the IPA Investment Group.

Similarly to VNDirect, as of the morning of March 26, the systems of PTI and IPAAM are still inaccessible. - VNA

**Vietnam-Cuba: Cuba-Vietnam ties – symbol of solidarity: Cuban NA President**



Section: General News - The close-knit relationship between Cuba and Vietnam, founded by President Ho Chi Minh and Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro and nurtured by the two countries' generations of leaders and people, is a symbol of the era and of solidarity, said President of the National Assembly of People's Power of Cuba Esteban Lazo Hernández.

During a reception in Havana on March 26 for the new Vietnamese Ambassador to Cuba, Le Quang Long, Hernández committed all possible support for the diplomat to fulfill tasks assigned by the Vietnamese Party and State.

He recounted significant milestones in the exceptionally rare relationship between the two countries, notably the Cuba visit by National Assembly Chairman Vuong Dinh Hue in April 2023 that coincided with the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Committee for Solidarity with South Vietnam of Cuba, now the Cuba-Vietnam Friendship Association; the 50th anniversary of leader Fidel Castro's first visit to Vietnam and the southern liberated zone, and the 63rd anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations (December 2).

According to him, Hue was the first foreign leader to visit Cuba after the country's general election, and to address the Cuban legislature following the election of important State positions in line with the Constitution. This unprecedented event demonstrates the importance that the Cuban NA attaches to the Vietnam-Cuba relationship, he said.

Long, for his part, affirmed that Vietnam will never forget the invaluable support provided by the fraternal Cuban people during difficult times.

He highlighted Vietnam's unwavering support for Cuba in its fight against the US blockade, its pursuit of socio-economic development and efforts to strengthen bilateral cooperation across various sectors.

Earlier, he submitted a copy of his credentials to Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Anayansi Rodríguez Camejo. - VNA

## **Vietnam: Australian official hails positive developments in Vietnam-Australia relations**

Section: General News - Vietnamese Ambassador to Australia Pham Hung Tam met with Senator Tim Ayres, Assistant Minister for Trade and Manufacturing of Australia, in Canberra on March 27, during which the Australian official spoke highly of positive developments in the relations between the two countries, especially the elevation of their relationship to comprehensive strategic partnership on the occasion of an official visit to Australia by Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh in March.

Ayres affirmed that the Australian Government's leadership and he personally hold positive views on the current situation and prospects of the Vietnam-Australia relationship. Therefore, they are interested in and support the further development of the relationship for the benefit of both countries, for peace, stability, and prosperity in the region.

He emphasised that there is still room for growth in the bilateral trade and investment relationship, and committed to continue to pay attention to further opening up the market for Vietnamese agricultural products. He also pledged continued support for Vietnam in supplying essential minerals and enhancing cooperation in climate change adaptation and energy transition towards the goal of achieving net-zero emissions.

The Vietnamese diplomat discussed with his host measures to further strengthen bilateral trade and investment relations, ensure sustainable supply chains, effectively implement trade agreements that both countries are members such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), ASEAN-

Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA), and hasten the launch of the Ministerial Dialogue on energy and minerals. - VNA

#### **Vietnam/Cambodia: Vietnam, Cambodia foster defence cooperation**

Section: General News - Deputy Minister of National Defence Sen. Lieut. Gen Hoang Xuan Chien received newly-appointed Cambodian Military Attaché in Vietnam Maj. Gen. Leang Sovannara in Hanoi on March 27.

Chien expressed his delight at the results of bilateral defence cooperation over the past time, particularly in delegation exchanges, human resources training, border management and protection, and seeking and repatriation of remains of Vietnamese volunteers and experts who sacrificed in Cambodia during the war.

He spoke highly of the collaboration among the Ministries of National Defence of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in successfully organising the first border defence friendship exchange programme in January 2023.

Chien expected that Leang Sovannara will closely coordinate with relevant units of the Vietnamese Ministry of National Defence to continue effectively implementing cooperation contents between the two sides, especially on the exchange of delegations, training of human resources, and overcoming mine consequences after the war, participation in UN peacekeeping operations, and support each other at multilateral forums.

He also expressed his belief that Leang Sovannara will promote achieved results of his predecessor and make new contributions to further develop defence cooperation between the two nations.

For his part, Leang Sovannara expressed his pleasure at the good results of Vietnam-Cambodia relations in general and bilateral defence cooperation in particular. He also affirmed that in his tenure, he will make efforts to contribute to the effective implementation of Vietnam-Cambodia defence cooperation contents. - VNA

### **Thailand/Vietnam: Thai scholar credits Dien Bien Phu Victory to sound leadership of CPV**

Section: General News - Thai scholar Songrit Pongern has attributed Vietnam's achievements, including the historic Dien Bien Phu victory, to the enduring qualities embodied in Ho Chi Minh's ideology and the sound leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

During a recent conversation with a Vietnam News Agency reporter in Bangkok, Songrit said the Dien Bien Phu victory had inspired and encouraged the fight for independence in colonised nations worldwide, with the model of solidarity displayed by Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia which ultimately led to their triumph over superpowers like France and the US.

He said the shared ideology and destiny provide a powerful force for solidarity among the three neighbouring countries, helping them overcome the hardships of the prolonged war for national independence. The solidarity among the three countries has continued to today, evident in their shared stance on the international political stage and within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including initiatives like the shared border economic zone.

Visiting Dien Bien Phu in 1989 when Vietnam marked the 35th anniversary of the Dien Bien Phu victory and again in 1995 when Vietnam joined ASEAN, Songrit expressed admiration for Vietnam's sustained economic growth, noting that since economic reform began in 1986, Vietnam's gross domestic product (GDP) has climbed to the third place in ASEAN.

He saw Vietnam's skilled workforce as a major asset to attract foreign investment and believed that the country holds significant potential in both export production and meeting domestic demand.

Ultimately, he said Vietnam's goal of becoming a developed, high-income nation by 2050 is achievable, stressing that Vietnam's progress will be even more robust if it develops in tandem with all the countries in ASEAN, thus fostering a community of shared prosperity in the region. - VNA

### **Vietnam: HCM City boost multifaceted cooperation with Venezuela**

Section: General News - A delegation of Ho Chi Minh City led by Standing Vice Secretary of the municipal Party Committee Nguyen Ho Hai paid a working visit to Venezuela to strengthen and tighten the traditional friendship between the two countries in many fields.

As part of a trip to Latin America from March 23 – 26, the visit marked the start of a series of activities in celebration of the 35th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Vietnam and Venezuela (1989 - 2024), and aimed to concretise cooperation agreements between the two parties and the two countries reached during the visit to Venezuela by Politburo member Phan Dinh Trac in November last year.

During their stay, the delegation met with Diosdado Cabello, First Vice President of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV); and had working sessions with PSUV Vice President in charge of foreign affairs Rander Peña, Foreign Minister Yvan Gil Pinto, Minister of Agricultural Production and Lands Castro Soteldo, and representatives of some ministries, sectors, and localities of Venezuela to promote cooperation in some areas.

During the meetings with Venezuelan officials, Hai highlighted the sound development of the Vietnam – Venezuela relations, saying that the relationship has been promoted in many fields,

especially in politics and diplomacy through the exchange of all-level delegations, and experience sharing on party-building work.

He said that there is ample room for HCM City and Venezuela to develop their relations, suggesting experience sharing in areas of mutual interest, such as agriculture, urban management, party-building, and personnel training.

Regarding trade cooperation, the HCM City official proposed to further connect and boost trade cooperation between businesses of the two sides, hoping that Venezuela will continue to create favourable conditions for Vietnamese goods, including HCM City's goods, to access the Venezuelan market.

HCM City looks forward to seeing more and more investors and products of Venezuela in the southern economic hub, Hai said.

Cabello emphasised that the visit of the HCM City delegation not only demonstrates mutual respect between the two ruling parties but also contributes to nurturing the good traditional relations between the two parties, the two governments, and their people.

He affirmed that the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) not only demonstrated skillful leadership through the struggle for national independence but also led the country to achieve many admirable achievements in socio-economic development, deserving to be an example to follow.

The two sides agreed on cooperative contents to gradually concretise agreements between the two countries, including enhancing experience sharing in party-building, promoting economic, cultural, and tourism cooperation between HCM City and Venezuelan localities in general, and Caracas capital city in particular.

Foreign Minister Yvan Gil Pinto said after the visit, the contents proposed by the two sides will be implemented immediately with specific actions. - VNA

## **Vietnam: Auditor General of Vietnam meets leaders of UN, other countries' SAIs**

Section: General News - Auditor General of the State Audit Office of Vietnam (SAV) Ngo Van Tuan has met with United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Li Junhua at the UN headquarters in New York.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of a global meeting on the engagement of supreme audit institutions (SAIs) in assessing national climate action on March 25 - 26.

Tuan said climate change is now one of the most discussed topics around the world. As an active and responsible member of the International Organisation of SAIs (INTOSAI) and the Governing Board of the Asian Organisation of SAIs (ASOSAI) in the 2015 - 2024 period and to implement the commitments under the Hanoi Declaration on environmental auditing for sustainable development, the SAV identified environmental auditing as one of its focuses to enhance both the quality and quantity of audits.

Giving a brief introduction of the SAV's activities and its engagement in international cooperation in environmental, climate change, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) auditing, he noted that the SAV initiated and chaired an audit on the management of water resources in the Mekong River Basin in 2021 which also involved the SAIs of Thailand and Myanmar.

The SAV has also actively taken part in training courses, meetings, and webinars on environmental and SDGs auditing held by other countries' SAIs, partners, and organisations in the region and the world, he added.

The Auditor General proposed the UN Under-Secretary-General promote the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)'s assistance and sharing of auditing information, research,

and publications on environmental and social affairs so that the SAV can use them as sources of reference.

UNDESA and the SAV can also develop cooperative ties through multilateral cooperation forums on environmental, climate change, and SDGs auditing, Tuan suggested.

Under-Secretary-General Li highly valued the SAV's participation in the global meeting, during which it shared its experience in this field, thus reflecting the voice of developing countries and boosting the exchange of environmental auditing experience.

The UN official noted that he is impressed with the SAV's unceasing efforts to help with environmental protection and climate change adaptation. He also voiced the readiness to assist the SAV in capacity building, information technology application, and big data use.

On the sidelines of the global meeting, Tuan also met with and invited Bruno Dantas, President of the Brazilian Federal Court of Accounts and Chair of INTOSAI, to attend a ceremony marking the 30th founding anniversary of Vietnam's audit sector. The Brazilian side said it will send senior officials to the event.

The Auditor General of Vietnam also had separate meetings with the auditors general of India and Turkey to promote bilateral cooperation and seek support from the two countries' SAIs for the SAV's candidacy for membership of the ASOSAI Audit Committee for the 2024 - 2027 tenure.

The SAIs of India and Turkey showed their support for the SAV's candidacy. The Auditor General of Turkey also voiced the hope to visit the SAV in 2025. - VNA

**Vietnam: Deputy PM hosts GFANZ Vice Chairwoman**



Section: General News - Deputy Prime Minister Tran Hong Ha hosted a reception on March 27 for Mary L Schapiro, vice chairwoman of the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ).

Vietnam is facing difficulties in establishing mechanisms and policies for green transition, the Deputy PM said, noting that many investors have expressed interest in renewable energy projects but have yet to solve technology-related challenges concerning ensuring the balance and stability of the national power grid, producing and using green hydrogen and ammonia, energy storage solutions and electricity export.

