

## THAI NEWS UPDATE: 5 OCTOBER 2021

### **1. Asean trade talks with Australia, NZ, India bear fruit**

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

Asean, Australia and New Zealand are to upgrade their free trade agreement by 2022, while Asean Economic Ministers (AEM) in consultations with India have resolved to increase the free trade in goods and provide increased inter-market access in hopes of creating a market of more than 2 billion consumers. Deputy Commerce Minister Sansern Samalapa told reporters on Sunday that the 26th AEM-Asean discussions with Australia and New Zealand on September 15 had welcomed the progress in negotiations on upgrading the Asean-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) agreement.

### **2. Thailand elite cardholders offered new privileges**

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

The Thailand Privilege Card Co is launching a new “Elite Flexible One” campaign, which will make it easier for foreigners to buy property in the country. A separate “Welcome Back to Amazing Paradise” campaign has been launched to bring back existing elite cardholders, so they can contribute to the revival of the economy. Thailand Privilege Card Company Limited under the supervision of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), launched the “Elite Flexible One” project and “Welcome back to Amazing Paradise” campaign on Monday in a bid to respond to the government's policy to build confidence in the eyes of foreigners amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **3. Thailand Pavilion garners attention**

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

The launch of the Thailand Pavilion at Dubai's World Expo has received a favourable response and quickly become one of the top destinations among visitors, according to the Digital Economy Promotion Agency (Depa), a major agency dealing with Thailand's showcase event. The World Expo kicked off last Friday with the participation of 192 countries around the globe. The world's biggest fair runs until March 31 next year. Participating countries have to select one of three concepts to showcase their potential – mobility, opportunity or sustainability. Thailand chose Mobility, which showcases its advanced transportation, logistics, digital connectivity, along with personal mobility, through its four pavilion halls. Thailand is the only Asean country to choose the mobility concept, which makes it easier to display the country's full potential and identity, according to Depa.

#### **4. Two major retail brands Tops and Watsons join forces to introduce Watsons products to Tops' and Central Food Hall's shelves for the first time**

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

Modern trade industry is heated up once again as two major retailers in Thailand - Tops, the leading supermarket brand under Central Retail, and Watsons, the #1 leader in health and beauty stores in Thailand. Modern trade industry is heated up once again as two major retailers in Thailand - Tops, the leading supermarket brand under Central Retail, and Watsons, the #1 leader in health and beauty stores in Thailand, have announced an official partnership to win in the health and beauty market, which is Watsons' strength and expertise. Together, they will make Watsons' 200 best-selling products from five popular brands available outside Watsons for the first time, introducing an omnichannel experience starting with 30 branches of Tops market, Tops daily and Central Food Hall, as well as Tops online.

#### **5. State rejigs EEC investment plans**

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

The government has revised investment plans in the state flagship Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), as it aims to drive economic growth by 4.5-5% a year between 2022 and 2026. Kanit Sangsubhan, secretary-general of the EEC Office, said the EEC is hoping to become the country's vital investment destination during this period to draw investment at an average of 400-500 billion baht a year. "The government is ambitious to recover the economy to grow by 4.5-5% a year over the next five years with a special focus on speeding up investment in technology, innovation research and development in the EEC," he said. According to Mr Kanit, the EEC Policy Committee's meeting chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha yesterday endorsed the revised investment plan for the EEC for the period 2022-26 with a combined investment value of 2.2 trillion baht.