

Editorial

The 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck Myanmar, toppling buildings as far away as the Thai capital Bangkok on March 28, 2025. It has caused significant disruptions in central Myanmar, particularly in the Sagaing, Mandalay, and Naypyitaw regions where the Myanmar IP Department (MIPD) is located. Consequently, the MIPD online system is currently inoperative and undergoing urgent repairs.

As a result, IP agents in Myanmar are temporarily unable to submit their IP applications (Patent, Trademark and Industrial design), oppositions, responses to notifications, and related processes neither submit manually nor electronically from March 28, 2025-April 6, 2025. Currently, we have been updated by our Myanmar associate that the urgent repairs have been completed. The MIPD online system is now fully operational from April 7, 2025 and has resumed accepting IP applications and related submissions as normal.

In Bangkok, Thailand, the Department of Intellectual Property (DIP), the national office resumed to work on March 31, 2025 and now accepts IP applications as usual. We are also thankful for all the heartfelt messages pouring from our associates overseas. We still pray for people who suffered and loss of their lives from this disaster in both of Thailand and Myanmar. We assure you that our team will remain hopeful and recover strongly with your support, which means a great deal to us.

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1. NRCT urges more innovation development

(From www.nationthailand.com, February 4, 2025)

Bangkok – The National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) urged Thailand to develop innovation further to boost the country's competitiveness. Among 133 economies featured in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2024, Thailand climbed from 43rd to 41st, the country's innovation competitiveness was ranked third in ASEAN. Its innovative competitiveness was better than the average competitiveness among 34 upper middle-income economies, NRCT director Wipharat Deedong said. The country had done well in four of seven criteria under the GII include human capital and research, infrastructure, market sophistication, knowledge and technology outputs.

2. 145 suspects, half of them Chinese, arrested in crime crackdown in Bangkok

(From www.nationthailand.com, February 20, 2025)

Bangkok – The Metropolitan Police Bureau has arrested 145 suspects, including 9 Thais, 77 Chinese, 32 Myanmar and others of various nationalities in a three-day crime suppression operation in Bangkok. Offences ranged from drug and gambling crimes to immigration and business law violations, including 1 drug case, 67 gambling cases, 15 immigration law violations, 68 breaches of alien business laws, 21 customs law violations, 33 cases of intellectual property rights violations and 9 other offences. The operation involved officers from 88 police stations, nine divisions and the arrests took place across 123 locations in Bangkok.

3. Japanese Firms Eye Thailand as Production Hub Amidst China Concerns

(From www.nationthailand.com, February 24, 2025)

Bangkok – Japanese Companies are considering relocating some production from China to Thailand, seeking supply chain and reduced exposure to the US trade tensions. This report comes after a successful investment mission to Japan by the Thailand Board of Investment (BOI). The BOI emphasizes its commitment to sustainable development through investing in education and skills training, developing infrastructure, fostering innovation across industries, providing supportive policies and regulations. BOI Secretary-General Narit Therdsteeasukdi met with investors in three key sectors including semiconductors, automotive, food and packaging.

4. Transport Ministry to upgrade Ranong Port after 200% import-export surge

(From www.nationthailand.com, March 9, 2025)

Bangkok – The Transport Ministry has planned to improve facilities and services in Ranong Port after a 200% surge in import-export volumes. The government will promote the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) and enhance Thai logistics to meet international standards. The port is under the Port Authority of Thailand (PAT)'s supervision, has been instructed to expand container yard areas and upgrade facilities for improved shipping services. It operates two piers: a multi-purpose pier capable of accommodating cargo ships with a weight of up to 500 gross tons, and a container pier designed to handle vessels weighing up to 12,000 deadweight tons. The growth of Ranong Port links to neighboring countries, especially Myanmar, which is a major market for Thai exports, said PAT director Kriengkrai Chaisiriwongsuk.