Vietnam aims to address legal obstacles in the near future while simultaneously piloting offshore wind and solar power projects with energy storage solutions, and flexible power supply, he said.

The Deputy PM emphasised that Vietnam has built some energy transition projects such as enhancing capacity of hydropower plants in combination with solar and wind power, developing biomass electricity, transitioning to green transportation, reducing methane emissions on over 1 million hectares of rice fields and developing 5,000 MW of rooftop solar power, but financial support is required to carry them out soon.

Vietnam hopes to receive technical assistance and expertise in devising and perfecting institutions, transferring technology and assessing the feasibility of energy centres and offshore wind power, the official said.

He suggested that GFANZ establish clear financial mechanisms regarding the responsibilities of stakeholders, including Government, financial institutions and businesses, the specificity of funding sources for the renewable energy sector, and promptly materialise them through projects.

The Deputy PM also said that the alliance should have specific commitments relating to finance and technology transfer from G7 countries and international partners within the Joint Energy Transition Partnership (JETP).

Schapiro, for her part, said GFANZ will allocate financial resources for research, innovation, and technology transfer in the renewable energy sector.

She said she expects to receive clear requests and proposals from Vietnam's ministries and sectors regarding mechanisms for mobilising funds in the international market for enterprises investing in smart grid development, renewable energy, fossil energy transition, green fuel production from solar and offshore wind power. - VNA

#### **Vietnam: FM addresses seminar on Vietnam-US relations in Washington D.C.**

Section: General News - Minister of Foreign Affairs Bui Thanh Son attended and delivered a speech at a seminar on Vietnam-US relations at Brookings Institute in Washington D.C. on March 26, within the framework of his official visit to the US to co-chair the first foreign ministerial-level dialogue between the two countries.

In his speech, Son said that amidst latent traditional and non-traditional security challenges in the region, Vietnam consistently implements its foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, peace, friendship, cooperation and development, multilateralisation and diversification of foreign relations, comprehensive and extensive international integration, and being a friend, a trusted partner and an active and responsible member of the international community.

In particular, the minister emphasised that Vietnam continues its bamboo diplomacy school of "solid roots, strong trunks, flexible branches" to respond to challenges and maintain a favourable diplomatic environment for national development, which is clearly reflected in the fact that to date, Vietnam has established a strategic partnership and comprehensive strategic partnership with all five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

He said to achieve its set development targets, in addition to its efforts, activeness and self-reliance, Vietnam needs a peaceful, stable external environment and active cooperation and support from important partners, including the US. In that spirit, the minister affirmed that Vietnam always considers the US as one of its most important partners.

To further deepen the Vietnam – US comprehensive strategic partnership, Son said that the two countries need to increase the exchange of high-level and all-level delegations; promote political trust; continue focusing on economic - trade - investment cooperation; boost collaboration in science, technology and innovation, including the semiconductor ecosystem; consolidate people-to-people exchanges, educational and cultural cooperation; and coordinate more closely at multilateral forums and cooperation mechanisms such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the United Nations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, and the Mekong - US partnership.

Vietnam will also continue to improve the business environment, and create favourable conditions for foreign enterprises to invest and do business in the country, he emphasised.

Receiving several advisors and assistants of the US Congress, Minister Son expressed his thanks to parliamentarians of both parties, notably Senators John McCain, John Kerry and Patrick Leahy, who always support Vietnam and Vietnam - US relations. He proposed the US Congress to maintain support for bilateral cooperation in various fields, including overcoming the consequences of war, economics, trade, education and training, science, technology, security, defence, and people-to-people exchanges.

The advisors and assistants appreciated Vietnam's efforts to create a favourable environment for US businesses to invest in the country, implement international commitments to respond to climate change, especially in the Mekong Delta region, and ensure human rights.

They affirmed the support of the two political parties in the US Congress for bilateral relations as well as continued cooperation with Vietnam to contribute to further develop the bilateral ties in

various fields in the spirit of the new relationship framework as well as in regional and international issues.

On this occasion, the Vietnamese foreign minister also received Jeffrey Goss, Associate Vice Provost/SE Asia at the Arizona State University, and had an online meeting with NVIDIA Vice President Keith Strier. - VNA

### **ASEAN-Republic of Korea (South Korea): RoK, Southeast Asian countries conduct joint research on wastewater treatment**

Section: General News - Scientists from Southeast Asian countries and the Republic of Korea (RoK) have gathered in Bangkok, Thailand, for a five-day symposium starting on March 25 with the theme of "International joint research symposium on water and wastewater treatment using E-beam technology".

The symposium drew the participation of around 30 international experts from the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI), the Indonesian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (BRIN), the Thai Atomic Energy Research Institute (TINT) and the Vietnam Atomic Energy Research Institute (VAEI).

At the event, each country shared the current state of environmental issues and research related to wastewater and wastewater treatment, confirmed goals to be achieved through future joint research, and established plans.

Earlier, Indonesia invited Dr. Yoo Seungho's research group from the KAERI to participate in a dyeing wastewater treatment solution in 2023 and give advice on dyeing wastewater treatment

technology using electron beam technology. The institute is making efforts to meet the requirements for radiation technology transfer.

Vietnam and Thailand, whose industries grow steadily, are also working hard to secure the technology to effectively treat non-degradable sewage and wastewater. Researchers from the two countries expressed their interest in water treatment technology using mobile electron accelerators and hoped to receive technology transfer and conduct joint research with the RoK.

In 2011, KAERI developed an electron beam-based radiation fusion technology that simultaneously treats non-degradable organic pollutants and pathogenic microorganisms remaining in wastewater treatment effluents. In recognition of its technological excellence and economic feasibility, it obtained certification and verification of the new technology by the Ministry of Environment in 2012.

KAERI Director Joo Han-gyu said that unlike existing international academic conferences that merely share information and research results, this symposium was significant in realising research results in social and political terms through international joint research.

The institute will continue to promote joint research to export technology to Southeast Asia and train human resources in this regard, he added. - VNA

#### **Indonesia: Indonesia works to spur use of electric buses**

Section: Business News - The Indonesian Ministry of Finance recently has announced tax incentives of 5% and 10% for electric buses with a localisation rate of 20% and at least 40%, respectively, in a bid to spur the use of public transport using electric motors in the country.

Developing electric buses is part of the solutions to realise Indonesia's commitment related to smart and environmentally friendly cities.

In Jakarta, spurring electric vehicle (EV) production and sales also aims to contribute to improving air quality and reducing pollution.

However, the development of electric bus technology in the Southeast Asian nation is not as fast as other EVs such as cars and motorbikes.

Beni Sukadis, Coordinator of the Indonesian Institute for Strategic and Defence Studies, said Indonesia aims to promote clean energy to fulfill its commitment to neutralise emissions before 2060.

Therefore, developing electric buses is an inevitable trend that Jakarta pursues, he said, adding that it is making efforts to build a green public transport system, towards a smart and environmentally friendly city in the future.

Municipally-owned land transportation company Transportasi Jakarta (TransJakarta) is planning to gradually increase the number of electric buses to about 500 large and medium-sized vehicles in 2024 and 2025. The plan aims to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality in Jakarta, helping to increase the ratio of public transport to 60% and electrifying 100% of TransJakarta's buses before 2030. - VNA

**Malaysia: Malaysia aims to develop semiconductor enterprises industry**

Section: Business News - Malaysian Deputy Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) Liew Chin Tong said the government is committed to developing the semiconductor industry which is now a strategic income source for the country.

Speaking at the parliament on March 26, the deputy minister said trade and technology competition between China and the US in the semiconductor industry has benefited Malaysia.

According to Liew, this competition has led multinational semiconductor companies to make strategic decisions to build a second supply chain and not to focus solely on one country to ensure a secure and resilient supply chain or “derisking”.

He noted that many companies have selected Malaysia as a new location for their production facilities and the country has an advantage over other nations with a mature semiconductor industry ecosystem since the 1970s, especially the E&E cluster in Penang and Kulim, Kedah.

He acknowledged that such investments are expected to continue to position Malaysia as one of the key investment destinations in advancing the global chip industry, and the country should seize this golden opportunity to expand the country’s semiconductor industry and become a high-value-added semiconductor producer with activities along the value chain, such as integrated circuit (IC) design, wafer fabrication, assembly and testing as well as technical marketing.

Liew emphasised that the government aims to ensure that investments in Malaysia will create value chains that create high-paying skilled jobs, adding that Malaysia wants to create a supply and value chain that encompasses local companies. The country aims to create 100 technology companies with an annual revenue of 1 billion MYR (213 million USD) before 2030.

Currently, Malaysia only has nine local technology companies that can generate 1 billion MYR a year. Another 10 companies generate between 100 million MYR and 1 billion MYR a year, he said. -

VNA

## Indonesia: Indonesia seeks more evidence that Javan tiger not yet extinct

Section: General News - With camera traps and extensive DNA sweeps, Indonesian conservationists are hoping to find more evidence that the Javan tiger, a species declared extinct, actually still exists in the wild, the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry announced on March 26.

In a DNA study released last week, scientists at the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) of Indonesia said a strand of tiger hair sighted in a West Java village in 2019 matched some characteristics of the tiger, which is native to the Southeast Asian nation.

Satyawan Pudyatmoko, the ministry official who oversees conservation, said the research has sparked speculation that the Javan tiger is still in the wild, adding that the ministry is making efforts to verify that.

Measures include setting camera traps around the area and seeking advice from genetics experts, he said.

Previously, the Javan and Bali tigers have been declared extinct by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the global authority on wildlife extinction risk. Only the Sumatran tiger remains, and it is considered endangered. Researchers have cited poaching and deforestation are among the causes driving the extinction of these species of tiger.

However, in 2019, villagers spotted what they thought was a Javan tiger and collected its hair from a fence and found scratch marks. - VNA



Vietnam: Vietnam, US should focus on increasing political trust, sci-tech cooperation: Foreign minister

Section: General News - Minister of Foreign Affairs Bùi Thanh Sơn attended and delivered a speech at a seminar on Vietnam-United States relations at Brookings Institute in Washington D.C. on March 26, within the framework of his official visit to the US to co-chair the first foreign ministerial-level dialogue between the two countries.

In his speech, Minister Sơn said that amidst latent traditional and non-traditional security challenges in the region, Vietnam consistently implements its foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, peace, friendship, cooperation and development, multilateralisation and diversification of foreign relations, comprehensive and extensive international integration, and being a friend, a trusted partner and an active and responsible member of the international community.

In particular, the diplomat emphasised that Vietnam continues its bamboo diplomacy school of "solid roots, strong trunks, flexible branches" to respond to challenges and maintain a favourable diplomatic environment for national development, which is clearly reflected in the fact that to date, Vietnam has established a strategic partnership and comprehensive strategic partnership with all five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

He said to achieve its set development targets, in addition to its efforts, activeness and self-reliance, Vietnam needs a peaceful, stable external environment and active cooperation and support from important partners, including the US. In that spirit, the minister affirmed that Vietnam always considers the US as one of its most important partners.

To further deepen the Vietnam-US comprehensive strategic partnership, Minister Sơn said that the two countries need to increase the exchange of high-level and all-level delegations; promote political trust; continue focusing on economic - trade - investment cooperation; boost collaboration in science, technology and innovation, including the semiconductor ecosystem; consolidate

people-to-people exchanges, educational and cultural cooperation; and coordinate more closely at multilateral forums and cooperation mechanisms such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the United Nations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, and the Mekong - US partnership.

Vietnam will also continue to improve the business environment, and create favourable conditions for foreign enterprises to invest and do business in the country, he emphasised.

Receiving several advisors and assistants of the US Congress, Minister SŌn expressed his thanks to parliamentarians of both parties, notably Senators John McCain, John Kerry and Patrick Leahy, who always support Vietnam and Vietnam-US relations. He proposed the US Congress to maintain support for bilateral cooperation in various fields, including overcoming the consequences of war, economics, trade, education and training, science, technology, security, defence, and people-to-people exchanges.

The advisors and assistants appreciated Vietnam's efforts to create a favourable environment for US businesses to invest in the country, implement international commitments to respond to climate change, especially in the Mekong Delta region, and ensure human rights.

They affirmed the support of the two political parties in the US Congress for bilateral relations as well as continued cooperation with Vietnam to contribute to further develop the bilateral ties in various fields in the spirit of the new relationship framework as well as in regional and international issues.

On this occasion, the Vietnamese foreign minister also received Jeffrey Goss, Associate Vice Provost/SE Asia at the Arizona State University, and had an online meeting with NVIDIA Vice President Keith Strier.

NVIDIA Vice President expressed strong admiration for Vietnam's determination in developing high technology, AI, and semiconductors. Alongside commitments from CEO Jensen Huang, both

parties will actively collaborate to transform Vietnam into "NVIDIA's second home," particularly in technology and high-quality workforce training.

Keith Strier also affirmed that NVIDIA will push for the prompt implementation of specific collaboration plans with Vietnam. - VNS

### **Vietnam: Deputy PM hosts JICA Executive Senior Vice President**

Section: General News - Deputy Prime Minister **Trần Lưu Quang** received Executive Senior Vice President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Yamada Junichi in Hanoi on Tuesday.

Welcoming the JICA official to Vietnam to attend the launch of the first phase of the Vietnam-Japan joint initiative in the new era, Deputy PM Quang briefed the guest on Vietnam's national budget management mechanisms as well as the country's recent efforts to remove difficulties and obstacles to speed up the progress of projects using Japanese ODA.

For his part, Yamada said that recently, Japan's ODA disbursement rate has increased significantly, with the amount of slow disbursement at about 1.8 billion JPY (11.86 million USD), much lower than that in previous years thanks to the drastic direction of the Vietnamese Government.

The JICA Executive Senior Vice President affirmed that the agency is ready to discuss with Vietnam about the implementation of 11 infrastructure development projects in localities, including the consideration of the possibility for these projects to be bid domestically instead of internationally to shorten investment preparation time.

He suggested that Vietnam build a separate legal framework for additional loans outside the medium-term budget plan from JICA as well as other donors such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

Lauding JICA's recommendations, Deputy PM Quang proposed that the two sides work together on the suitable interest rates and each specific project.

The two sides concurred to coordinate closely to remove difficulties and obstacles facing each project, including those related to tax rates for Japanese contractors implementing ODA projects, thus speeding up the progress of delayed projects, especially the Chợ Rẫy Hospital No.2 and the Vietnam-Japan University.

Japan is currently Vietnam's largest ODA provider. Since 1992, Japan has provided Vietnam with over 2,700 billion JPY in ODA loans, along with nearly 100 billion JPY in non-refundable aid and nearly 180 billion JPY in technical assistance. Japan's ODA accounts for over 30 per cent of bilateral development aid that Vietnam has received. In 2023, Japan's total ODA capital for Vietnam reached more than 100 billion JPY, the highest level since 2017. - VNS

#### **Vietnam: Vietnam calls for international co-operation in drug crime prevention**

Section: General News - Vietnam has been fighting against the increasing drug supply from the 'Golden Triangle' and global drug trafficking activities in the Asia-Pacific, setting up a tough job for the country to curb drug crime, trans-national drug criminals and drug trafficking rings.

Head of the Counter Narcotics Police Department Lieutenant General Nguyễn Văn Việt spoke at the opening ceremony of the Asia Pacific International Drug Enforcement Conference in Đà Nẵng City.

Viên said Vietnam placed top priority on preventing drug trafficking and drug use by setting up early warnings and barriers including education, post drug addiction programmes, as well as strict control and surveillance on illegal drug trafficking.

“Vietnam strongly emphasised crucial attacks on drug crime and drug-related activities. We have been pursuing a target of building a free-drug zone of trans-national drug trafficking and zero-drug user community,” Viên said.

“The country has been changing in education reform and effective communications to protect young generations from drug addiction at families, schools, working places and the public,” he said.

“The Counter Narcotics Police Department of Vietnam positively boosted co-operation with ASEAN countries, trans-border crossing nations, and members of the Greater Mekong Sub-region, extending information sharing networks with countries members in Asia Pacific.”

He warned that mass drug transport from the ‘Golden Triangle’ into Vietnam would then be trafficked to other countries in the region.

“I think all members would agree with our view on the importance of early preventive solutions on drug trafficking and trade. We have to boost co-operation and sharing with responsibility in blocking drug transport and the negative impacts of drugs on the society.”

The Lieutenant General also highly appreciated the experience and technology applications in drug prevention that the US and developed countries in the region have effectively used.

He hoped the US and partners would help Vietnam and other countries improve their capacity with training, equipment support and experience sharing.

He said it’s the second time Vietnam and the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has jointly organised the conference, strongly confirmed their determination in the fight against drugs and building a free-drug community.

The US Consul General in HCM City, Susan Burns, stressed that co-operation is a key for all member countries in prevention of drug trafficking, drug crime organisations and production of illicit chemicals.

She said drug crime prevention is not a mission of one country, but requires positive co-operation among members.

Susan hoped the conference would offer opportunities for member countries sharing information and methods of drug production among drug crime organisations and solutions in dealing with trans-border crime organisations.

John P Scott, head of DEA's Asia Pacific Division, shared that member countries in the region should strengthen co-operation in training and joint-campaign implementation with an aim of building safe communities and dealing with drug-related matters.

According to a report from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the number of drug users between the age of 15 and 64 increased from 240 million in 2011 to 296 million in 2023, making up 5.8 per cent of global population.

Vietnam has been seriously affected by drug-trafficking as it is located near the 'Golden Triangle' area – one of the main illicit opium-producing areas in Asia.

According the Counter Narcotics Police Department, the Public Security Ministry's drug-related crime investigation forces had seized 450kg of heroin, 4.9 tonnes of methamphetamine, or crystal meth, 809 kg of opium, 480kg of marijuana, 330kg of cocaine with 38,700 drug-related offenders in 11 months of 2023.

Drug-crime organisations sold drugs disguised in coffee and tea bags, luring school students and young people with easy use, a report from the department unveiled.

Drugs were also made in shape of electronic cigarettes or imported in bags of cement, the report showed.

“We also face difficulties from high-tech crimes with digital platforms, social network transactions and increasing illegal trade of heroin, amphetamine, ketamine and crystal methamphetamine,”

Lieutenant General Nguyễn Văn Việt said. - VNS

## Vietnam: Finnish Parliament Speaker wraps up Vietnam visit

Section: General News - Speaker of the Parliament of Finland Jussi Halla-aho and his entourage left Hanoi on March 26, concluding their three-day official visit to Vietnam at the invitation of National Assembly Chairman Vương Đình Huệ.

This is the first official visit of the Speaker outside Europe since he took office, demonstrating Vietnam's special position in Finland's foreign policy and the excellent friendly relations between the two legislatures. It was also a high-level exchange activity marking the 50th anniversary of Vietnam-Finland diplomatic ties (1973-2023).

During his stay, Halla-aho held talks with NA Chairman Hue and met with Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chính and permanent member of the Party Central Committee's Secretariat and head of the Party Central Committee's Organisation Commission Trương Thị Mai.

The two sides concurred on the need to explore new directions, approaches and impetus to further deepen bilateral relationship. They agreed to promote the exchange of delegations at all levels and across the Party, State and NA channels to enhance political trust while strengthening collaboration at multilateral forums in pursuit of stability, peace and sustainable development.

Within the framework of multilateral cooperation, they agreed to maintain contact, coordination and mutual support at global and regional parliamentary forums such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting (ASEP).

They vowed to enhance the monitoring of the effective implementation of international treaties and cooperation agreements signed between the Governments, ministries, agencies and localities of the two countries; as well as facilitate stronger business-to-business and locality-to-locality connections.

The two countries will fully tap the benefits from the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA), especially in areas of their demand and strengths such as hi-tech, green development, environment, agriculture, forestry and information technology.

On global and regional issues of shared concern, the two sides affirmed their readiness to cooperate bilaterally and at multilateral forums based on respect for international law and the United Nations Charter, for the sake of peace, stability and development in the region and the world, including the East Sea. - VNS

#### **Vietnam: PM chairs 2nd meeting of 14th National Party Congress's socio-economic subcommittee**

Section: General News - Politburo member, Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chính, head of the subcommittee for socio-economic affairs of the 14th National Party Congress, chaired its 2nd meeting in Hanoi on Tuesday to discuss a draft report on the evaluation of the five-year implementation of the socio-economic development strategy in the 2021-30 period, as well as orientations and tasks for socio-economic development for the 2026-30 period.

PM Chính acknowledged and spoke highly of the enthusiastic, intellectual, and responsible opinions of the subcommittee's members, and other delegates.



He requested the editorial team to carefully study and incorporate feedbacks, and urgently finalise the draft report to submit to the Prime Minister and the subcommittee's standing members for consideration before presenting it to the Political Bureau.

The PM said that the draft report has a logical structure, clearly reflecting the spirit of innovation, and highlighting key issues; fundamentally outlines new aspects in leadership, organisation, and implementation of the strategy; identifies causes and lessons; and basically forecasts the upcoming situation to propose orientations, tasks and solutions for the coming time.

He requested the editorial team to continue refining the draft report with contents that are practical, and easy to understand, remember, implement, monitor, and evaluate, saying that the evaluation needs to closely adhere to objectives and tasks outlined in the 13th National Party Congress's Resolution, and directions given by General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng.

The assessment must be objective, honest, and practical, clearly indicating difficulties, advantages, achievements, and shortcomings, both what has been accomplished and what has not, he stressed.

Additionally, the PM underlined the necessity to deeply analyse solutions regarding the three strategic breakthroughs; industrialisation, modernisation, and innovation of growth models; the formation and development of new economic models; the establishment of international financial hubs and free trade zones; and measures to ensure sustainable and harmonious development among economy, society, environment, national defence and security.

The Government leader asked the subcommittee to mobilise brainpower and resources of its members for the work, expressing his belief that the subcommittee will excellently complete the tasks entrusted by the Party Central Committee, contributing to the successful organisation of the 14th National Party Congress. - VNS

## Vietnam: Speaker of Finnish Parliament tours relic sites in Hanoi, wraps up Vietnam visit

Section: General News - Speaker of the Parliament of Finland Jussi Halla-aho on Tuesday visited the Temple of Literature, a special national relic, and Hoả Lò prison relic in Hanoi.

At the Temple of Literature, considered as Vietnam's first university, Halla-aho and his entourage were briefed on its history of formation and development, and contemplated ancient architectural structures there.

To mark his visit, the Speaker wrote in a golden guestbook and received a book about the temple from a leader of the Văn Miếu-Quốc Tử Giám Culture and Science Centre.

Constructed under the Lý Dynasty (1010-1225), the temple stands as one of Hanoi's most popular landmarks and a significant symbol of knowledge and education in Vietnam.

At the Hoả Lò prison relic, the Finnish leader delved into Vietnam's revolutionary past through valuable documents and artifacts, gaining an insight into the courage and unwavering spirit of Vietnamese revolutionaries.