5. Thai steel industry in crisis as cheap Chinese imports surge

(From www.nationthailand.com, March 13, 2025)

Bangkok – Thailand's steel factories are shutting down due to cheap Chinese steel factories in Thailand ramp up steel production. In 2024, Chinese steelmakers exported 110 million tons, mostly

to Thailand and neighboring ASEAN countries. Chinese steel manufacturers have been allowed to set up factories in Thailand using induction furnaces technology that China banned in 2017 due to its environmental impact. Thai steel factories that shut down this year used electric arc furnaces for production of steel bars and wire rods, resulting in higher costs. The factory closures have calls for urgent government action to maintain the Thai steel industry's competitiveness in the long term.

6. Chinese manufacturing firms drive up land price in the EEC by over 26%

(From [Bangkok Post, Thailand, March 14, 2025](#))

Bangkok – The relocation of manufacturing bases by Chinese companies is the main factor driving up the prices of lands in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). The land price index for Q4 last year was 14% higher than the five-year average index before the Covid-19 pandemic. The Government Housing Bank's Real Estate Information Centre (REIC) said an increasing number of Chinese investors' relocation to the EEC was boosted by the opening of the government's All-Service Centre in Amata City Industrial, Chonburi province. The centre facilitates investors in obtaining various permits and licences, supporting their setting up of manufacturing bases in Thailand.

7. Thailand's automotive industry faces severe EV transition

(From www.nationthailand.com, March 15, 2025)

Bangkok – Thailand's automotive industry is facing significant disruption as the global shift towards electric vehicles (EVs) accelerates. The sector is crucial with a market value of 2.1 trillion baht, representing 11% of the country's GDP and employing 690,000 people. According to Krungthai COMPASS analysis, the transition threatens to displace over 100,000 workers. Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the International Labor Organization (ILO) has identified five key tools to mitigate the impact of this transition including skills needs assessment, training guidelines, occupational mapping, in-company trainer development, online training courses. These tools are not only for workers and enables business to adapt to structural changes, but the Thai government must also attract foreign investment in emerging technologies too.

8. Number of foreign investors in first two months rises by 68%

(From www.nationthailand.com, March 19, 2025)

Bangkok – Foreign investment in Thailand surged 68% in early 2025, with 181 firms investing 35.277 billion baht, led by Japan, China, and Singapore. According to the Business Development Department (BDD), the number of foreigners permitted to invest under the provisions of the Alien Business Act BE 2542 rose by 68% compared to the same period last year. The top five countries were Japan for 38 investors (21% of all foreign investors), China for 23 investors (13%), Singapore for 23 investors (13%), United States for 19 investors (11%) and Hong Kong for 16 investors (9%).

57 of the 181 firms invested in the Eastern Economic Corridor, with a total investment value of 17.546 billion baht.

9. Biodiesel brand a low-carbon boost

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, March 16, 2025)

Bangkok – Thailand’s National Energy Technology Center (ENTECC) and Japan’s New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) have launched H-Fame, a premium biodiesel which reduces the rate of engine wear and is suitable for trucks. H-Fame biodiesel was developed in 2017 with the support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST). It has been tested and ready for mass production with the cost could drop as low as 1 baht per litre. The pure H-Fame’s efficiency is comparable to B7, a type of common fuel, and emits less particulate matter.

10. Thailand enthusiastically embraces China’s smart farming methods

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, March 17, 2025)

Bangkok – Huida Tech, founded in Heilongjiang province, Northeast China, in 2009, has delivered more than 35, 000 autopilot steering systems, covering a total of 20.23 million hectares of farmland worldwide, including Brazil, Laos, Mexico, South Korea, Türkiye and Vietnam. Its intelligent water saving irrigation systems and agricultural drones are being piloted in Thailand and Vietnam. Local media reported that Thailand now has about 5,000 drones monitoring 4 million rai of land across the country. Huida plans to establish an innovation centre in Thailand to provide local farmers with comprehensive smart farming solutions. There are about 12 million farmers in Thailand and about 43 per cent of the land area is used for agriculture, contributing 8 per cent to the country's GDP.