Also on Tuesday, the Finnish delegation paid a working visit to Tân Thời Đại School in Hanoi's Hà Đông District, which is the first primary school in the capital city that has wholly applied the education method of Finland.

The Speaker and his entourage attended the inauguration ceremony of the consular office of the Finnish Embassy in Hanoi.

In the morning of the same day, the delegation attended a ceremony marking the completion of Thảng Long - Bắc Ninh waste-to-energy plant project in the northern province of Bắc Ninh.

He then toured the facility and learnt about its operations and waste treatment process which uses Finnish technology, hailing it as a testament to the successful bilateral cooperation in environmental protection, climate change mitigation, and the pursuit of a sustainable future.

Speaker of the Parliament of Finland Jussi Halla-aho and his entourage left Hanoi on March 26 night. - VNS

### **Vietnam/China: Vietnamese, Chinese front officials discuss ways to deepen ties**

Section: General News - Vice President of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee Hoàng Công Thũy hosted a reception in Hanoi on Tuesday for Vice Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Wu Xinbao, affirming the construction and development of Vietnam-China comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership as a top priority in Vietnam's foreign policy and long-term strategy.

Thũy expressed his belief that the Chinese people, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, with General Secretary and President of China Xi Jinping as its core, will continue to achieve even greater victories, building China into a prosperous, modern, civilised and democratic socialist country with an increasingly important position on the international stage.

He highlighted the growing bilateral economic, trade and investment ties, increased exchanges between Party and Government agencies in diplomacy and national defence, and favourable relationship between border localities of the two countries.

Wu, for his part, informed the host about his talks with the Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF) Committees of HCM City and Hanoi, and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral cooperation for the 2024-26 period. He said the delegation had also surveyed the business

environment in Vietnam as a number of Shanghai enterprises are keen on expanding cooperation with the world and Vietnam is a destination of particular interest to them.

At the talks with Chairwoman of the VFF Committee of Hanoi Nguyễn Lan Hương, Wu said the MoU will establish a long-term framework for collaboration between the two committees. He expected that Shanghai and Hanoi would continue fostering economic and trade collaboration, thereby strengthening exchanges and mutual understanding.

Hương hoped that both sides would engage in more activities to share experiences in fulfilling the political tasks of the two cities, contributing to further consolidating their friendly and cooperative ties.

In the morning of the same day, Vice Secretary of the Hanoi municipal Party Committee Nguyễn Văn Phong held a working session with the Chinese delegation, during which they shared experiences in the front affairs and city development, including building infrastructure and improving citizens' well-being. - VNS

#### **Vietnam/North Korea: Senior Party official receives DPRK guest**

Section: General News - Politburo member, permanent member of the Party Central Committee's Secretariat and head of the Party Central Committee's Organisation Commission Trương Thị Mai hosted a reception for visiting Director of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) Kim Song Nam in Hanoi on Tuesday.

The Vietnamese Party official warmly welcomed the DPRK delegation to visit Vietnam from March 25 to 28 in the context that the two sides are looking forward to commemorating the 75th founding anniversary of the diplomatic relations.

Mai congratulated the Party, government, and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on achievements they have made since the WPK's 8th Congress, expressing her belief that under the leadership of the Central Committee of the WPK, the country will achieve more successes in developing the economy and improving the people's lives.

She stressed that the Party, State, and people of Vietnam always attach importance to the traditional friendship and cooperation with their DPRK counterparts, and always remember and appreciate the support and solidarity of the DPRK for the national liberation and construction cause of Vietnam.

Highly valuing the results of the talks between the DPRK Party official and head of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) Central Committee's Commission for External Relations Lê Hoài Trung, Mai mentioned some orientations for cooperation between the two sides in the coming time, including to continue enhancing the advisory role of the Commission for External Relations and the International Department of the two Parties in promoting the relations between the two parties and two countries.

For his part, Kim expressed his pleasure to witness Vietnam's great socio-economic development achievements under the leadership of the CPV, with General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng at the helm.

He affirmed that the Party and government of the DPRK always value and aspire to further develop the traditional friendship with Vietnam, which was founded and nurtured by President Hồ Chí Minh and Chairman Kim Il Sung, and leaders of the two countries. - VNS

**Vietnam/Russia: Vietnamese Party chief holds phone talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin**

Section: General News - General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee Nguyễn Phú Trọng emphasised that Vietnam considers the comprehensive strategic partnership with Russia as one of the top priorities in the country's foreign policy.

He made this statement during high-level phone talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday at the Party headquarters in Hanoi.

General Secretary Trọng warmly congratulated President Putin on being re-elected as President of Russia for the 2024-2030 term with a record-high number of votes. This reflected the trust and support of the Russian people for President Putin in leading the country's development in the new era, he said.

He also conveyed deep condolences to President Putin, the Russian people, and the families of victims of the terrorist attack in Moscow on the evening of March 22, 2024.

The Vietnamese leader said Vietnam appreciated Russia's significant assistance during the Soviet era as well as today, for Vietnam and its people. He stressed that Vietnam viewed its comprehensive strategic partnership with Russia as a primary focus in its foreign policy.

President Putin expressed his gratitude for the congratulatory message from General Secretary Trọng and the timely condolences and sharing of the Party, State and people of Vietnam regarding the losses suffered by the Russian people in the terrorist attack.

Affirming that Vietnam is always a reliable friend and partner of Russia, President Putin expressed delight at the positive development of bilateral relations across all fields.

The two leaders agreed on several major directions and measures to promote bilateral cooperation in areas such as security-defence, economy-trade, culture and tourism.

General Secretary Trọng took the occasion to extend an invitation to President Putin to visit Vietnam in the near future, which the latter accepted with pleasure. - VNS

## Vietnam: Sustainable production towards green growth urgent

Section: General News - Vietnam is facing challenges from climate change, so transitioning to a sustainable production model towards green growth is an urgent requirement, experts said.

Speaking in the workshop "Sustainable production towards green growth" on Tuesday in HCM City, Director of Quang Trung Software Park **Trần Hữu Dũng** said that countries around the world and Vietnam are facing challenges of climate change and limited resources, and converting traditional production into a sustainable model is not only an option, but also an urgent request. This is necessary to protect the environment and create sustainable development.

Vietnam has participated in international conventions on global pollution control, climate change and environmental protection.

The Vietnamese Government is in the process of completing the legal framework and policies for green transformation.

Policies are introduced to target Vietnam's Net Zero goal by 2050 and ESG (environment, social, and governance) standards.

At the conference, the speakers recognised that sustainable development is increasingly becoming an overarching trend in the world. Digital economy, circular economy and green growth are development models chosen by many countries.

Science, technology and innovation are also increasingly becoming decisive factors for the competitiveness of each country. Speakers also introduced businesses to useful information about

sustainable development trends, sharing practical experiences on building and implementing green production models and sustainable economic development.

Nguyễn Thị Thanh Phượng, director of the City Institute of Environmental Industry, said that businesses aiming for green development need to combine circularity and digital economy for sustainable development.

In particular, the digital economy is understood as an economy that operates mainly based on digital technology, while the circular economy is a model in which design, production, and service activities set the goal of prolonging product life and eliminating negative environmental impact.

According to Thanh Phượng, digital transformation not only brings efficiency and flexibility in production management but also helps optimise resources and minimise waste.

At the same time, green transformation helps minimise the impact on the environment and creates a healthy living environment for the community.

Phí Anh Tuấn, chairman of the HCM City Computer Association (HCA), said that businesses are currently facing many challenges such as resources and technology when switching to green production.

Therefore, for sustainable production towards green growth, businesses need to implement control solutions to help increase efficiency in green production such as applying MES tools.

MES is a production operating system used in factories for the purposes of tracking, monitoring, and controlling production systems and storing complex data.

It also helps automate production lines, enhancing the efficiency of corporate governance.

At the same time, businesses need to focus on meeting the targets in the ESG standards as well as reducing carbon emissions from production activities.



From there, businesses can save operating costs, increase productivity efficiency and reduce regulatory and policy risks related to climate change.

In addition, to promote sustainable production towards green growth, State management agencies need to continue to promote awareness of green production.

In particular, the Government also needs to have policies to encourage and prioritise green production units, while perfecting policy mechanisms to support businesses in converting to green production and sustainable consumption. - VNS

#### **Vietnam: Hanoi struggles with advancing organic agriculture**

Section: General News - Despite the development of several organic agriculture models in Hanoi, which have shown promising outcomes, the city encounters challenges in scaling these models up to large-scale commercial production.

The city has over 197,000 ha of agricultural land but organic farming has just been practiced on about 2,000 ha of crops and over 10 ha of aquacultural areas.

**Vũ Thị Hương**, director of the Hanoi Agriculture Promotion Centre, said that the economic efficiency of organic agricultural production models is usually 10-20 per cent higher than conventional production.

By participating in the models, farmers have their knowledge and skills improved. They also change the way of thinking and working to better meet consumers' demand, she said, noting that qualified organic products can enter supermarkets, convenience stores, and collective kitchens more easily.

Talking about the difficulties that organic agriculture is facing, **Trịnh Thị Nguyệt**, director of **Đông Phú Organic Agriculture Cooperative** in Hanoi's suburban district of **Chương Mỹ** said that the costs of organic agriculture production remain high, making organic products less competitive than conventional ones.

Moreover, organic products don't look good or yet have differences to attract consumers, which results in instable consumption.

General Director of **Bảo Minh Agricultural Processing and Trade Joint Stock Company** **Bùi Thị Hạnh Hiếu** said that to overcome difficulties and expand organic agricultural areas, farmers need support in accessing scientific and technological applications and meeting organic production standards.

Authorities also need to pay more attention to building brands for local organic products and helping farmers connect with businesses and boost trade promotion.

In efforts to limit the negative impacts of agricultural production on the environment, Hanoi has been implementing a project on organic agriculture development in the 2021-25 period, under which organic agriculture will be combined with eco-tourism and hi-tech organic production.

Deputy Director of the city's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development **Nguyễn Mạnh Phương** said that to promote organic agriculture, localities need to strengthen communications to raise public awareness of organic products, particularly among producers, businesses and consumers.

Meanwhile, localities need to focus on developing concentrated organic agricultural production areas and key products, creating favourable conditions to attract investors to organic agricultural models in closed chains from production, processing to distribution. - VNS

## Vietnam: Vietnam getting ready for the fourth FDI boom

Section: Business News - Vietnam needs to take drastic actions to get ready for the fourth wave of foreign direct investment (FDI) which is in the making and is expected to leverage the country on the global high-tech map.

The annual report of foreign investment in Vietnam 2023, announced on Tuesday by the Vietnam Association of Foreign Invested Enterprises (VAFIE), pointed out that Vietnam remains an attractive destination for the FDI influx with more than 49,000 foreign enterprises currently operating in the country.

It cited statistics that the FDI flow to Vietnam rose strongly by 32.1 per cent in 2023 to US\$36.61 billion while the global capital only increased slightly by 3 per cent.

FDI has been a major growth driver for the Vietnamese economy and is expected to continue the upward trend in the context of rising demand for diversifying the supply chain of multinational manufacturers, in which Vietnam has increasing appeal with stable macro-economic conditions, and improving investment environment and labour force quality.

The next FDI boom on the horizon will focus on high-tech fields including semiconductors, electronics, artificial intelligence (AI) and renewable energy to transform the economy into a higher-value ladder and promote long-term growth.

Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment Trần Huy Đông said that the competition among countries in FDI attraction is increasingly fierce, especially in semiconductors, because of the industry's large potential which could reach more than \$1 trillion in 2030.

He said that countries which are quicker in developing appropriate and well-implemented policies will be able to reap the opportunities of the new investment wave.

Vietnam has been preparing the best conditions to remain attractive to foreign capital and welcome foreign investors in high-tech fields, including infrastructure, support policies and development strategies as well as human resources, he said.

VAFIE's report said that international organisations and foreign investors are mostly optimistic about the Vietnamese economy, with improved confidence.

However, there are limitations in the investment environment which need to be resolved such as non-transparent and time-consuming administrative procedures, high compliance costs, electricity shortage, lack of high-quality human resource and slow green transition process, the report pointed out.

Improving the legal framework and the efficiency of the regulatory environment is critical for Vietnam to attract FDI, coupled with improving the infrastructure system, especially energy, digital and transport infrastructure, hastening administrative reform and improving human resource quality, according to VAFIE.

According to the American Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam, it is necessary to create a more attractive, transparent and stable business environment. "The business climate can best be helped by actions that increase productivity, remove technical barriers and business conditions, and reduce the unnecessary costs of doing business in Vietnam."

Phan Hũu Thắng, president of the Institute for International Investment Studies, said the shift in global supply chains is inevitable, and it provides opportunities for Vietnam to attract high-quality FDI. It's time for Vietnam be active in attracting FDI and direct the capital flow into the prioritised sectors, he said.

The formation of specialised industrial parks, high-tech parks and eco industrial parks is important for the future, he said.

The target of achieving an economic growth rate of 6.5 per cent in 2021-25 period for Vietnam might be challenging, Võ Trí Thành, director of the Institute for Brand and Competitiveness Strategy said. However, the Vietnamese economy is standing at a turning point in which the FDI flows into high-tech industries will help create breakthroughs. - VNS

### **Vietnam: Singapore is the largest foreign investor in Vietnam in Q1**

Section: Business News - Vietnam has attracted a total of US\$6.17 billion in foreign investment in the first quarter of this year with Singapore being the largest investor accounting for 41.3 per cent of the investment influx.

According to the Foreign Investment Agency, registered capital rose 13.4 per cent over the same period last year to \$6.17 billion, including \$4.77 billion in to 644 new projects, up 23.4 per cent in the number of projects and 57.9 per cent in the investment value.

A total of \$934.6 million is registered to be added to existing projects and \$466.2 million earmarked for stakes and capital contribution.

The average capital per new project in March is \$4.9 million, lower than \$7.4 million in February and \$10.6 million in January.

The disbursed foreign investment rose by 7.1 per cent in the first quarter to reach \$4.63 billion, a signal that the disbursement will continue the positive trend, the agency said.

Foreign investors poured capitals into 17 out of 21 economic sectors, among which, the manufacturing and processing industry takes the lead with a total registered capital of \$3.93 billion, a slight decrease of 1.3 per cent over the same period last year, however.

The real estate sector comes the second with total registered capital of \$1.58 billion in the first quarter, 2.1 times the figure of the same period last year, followed by the wholesale and retail industry and science and technology with an investment of \$224.8 million and \$190.2 million, respectively.

The foreign investment influx comes from 62 countries and territories.

Singapore is the biggest investor in Vietnam with a total registered capital of \$2.55 billion, up by 51.3 per cent. A major project of Singapore is \$662 million urban project Lumi Hanoi.

With a total registered capital of \$1.05 billion, 2.3 times higher, Hong Kong is the second largest investor in Vietnam.

Hanoi is the top FDI destination with an influx of \$970.8 million, rising by 6.1 times over the same period last year, followed by Bắc Ninh with \$745.2 million. - VNS

## **Vietnam: Binh Duong Province eyes Australian trade, investment ties**

Section: General News - Binh Duong Province is seeking mutual trade and investment opportunities with Australia.

At a seminar in Sydney on Monday, Nguyễn Đăng Thắng, the Vietnamese consul for New South Wales (NSW), Queensland and South Australia states, expressed happiness at the rapid development in the relationship between the two countries, highlighted by its elevation to a comprehensive strategic partnership recently.

He hoped this would lay the foundation for the countries to embark on a new journey, enhancing bilateral relations, particularly in trade and investment.

He introduced Binh Duong Province as a leading destination for foreign investment and one of the most dynamic localities in Vietnam.

Karla Lampe, director for International Engagement and Market Development at the New South Wales Investment Agency, said relations were developing rapidly between Vietnamese localities and her state.

NSW, known for its world-class education system and being one of the strongest pillars of the Australian economy, is particularly interested in promoting trade and investment with Vietnam, she said.

Vietnam ranks fifth in the list of countries sending students to the state, but educational cooperation has ample room for development, she said.

David Harding, CEO of Business NSW, said Vietnam and Australia are situated in one of the most dynamic regions in the world.

Australia is seeking to diversify its trade and economic relationships, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic and political changes worldwide while Vietnam possesses abundant labour resources and a highly skilled workforce.

He said the strong development of Vietnam - Australia relations, especially in trade and investment, presents an opportunity for businesses from both countries to collaborate.

Nguyễn Lộc Hà, Deputy Chairman of the Binh Duong People's Committee, listed the strengths and potential of and investment opportunities in his province and its preferential policies for foreign investors. Binh Duong is a leading manufacturing centre with a diverse range of supply chains and a hub for scientific and technological innovation.

It would create the most favourable conditions for them, he said.

He exhorted Australian businesses to invest in areas such as technology, supporting industries, information technology, high-tech agriculture, renewable and environment-friendly energy, commerce and services, construction, infrastructure and high-quality human resources training.

Nguyễn Duy, marketing director for English-speaking markets at Becamex IDC Corporation, said Binh Duong aims to become a hub for innovation and research with science and education, information technology and business parks and e-commerce zones.

It has been collaborating with the World Bank to build eco-industrial parks with solar and other green energy, water recycling and management using an intelligent operations centre, he said.

Australian business executives said that Vietnam remains their country's top trading and investment partner in the region.

Speaking to Vietnam News Agency, Francis Wong, Becamex's marketing representative in Australia, said the elevation of bilateral relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership presents a significant opportunity for Australian companies to invest in Vietnam, especially in areas such as energy innovation and environment.

These are Australia's strengths, and companies from that country have the potential to invest in Vietnam due to its strong manufacturing base, he said, adding he received a number of inquiries about investment in Vietnam in the past two to three weeks after the visit to Australia by Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chính.

In the morning of the conference, a trade and investment promotion delegation led by the province's Deputy Chairman, Nguyễn Lộc Hà, held a meeting with Mohamed Hage, President of the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Dean Kirkwood, General Director of the Resource Industry Network in Mackay City (Queensland state), to exchange views and discuss cooperation.



Australian organisations and business deeply appreciated the activities of the delegation and suggested a number of initiatives to expand cooperation with Binh Duong Province.

The seminar was organised by Binh Duong People's Committee, together with Becamex IDC Corporation, the Vietnamese consulate general in Sydney City and the New South Wales Investment Agency. - VNS

### **Vietnam: Ministry asks carriers to develop fleet operation plan to meet summer travel demand**

Section: General News - The Ministry of Transport has asked carriers to develop aircraft fleet operation plans to meet the rising travel demand for the upcoming national holidays and summer peak.

In a document sent to the Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam, the ministry said that the restructuring of some airlines' fleet and flight networks, coupled with the recall of PW1100 engines by Pratt & Whitney for repair, have affected the load on both international and domestic flight routes, causing difficulties to passengers in terms of prices and schedules.

Statistics showed that the aircraft fleet in operation in Vietnam has been reduced by 25 per cent, from 223 in 2023 to 173 in the first quarter of this year.

The request is raised in the context that the upcoming national holidays of South Vietnam Liberation Day on April 30th and Labour Day on May 1, and summer holidays, will push up air travel demand.

Accordingly, airlines must develop aircraft fleet operation plans to meet the demand as well as raise solutions to reduce flight cancellations or delays and improve service quality.

The ministry asked the Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam to enhance supervision over the air transportation services, ticket listings and sales to prevent illegal increases in air tickets. Any violations must be promptly handled.

In addition, flight operation plans and adjustments must be made public so that passengers can be active with their travel plans.

Pratt & Whitney's recall of its PW1100 engines affects several Airbus A321 NEO operated by Vietnam Airlines and Vietjet, meaning that these planes will be grounded in 2024 and 2025.

According to Vietnam Airlines' general director Lê H<sup>Ồ</sup>ng Hà, the shortage of aircrafts caused by engine repair and maintenance poses significant difficulties to airlines in 2024.

The problem is that it takes up to 250-300 days for maintenance of an engine, compared to the previous average maintenance time of 100-120 days due to the disruption in supply chains.

Vietnam Airlines currently operates around 60 A321, 12 of which must be grounded for the engine maintenance.

Other airlines are struggling with restructuring.

Starting from March 18, Pacific Airlines (part of the Vietnam Airlines Group) suspends flight operations to restructure its fleet and flight network in an effort to ensure operational efficiency. After returning the aircrafts to clear debt, the airline will not operate any aircraft but rent from Vietnam Airlines.

Bamboo Airways is also undergoing a major restructuring. It has been shutting down all international flight routes and low-performing domestic routes since the end of last year, including routes from HCM City and Hanoi to Côn Đ<sup>Ả</sup>o starting from April.

Bamboo reached an agreement to terminate a lease contract on three Embraer E190 jets, narrow-body aircraft accommodating up to 114 passengers, by the end of March. The aircraft fleet of Bamboo will be reduced from the peak of 30 to only 8 from April 2024.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam said that the reduction in the number of aircraft in operation would affect the air transport load this year.

The authority asked air carriers to have plans to make up for the shortage of jets, especially in peak periods such as summer holidays.

Airlines must announce adjustments of flight schedules daily and keep passengers updated. - VNS

### **Vietnam: Central bank revises regulations on foreign currency transactions**

Section: Business News - The State Bank of Vietnam (SBV) has revised a circular regulating foreign currency transactions to make it more flexible and proactive in managing the foreign exchange rate in response to changes in domestic and international market conditions.

The draft circular recently published for comments amends Circular 02/2021/TT-NHNN stipulating foreign currency transactions on domestic foreign currency market among banks authorised to make foreign currency transactions.

According to the SBV, market conditions, exchange rate levels, and domestic and international interest rate differences are changing rapidly and unpredictably. Therefore, the SBV wants to amend the current policy to increase flexibility and initiative in managing monetary and exchange rate policies in response to changes in domestic and international market conditions.

In some periods such as in 2022, the narrowing difference between Vietnamese **đồng**- and US dollar-denominated interest rates limited the room for the market to determine the USD/VN**Đ** forward exchange rate, which might affect market liquidity.

The circular has detailed regulations on issues related to foreign exchange management according to market developments, such as policy regulations on forward exchange rates and bases for determining forward exchange rate cap, which may limit the SBV's ability to react to market fluctuations.

Therefore, in order to maintain flexibility and initiative in management and create more favourable conditions for market operations, the SBV has reviewed and amended Clause 3 of Article 5 under Circular 02/2021/TT-NHNN.

Instead of the current specific stipulations in the circular, forward exchange rate between the **đồng** and the dollar in forward transactions, and forward transactions in swap transactions will be agreed upon by the parties involved in the transaction and in accordance with regulations issued by the SBV in a given time under the draft circular.

The SBV's proposed change aims to create a basis for more flexible and proactive intervention in the foreign currency market through buying and selling dollar futures with banks. Besides, through foreign currency forward transactions, the SBV can also affect the dollar- and **đồng**-denominated interest rate difference in the interbank market.

The USD/VN**Đ** exchange rate has increased sharply in the first months of this year and is trading at a historic high.

The dollar buying and selling price at Vietcombank, the bank with the largest foreign currency transaction scale in the Vietnamese banking system, was listed at VN**Đ**24,590 and VN**Đ**24,960, respectively, on March 22. This was the highest dollar transaction price in Vietcombank's history, up by about 2.2 per cent compared to the beginning of this year.

At other banks, the dollar selling price is currently listed in the range of VN**Đ**24,950 - 24,960.

The exchange rate has still shown no signs of cooling down though the SBV has continuously issued bills in the past nine trading sessions, with the total cumulative winning volume reaching nearly VNĐ130 trillion. - VNS

### **Vietnam: Hanoi workshop explores semiconductor measurement, testing technology**

Section: General News - A workshop was held in Hanoi on March 26 to discuss semiconductor measurement and testing technology in training, research, development and production.

The event was co-hosted by the National Innovation Centre (NIC), the Ministry of Planning and Investment, ASIC Technologies and Keysight Technologies of the US.

Sangho Oh, director of Keysight South Asia Pacific Regional Sales, highlighted the crucial role of measurement throughout the design and manufacturing process of semiconductor chips.

He also further reaffirmed Keysight's commitment to provide Vietnam's burgeoning semiconductor industry with necessary tools and expertise.

Keysight is ready to collaborate with the NIC to propel Vietnam's semiconductor industry, he said.

Deputy Director of ASIC Technologies Nguyễn Anh Quân said the event will contribute to developing Vietnam's human resources and semiconductor technology.

Leading experts from Keysight presented solutions to semiconductor chip measurement to optimise the design and manufacturing process. - VNS

Vietnam: Vietnam ready to welcome “eagles” in electronics, semiconductor industry: Official

Section: Business News - Vietnam has prepared necessary conditions to attract “eagles” worldwide in the electronics and semiconductor industry, Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment Trần Duy Đông told the Vietnam Global Manufacturing Forum 2024 (VGMF2024) in Hanoi on March 26.

Đông highlighted the country's strong infrastructure, research and development incentives, and skilled workforce as key advantages for investors.

With the global electronics and semiconductor market expected to surpass US\$1 trillion by 2030, he said the Vietnamese Government and Prime Minister are directing the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), relevant ministries and agencies to prepare the best conditions to welcome incoming investments.

According to the official, Vietnam is currently among the top 40 economies in the world in terms of GDP with over \$430 billion and the top 20 economies in international trade and foreign direct investment. The nation prioritises projects in hi-tech fields like electronics, semiconductors, innovation and renewable energy. The country also seeks to develop international financial centres, modern services and trade, infrastructure, research and development.

Đông also revealed an MPI-developed human resource development scheme specifically for the semiconductor industry. This scheme, targeting the training of 50,000 engineers by 2030, will be submitted to the PM for approval in the near future.

The National Innovation Centre (NIC), managed by the MPI, will focus on smart factory and urban development, digital communication, environmental technology, cybersecurity, semiconductor industry, hydrogen and healthcare. Notably, the NIC has already secured partnerships with US chipmakers Synopsys and Garden to establish a facility dedicated to chip research and design.

Furthermore, the MPI is drafting a decree on an investment support fund, offering substantial financial assistance for hi-tech, electronics and semiconductor sectors. This decree will be submitted to the Government for issuance soon.

Trần Tuấn Anh, deputy director of the Hanoi Industrial and Export Processing Zones Authority (HIZA), unveiled the city's goal of establishing 2-5 new industrial parks by 2025 to draw more investors, especially those using modern, clean and eco-friendly technologies and producing highly competitive products to integrate seamlessly into the global value and supply chains. - VNS

#### **Vietnam: Thai Binh seeks to enhance investment, trade cooperation with Germany**

Section: Business News - A group representing the northern province of Thai Binh, led by Deputy Secretary of the provincial Party Committee Nguyễn Khắc Thuận, undertook a visit to various localities and business entities in Germany from March 25 to 27. Their aim was to bolster trade ties and encourage direct investment from the European nation.

During their time in Germany, the delegation engaged in discussions with officials from Hanover, the capital and largest city of Lower Saxony state.

Addressing the gathering, Thuận, who also serves as Chairman of the Thai Binh People's Committee, expressed aspirations for fostering collaboration between the province and Hanover in the foreseeable future.

Furthermore, Thai Binh seeks to attract German investment particularly in sectors such as healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and labour cooperation. Thuận highlighted that the province is planning to establish Vietnam's inaugural biopharmaceutical industrial park.

Thận and Mayor of Hanover Thomas Hermann also witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding on cooperation between the provincial Department of Planning and Investment and Hannoverimpuls GmbH – the economic development agency of the city and Hanover region.

As a result, both parties agreed to work together to help companies from Hanover and Thai Binh expand their business operations. They also decided to share information, send business groups back and forth, hold conferences and seminars together, offer advice on industries, and assist in finding partners in marketing, science, and technology.

The delegation then worked with the Chamber of Commerce Hannover to introduce the province and its investment opportunities.

They also organised a forum for investment and business connection between Thai Binh and Lower Saxony, attended by about 30 German companies. - VNS

#### **Vietnam/United States: Vietnam – US parliamentary cooperation to be enhanced, says NA Chairman**

Section: General News - The legislative bodies of Vietnam and the United States should further increase cooperation to support the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that is developing positively between the two countries.

National Assembly Chairman Vuong Dinh Hue was speaking while receiving a US Senate delegation led by Kirsten Gillibrand, chairwoman of the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Personnel, in Hanoi on March 27.



He appreciated the United States' consistent policy of supporting a strong, independent, self-reliant and prosperous Vietnam, and affirmed that Vietnam considers the US to a strategically important partner.

Vietnam is ready to join the US in promoting the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in an increasingly substantive, in-depth, and stable manner, he said.

Hue recalled President Joe Biden's state visit to Vietnam in September 2023 during which the two countries' top leaders decided to upgrade Vietnam – US relations to a level of comprehensive strategic partnership.

The new partnership framework will open up new opportunities for the two countries to ramp up bilateral cooperation through all channels and in all spheres, including in innovation, artificial intelligence, human resource training, semiconductor chip manufacturing, supply chain connection, and energy transition, as well as people-to-people exchanges, he said.

Emphasizing that parliamentary cooperation is an important pillar in promoting bilateral relations, Hue proposed enhancing cooperation between the two countries' legislative bodies in tandem with the Vietnam – US Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

The two sides should increase visit exchanges, especially for young parliamentarians, to share information and working experiences in order to promote mutual understanding and increase cooperation, he suggested.

He told his guest that cooperation in overcoming the consequences of the past war is considered a bright spot in bilateral relations, making an important contribution to the process of reconciliation, war wound healing and trust building between the two peoples, and opening up more opportunities for cooperation in other key areas.

He asked the US Congress to continue to give high priority to cooperation in this field, and assured Vietnam will continue to fully cooperate with the US in taking stock of the MIA issue as it has done for the past 50 years, both through joint and unilateral activities.

Briefing his guests on economic cooperation, Hue said Vietnam is one of the seven largest trading partners of the US and an important part of the regional supply chain, while the US is Vietnam's second largest trading partner and largest export market.

Vietnam has currently signed 19 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with more than 60 countries and economic-trade blocs, including new-generation FTAs with high standards. Hundreds of large US firms are doing business effectively in Vietnam.

He requested that the US should soon recognize Vietnam as a market economy as many other countries have done to live up to expectations of businesses and peoples of the two countries.

He also proposed that the two sides gradually expand cooperation in areas such as terrorism prevention, transnational crime combating, and cyber security.

Senator Gillibrand for her part thanked Vietnam for close collaboration in dealing with the POW/MIA issue over the years, saying the recorded gains testify to the strength of people-to-people diplomacy and reconciliation.

The United States has made commitments and will continue to do so to contribute to overcoming the consequences of war, she assured his host.

Gillibrand expected that the two countries would foster mutually beneficial cooperation in areas that the United States has strengths in and Vietnam needs, such as artificial intelligence and semiconductors, alongside education and people-to-people exchanges.

According to the Senator, US Congressmen have since last year made seven working trips to Vietnam, including two this year, showing the US' efforts in enhancing relations with the Southeast Asian nation. Bilateral economic-investment and trade cooperation is prospering, with the US

importing hundreds of billions of US dollars worth of Vietnamese goods, and more US firms keen to do business in Vietnam.

Exchanging views on regional and international issues of mutual concern, Hue appreciated the US supporting the stance of Vietnam and ASEAN related to the East Sea, including ensuring freedom of navigation and aviation and peaceful resolution of disputes on the basis of international law.

He thanked the US for strengthening cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region, and hoped that the US, through its Indo-Pacific Strategy and regional initiatives, would continue to support ASEAN's central role, the ASEAN-US comprehensive strategic partnership, and the Mekong - US Partnership, actively contributing to peace, stability, cooperation and development in the region. - VOV

#### **Vietnam: FM talks Vietnam – US relations at Brookings Institution**

Section: General News - In its foreign policy Vietnam always considers the United States as one of its most important partners, affirmed Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son in his speech at the Brookings Institution in Washington DC on March 26 (local time).

Vietnamese Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son (sixth from left) and Assistant Vice Provost for Arizona State University Jeffrey Goss (sixth from right) and other scholars pose for a group photo.

Addressing approximately 500 experts, scholars, businesspeople, and media workers, Son noted that the two countries have recorded important gains in bilateral relations since the normalisation of diplomatic ties in 1995. They were marked by the historic visit of General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong to the US in 2015 and the State visit of US President Joe Biden to Vietnam in 2023, as well as the upgrading of Vietnam - US relations to a level of comprehensive strategic partnership.

As part of efforts to further deepen the Vietnam-US Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, the diplomat chief stated that the two countries must strive to increase visit exchanges, promote political trust, and respect each other's political institutions.

In his view, both sides should continue to consider economic - trade - investment cooperation to be a major pillar in bilateral relations, while also working to promote cooperation in science-technology and innovation, including the semiconductor ecosystem, people-to-people exchanges, education, and culture.

Furthermore, he outlined that the two countries should coordinate more closely at multilateral forums and through international bodies such as ASEAN, the UN, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), and the Mekong - United States partnership, among others.

Answering delegates' questions, the FM stressed that despite a rapidly changing world with both traditional and non-traditional challenges, Vietnam consistently implements a foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, peace, friendship, co-operation and development, as well as multilateralisation and diversification of foreign relations and deep international integration. It therefore continues to act as a reliable partner and as both an active and responsible member of the international community.

The country will continue with its "bamboo diplomacy" strategy to respond to challenges and maintain a favourable foreign environment for national development.

He expected that major countries will have stable, healthy relationships, and increase cooperation to respond to global common challenges such as climate change and food security. He affirmed that Vietnam would continue to improve its local business environment, creating favourable conditions for foreign businesses to invest and operate efficiently in the country. - VOV

## Vietnam: Vietnam seeks GFANZ assistance to meet climate commitment

Section: General News - Vietnam expects to receive technical and financial support and expertise from international partners and organisations, including the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ), in order to realise its climate action commitment, Deputy Prime Minister Tran Hong Ha told Mary L.Schapiro, GFANZ Vice Chair, in Hanoi on March 27.

At the meeting, Ha briefed his guest on major difficulties faced by Vietnam in formulating legal mechanisms and policies for green transformation.

According to the Deputy PM, many investors have expressed interest in renewable energy projects but have not yet solved the technological problem related to ensuring balance and stability of the national power grid, production and use of green hydrogen and green ammonia, power storage solutions, and energy export.

Vietnam aims to completely resolve legal problems, and at the same time it is piloting a number of offshore wind and solar power projects with energy storage solutions and flexible power supply. However, it is in dire need of financial support for early implementation, he said.

In addition, he said the country hopes to receive technical assistance and expertise in building and perfecting institutions, transferring technology, and assessing the feasibility of energy and offshore wind power centres.

He suggested that GFANZ should have specific commitments on financial and technical assistance as well as technology transfer from G7 countries and international partners in the Just Fair Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) agreement signed with Vietnam.

Mary L.Schapiro for her part briefed his host on global financial institutions' efforts in mobilizing capital for energy conversion projects as well as challenges for many economic sectors.

Accordingly, she said GFANZ will spend financial resources on research, innovation and technology transfer activities in the field of renewable energy.

The GFANZ leader expected to receive clear requests from the Vietnamese side regarding capital mobilization in the international market for investment businesses in the fields of smart grid development, renewable energy, fossil energy conversion, green fuel production from solar power, and offshore wind power. - VOV

### **Vietnam/Russia: Vietnam and Russia exchange views on future cooperation orientations**

Section: General News - Vietnam and Russia examined future cooperation orientations between the two countries during a phone call on March 26 between Vietnamese Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The two leaders discussed and agreed on a number of major directions to promote bilateral cooperation in fields such as security- defense, economy-trade, culture, tourism, among others.

Trong congratulated Putin on his re-election as President of Russia for the 2024-2030 term with a record high number of votes in modern history, demonstrating the trust and support of the Russian people in the president's leadership.

He also extended his deep condolences to Putin, the Russian people and relatives of the victims of the terrorist attack in Moscow on March 22.

The Party leader appreciated the great assistance given to Vietnam in the past and at present by the former Soviet Union and now Russia, and affirmed that Vietnam attaches importance to

strengthening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with Russia, considering this one of the top priorities in its foreign policy.

Putin for his part thanked Trong for his regards and affirmed that Vietnam is always a friend and reliable partner of the Russian Federation. He also expressed joy at the positive developments of Russia - Vietnam relations in all fields.

On this occasion, Party leader Nguyen Phu Trong respectfully invited President Putin to make an official visit to Vietnam soon, and the invitation was accepted with pleasure. - VOV

#### **Vietnam: Foreign Minister meets US National Security Advisor, USAID Administrator**

Section: General News - Minister of Foreign Affairs Bui Thanh Son held a working session with US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan in Washington D.C. on March 25 as part of his US trip to co-chair the first annual dialogue between the foreign ministers of Vietnam and the US.

Sullivan reaffirmed that the US attaches great importance to relations with Vietnam and supports a strong, independent, self-resilient and prosperous Vietnam with increasingly important role in the region and the world.

He expressed delight at the two sides actively and proactively implementing their comprehensive strategic partnership and high-level agreements reached by US President Joe Biden and General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Nguyen Phu Trong during the former's visit to Vietnam in September 2023.

For his part, Son said he is pleased at the specific and positive results recorded during the implementation of the Vietnam-US comprehensive strategic partnership so far, especially the regular high-level delegation exchanges.

Affirming Vietnam's external policy of independence, self-reliance, peace, friendship, multilateralisation and diversification, the FM underlined that Vietnam considers the US a partner of strategic importance, and highly valued the US's support to a strong, independent, self-resilient and prosperous nation of Vietnam.

He extended regards of Party General Secretary Trong and senior leaders of Vietnam to President Joe Biden, and invited Sullivan to visit Vietnam.

The Vietnamese FM suggested that the two sides continue to promoting cooperation across all key pillars of the bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership, with priority to making preparations for delegation exchanges and meetings between the two countries, especially at high levels, maintaining existing dialogue mechanisms and seeking new ones, especially in issues of differences.

The two sides should continue to expand economic-trade and science-technology cooperation, especially in innovation and human resources training, he said, proposing the US recognise Vietnam's market economy regulations soon, and strengthen cooperation in overcoming war consequences.

Sullivan pledged that the US will continue realising agreements reached by leaders of the two countries, and supports Vietnam in developing high technology industries, energy transition, climate change response, overcoming war aftermaths, and making bilateral relations more intensive, extensive, substantial and effective.

The two sides also discussed a number of regional and global issues of shared concern.



The same day, FM Son also had a meeting with Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Samantha Power who affirmed that the agency always prioritises the development of relations with Vietnam, and vowed that the USAID will continue to work for the implementation of the US-Vietnam comprehensive strategic partnership and agreements reached by senior leaders of the two countries.

Reviewing the partnership between Vietnam and the USAID in overcoming war consequences, supporting persons with disabilities, education-training, and health care, Son highly valued the USAID's assistance to Vietnam, and expressed his hope that the agency will continue to provide resources for the implementation of dioxin detoxification in Bien Hoa airport, searching for missing Vietnamese soldiers, enhancing Vietnam's capacity in DNA analysis, supporting persons with disabilities, and war victims. At the same time, the US should consider new areas of cooperation such as high-quality human resources training, climate change response, energy transition, while turning Fulbright University into a regional training centre.

Power briefed the Vietnamese FM on the situation of USAID projects in Vietnam, underlining that the agency will continue to focus on cooperation in dealing with war aftermath, including dioxin detoxification in Bien Hoa, enhancing the DNA analysis for Vietnamese scientists, improving health care and social services in order to enhance the living conditions for persons with disabilities, and support Vietnam in mitigating climate change impacts and promoting sustainable development, human resources training, health care infrastructure, and disease prevention and control.

The two sides concurred to continue to work closely together in approving and effectively developing USAID projects in Vietnam, contributing to fostering the Vietnam-US comprehensive strategic partnership. - VOV

**Vietnam: Vietnamese tuna available in 80 markets worldwide**

Section: Business News - Vietnamese tuna products have been exported to more than 80 markets around the world during the opening two months of the year, 10 more markets compared to the same period last year, according to the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP).

Most notably, tuna exports to the members of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) have witnessed vigorous growth.

February 2024 alone saw tuna exports to Canada and Chile skyrocket by 146% and 116%, respectively.

Meanwhile, after experiencing a strong increase in January, tuna exports to major markets such as the United States and the EU in February dropped of 8% and 16%, respectively.

Industry insiders point out that Vietnamese tuna will continue to face a number of challenges in the time ahead due to the European Commission's yellow card warning against Vietnamese seafood.

Furthermore, local businesses are short of both domestic raw materials and imported materials.

However, as a number of major international seafood fairs are scheduled to take place in the US and Spain in March and April, there will be a positive outlook ahead for Vietnamese tuna businesses, say experts. - VOV

**Vietnam/Thailand: VinFast inks cooperation deals with 15 Thai agents at BIMS 2024**

Section: Business News - Leading Vietnamese electric vehicle (EV) maker VinFast officially signed its first letters of intent for cooperation with 15 dealers in Thailand on March 27.

Vu Dang Yen Hang, general director of VinFast Thailand (middle) and representatives of dealerships in Thailand pose for a photo.

The signing ceremony took place within the framework of the ongoing Bangkok International Motor Show (BIMS) 2024 which is running from March 27 to April 7.

The signing marks an important milestone in expanding VinFast's distribution network and enhancing its presence, thereby affirming the position and attractiveness of the Vietnamese EV brand in the region's leading auto market.

Under the letters of content, VinFast and its agents will actively work towards exploiting 22 stores, with a specific focus on major roads in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region.

Along with Bangkok and five neighbouring provinces in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region, VinFast's dealer network will also expand to other major cities such as Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Ubon Ratchathani, Ayutthaya, and Chonburi.

Vu Dang Yen Hang, general director of VinFast Thailand, emphasised that the partnership with reputable and experienced dealers in Thailand is anticipated to strengthen the firm's presence in the region, whilst also serving as a solid foundation for the firm's future development in the Thai market.

"We also aim to expand the EV distribution network to major cities in Thailand, in order to keep pace with the strong green transportation revolution in the country and globally," she noted.

Dealers in Thailand plan to sell VinFast EV models such as the VF e34, VF 5, VF 6, and VF 7 in the first phase, immediately after these models debut in the market. Furthermore, they will also sell VinFast electric motorbike products.

According to the schedule, VinFast will expand its operations to at least 50 countries worldwide this year. In addition to key markets like the United States, Canada, and Europe, the automaker is

seeking to penetrate deep into neighbouring countries in Asia such as India, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, as well as the Middle East and Africa.

VinFast has brought numerous models to BIMS 2024, including the mini-SUV VF 3; the VF 5, VF e34, VF 6, VF 7, VF 8, and VF 9; as well as the A-SUV to E-SUV segments.

Most notably, the VF Wild, an electric pickup truck concept that garnered global attention upon its debut at CES 2024, is also on display at the event. - VOV

### **Vietnam: Revised Land Law helps boost Vietnam's investment appeal**

Section: Business News - The revised Land Law, which was passed by the Vietnamese National Assembly in January 2024, is expected to lure capital from overseas Vietnamese (OV), said Chairman of the Vietnamese Business Association in Australia (VBAA) Tran Ba Phuc.

Talking to the Vietnam News Agency's resident correspondents in Australia, Phuc hailed the amended law, saying it provides greater assurance for OVs by explicitly guaranteeing their rights. This serves as a motivation to encourage them to return to the home country and invest more boldly.

Phuc, who is also Vice Chairman of the Business Association of Overseas Vietnamese (BAOOV), noted that the law has been revised towards greater transparency and more beneficial to OVs.

It is a step in the right direction, adding that it is relevant to the current situation of the country as well as the Vietnamese community abroad, aiming to stimulate economic breakthroughs and create favourable conditions for domestic enterprises and OVs.

Phuc viewed these changes as a reflection of the Vietnamese government's open policy in attracting capital and resources from abroad, as well as fostering connections between OVs and the homeland.

Many OVs want to contribute to the development of the homeland through remittances and reinvestment. Real estate offers a particularly attractive avenue for them to do so.

The revision also underscores the Vietnamese Party and State's consistent policy of considering OVs an inseparable part of the nation, he stressed.

Phuc suggested that the Vietnamese Government should intensify the dissemination of information about the revised Land Law and show its earnest and active implementation of the law in line with the outlined spirit to instill motivation and confidence among residents as well as the Vietnamese community and foreign businesses abroad who will prepare plans in the coming time and encourage their involvement.

He predicted that the real estate market in Vietnam will recover positively, becoming more vibrant in the coming years, thereby bringing benefits to the people and domestic businesses as well as OVs who are living and working in countries and territories around the world. - VOV

**Vietnam: Northern Vietnam to suffer first major hot spell of the year**

Section: General News - A hot spell is heading towards the northern region of Vietnam from west that is to bake the region in the coming days.

The hot spell will first affect north-western and north-central localities on March 30, with temperatures climbing to 33-35°C, according to the National Centre of Hydro-meteorological Forecasting.

In Hanoi, temperatures will rise by 9 to 10°C, reaching 35°C on April 1 - 2.

The hot spell is forecast to last until April 4 due to the influence of low air pressure coming from the west.

Meanwhile, the southern region, including Ho Chi Minh City, is enduring a prolonged heat wave which is anticipated to last for a couple of days.

Daytime temperatures will stay high at between 35 - 37°C, or even above 37°C in some places, with humidity falling to a low of 45%.

Doctors warn that the searing heat could potentially threaten the health of the people, especially children and the elderly, as well as labourers working outdoors. They advise that adults keep children in airy homes during hot days, be fully vaccinated, and maintain a clean living area. - VOV

### **Vietnam/United States: US organisation-funded project benefits poor households in Tra Vinh**

Section: General News - Eighteen cooperatives with 70 households engaging in cow breeding and 14 households specialising in beekeeping in the Mekong Delta province of Tra Vinh have benefited from a livelihood support project financed by Samaritan's Purse International Relief (SPIR) – a US non-profit organisation (NGO).

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the friendship union of the province reviewed the project at a meeting on March 26.

Accordingly, the project was implemented from July 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024 with a total budget of more than VND2.7 billion (nearly US\$108,250).

It focused on providing financial support and technical training in cattle raising and beekeeping to poor households, Khmer households, and vulnerable women in Cang Long, Tra Cu, and Cau Ke districts. As a result, the beneficiaries have significantly improved their income.

Le Van Dong, deputy director of the provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development said this is the third consecutive year SPIR has collaborated with the locality to work for the goal of reducing the rate of poor households through livestock and crop farming models.

Over the past three years, SPIR has provided livelihood support to 239 disadvantaged households with a total budget of VND7.1 billion, including 220 households specialising in cow breeding, 14 households practising beekeeping, and five households engaging in greenhouse vegetable cultivation.

The models have contributed to developing concentrated livestock areas in the direction of forming value chains, ensuring biosecurity, disease control, and environmental protection; and fostering sustainable economic development for vulnerable households. - VOV

### **Vietnam: Vietnamese corporate culture takes centre stage at Japan conference**

Section: General News - An international conference popularising Vietnamese corporate culture to Asia-Pacific nations took place in the Japanese prefecture of Chiba on March 26.

The event was co-hosted by the Vietnam Federation of UNESCO Associations (VFUA) and the Society of Japanese Value Engineering (SJVE).

VFUA Standing Vice Chairman and Vice President of the Asia-Pacific Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations Tran Van Manh said the forum aims to provide a comprehensive overview of corporate culture of developed countries worldwide, along with a specific focus on the current landscape in Vietnam. It also affords a chance to foster mutual respect among nations from different regions across the globe.

Representatives from the Vietnamese and Japanese firms engaged in constructive discussions, contributing to building corporate cultures towards a sustainable future.

The conference also served as a platform to recognise outstanding contributions to the community made by enterprises, entrepreneurs, organisations and individuals who have championed traditional Vietnamese culture, fostered national identity, and contributed to people-to-people and cultural diplomacy in line with UNESCO's criteria.

Via the event, VFUA hopes to popularise Vietnam, its country, people and culture to the Japanese people, especially in heritage, education, scientific research and corporate culture. - VOV

### **Vietnam: OVs applaud revisions to land, real estate-related laws**

Section: Business News - The regulations related to overseas Vietnamese (OVs) in the revised laws on land, housing, and real estate business were disseminated to expatriate at a hybrid conference on March 26.

The revised laws on land, housing, and real estate business have expanded relevant rights of overseas Vietnamese.



The conference was held by the State Committee for OV Affairs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Assembly's Committee for Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Construction, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. It was connected with over 50 places both at home and abroad via videoconferencing and livestreamed on social networks for OVs to follow.

At the event, officials presented the new points directly related to OVs in the three revised laws, saying the rights of OVs, including those holding Vietnamese nationality or Vietnamese-origin people, are now expanded and stipulated in a more detailed manner.

OVs said the revised laws have met many of their aspirations and opinions contributed during the amending process. With the new points of these laws, OVs' rights in the fields of land, housing, and real estate business have been expanded, demonstrating the Party, State, and National Assembly's attention to Vietnamese abroad.

They expressed their hope that documents guiding law enforcement will further detail those new regulations so that OVs can invest more strongly in domestic housing and real estate.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Le Thi Thu Hang, who is also Chairwoman of the State Committee for OV Affairs, said that implementing the Politburo's directions on OV affairs, the committee has actively coordinated with the relevant sides in the amendment of policies and laws related to OVs, especially the ones on land, housing, and real estate business.

She called on OVs to help with the enforcement of these laws and asked relevant agencies to take in their opinions to continue institutionalising the Party's guidelines and policies and properly implement the laws in reality.

Talking to the Vietnam News Agency after the conference, Nguyen Duc Diane Thu Dung, Chairwoman of the French-based Association for the Promotion of Vietnamese Culture (APCV), highly valued the Government's attention to OVs. She held that the revised Land Law, the revised Law on Housing, and the revised Law on Real Estate Business will give OVs more opportunities and further inspire their willingness to return and contribute to the homeland's development.

Bui Kim Tuyet, member of the executive committee of the General Union of Vietnamese in France (UGVF), noted she hopes when coming into force in 2025, the revised Land Law will create many opportunities for more OVs in France to return to Vietnam.

She also proposed the State create favourable passport granting conditions so that they can return to buy housing and land in the country. She considered this as important and essential because a number of Vietnamese-origin people have lived in France for a long time but they haven't got a Vietnamese passport despite high demand.

Voicing his delight at the new land-related policies, Phan Vinh, Vice Chairman of the association of Vietnamese sea and island lovers in France, said the revisions will help attract more OVs and OV entrepreneurs to the homeland to buy houses, make investment, and contribute to national development.

Echoing the view, Assoc. Prof. Tran Phuong Tra at the IPAG Business School in France and Director of the Economic Policy Network of the Association of Vietnamese Scientists and Experts (AVSE Global), perceived that the revised Land Law will help create more space of creation for new projects to ensure interests of both localities and OV investors. - VOV

### **Vietnam: Vietnam joins proceedings of ICJ's climate change opinion**

Section: General News - The Vietnamese Embassy in the Netherlands, on behalf of the Vietnamese Government, has submitted a request to join the proceedings of the International Court of Justice (ICJ)'s advisory opinion on climate change.

In its request, Vietnam proposed that the ICJ affirm the obligations of countries in combating climate change in accordance with relevant international agreements such as the United Nations

(UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), as well as the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR), contributing to the UN's collective efforts.

Vietnam affirmed that countries have the obligation to prevent harms to the global climate system and engage in goodwill cooperation in responding to climate change. Therefore, many developed countries failing to observe the obligation will lead to legal consequences in accordance with international law. On this basis, Vietnam also affirmed that the existing international legal framework on climate change already contains mechanisms for compensating developing countries for losses and damages caused by climate change.

This compensation, Vietnam asserted, should be guided by the CBDR principle, placing greater responsibility on developed nations to lead the response to adverse impacts of climate change due to their emissions.

More than 80 countries have submitted requests to join the proceedings of ICJ's advisory opinion on climate change, according to the ICJ Secretariat.

On March 29, 2023, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 77/276 which requested the ICJ provide an advisory opinion on the obligations of states in respect of climate change.

Vietnam and Vanuatu were among the 18 states of the core group promoting this resolution.

This is the third time Vietnam has sought to join the proceedings of ICJ's advisory opinion. - VOV

**Vietnam: Da Nang develops human resources to serve semiconductor IC industry**

Section: Business News - The Vietnam – Korea University of Information and Communication Technology (VKU) in the central city of Da Nang on March 26 launched a programme on human resources training for integrated circuit (IC) design.

At the event, Standing Vice Chairman of the municipal People's Committee Ho Ky Minh said that the programme is an important step in the city's strategy of promoting high-quality human resources development.

He spoke highly of the collaboration between the Da Nang Semiconductor and Artificial Intelligence Center for Research and Training (DSAC), the VKU, Synopsys Group and the Information Technology Institute under the Vietnam National University in promptly deploying the city's first IC circuit design instructor training course.

Susan Burns, US Consul General in Ho Chi Minh City, said that this programme demonstrates a commitment to strengthening cooperation between the government, private businesses and universities to develop high-tech talents in Vietnam. This cooperation activity aims to strengthen Vietnam's role in the diverse, safe global semiconductor supply chain. The US recognises Vietnam's important role in building flexible semiconductor supply chains and strongly supports the development of this industry in Vietnam.

VKU principal Huynh Cong Phap shared that when completing the training, students can build a practical IC design curriculum to be ready to deploy training at universities in Da Nang. At the same time, the school will implement a short-term training course on semiconductor circuit design for juniors and seniors who are currently studying majors such as computer engineering, technology, embedded systems and IoT, and technology information.

On the occasion, the university also opened a centre for semiconductor circuits and smart technology (VKU – SSTH), equipped with 30 computers and copyrighted circuit design software from Synopsys and many equipment for training and research of semiconductor circuits and smart technology. - VOV

## Vietnam: Vietnam co-sponsors UN's first AI resolution

Section: General News - Vietnam has co-sponsored the UN's first resolution on artificial intelligence (AI), which highlights the promotion of safe, secure, and trustworthy AI systems that will also benefit sustainable development for all.

Proposed by the US and co-sponsored by over 120 other nations, the resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly in New York on March 21.

The text recognised AI systems' potential to contribute to efforts towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, promoting peace and human rights, and narrowing the digital divide between nations.

It calls on nations to coordinate in establishing AI governance mechanisms at both national and global levels in line with international law, thus promoting sustainable AI research and applications while effectively controlling risks and enhancing support for developing countries to access technology and improve digital capabilities.

During the more-than-three-month negotiations, the Permanent Mission of Vietnam to the UN actively partook in related consultations. Based on the ensuring of national interests and aligning with the perspectives of developing countries, Vietnam's opinions aimed for the construction of a balanced resolution laying the groundwork for building governance frameworks and international cooperation on AI. - VOV

## **Vietnam: Vietnamese blood donors save life of UK patient**

Section: General News - Three Vietnamese donors with a rare blood type have helped save the life of a 64-year-old British man with immune thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP).

The man was taken to Cho Ray Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City for emergency treatment on March 17. Doctors said as he suffered the ITP and high blood pressure and was at risk of intracerebral hemorrhage, he needed an urgent platelet transfusion.

The man has a rare blood type of O Rh(-) with just one in 1,000 Vietnamese people having a match while the hospital ran out the platelet at that time. It then called out for donors to roll up their sleeves.

Six donors came, with three suitable identified.

Getting the blood transfusion and suitable treatment, the man made a good recovery and was discharged from hospital on March 23.

He thanked the donors and the medical team for their timely noble act. - VOV

## **Vietnam: Int'l conference on soil health held for first time in Vietnam**

Section: General News - The Thai Nguyen University (TNU) in the northern province of the same name, in collaboration with the Vietnamese Society of Soil Science (VSSS), on March 26 opened the 16th International Conference of the East and Southeast Asia Federation of Soil Science Societies (ESAFS) themed "Healthy Soils for Sustainable Development".

The ESAFS conferences is a series of scientific meetings organised every two years to share updated experience and knowledge among soil scientists, particularly within East and Southeast Asian countries. It is also a platform to promote research and development, and disseminate the acquired knowledge and technology related to soil sciences.

This is the first time the conference has been hosted by Vietnam.

At the event, delegates are to discuss a number of issues such as soil health, soil ecology and biodiversity, fertility and crop nutrition, classification and mapping, degradation and treatment, recent advances in soil research, land administration, and land policies and education on land management.

TNU President Hoang Van Hung said that the four-day conference aims to share experience and knowledge among soil scientists all over the world, promote active participation of member societies, and contribute towards sustainable development in the region through harmonisation of agriculture and the environment. - VOV