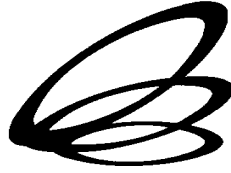


ศูนย์บริการลงทุน
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Thailand and Japan Held the 12th Meeting of the Enhancement of Business Environment Sub-Committee

The 12th Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Enhancement of Business Environment (EBE) in Thailand under the Japan–Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement (JTEPA) was held on 23 July 2025 at the Athenee Hotel in Bangkok, with discussions covering a wide range of issues that are crucial for Japanese business operation in Thailand, such as taxation - the use of e-documents for tax audits, immigration - the improvement of visa or stay permit procedures, employment, intellectual property (IP) - the acceleration of trademark and patent registration procedures and clarifying other relating IP regulatory issues, as well as transportation - further improvement of logistics system and rail and road infrastructure.

Mr. Toru Kajiwara, Economic Affairs Minister at the Embassy of Japan in Bangkok, was the Chairperson on the Japan side, with the delegation also including Mr. Ichiro Abe, the newly appointed President of JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) in Bangkok, and representatives of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce (JCC), led by Mr. Hiroyasu Sato.

The Chairperson of the meeting on the Thai side was Mr. Narit Therdsteerasukdi, Secretary General of the Board of Investment (BOI). The team also included Ms. Tanita Sirisup, BOI Senior Executive Investment Advisor, and officials from various Thai agencies such as the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Revenue Department, the Immigration Bureau, the Department of Employment, the Department of Intellectual Property, the Port Authority of Thailand, Airports of Thailand, the State Railway of Thailand, and the Thai Industrial Standards Institute.

Progress on Digital Transformation

The Japanese delegation commended Thailand's rapid and comprehensive rollout of its electronic tax (e-tax) system, which has significantly streamlined tax compliance for businesses. Thailand reaffirmed its commitment to expanding digital systems, including transitioning all tax-related processes toward fully paperless operations.

Thailand also confirmed its adherence to international standards, including compliance with the OECD Model Tax Convention, underscoring its position as a transparent and globally aligned tax jurisdiction that facilitates cross-border trade and investment.

In addition, the Department of Employment briefed participants on the upcoming expansion of the electronic work permit system. This new platform will enable businesses and foreign professionals to submit applications online anytime and from anywhere, with faster and more efficient processing.

Infrastructure and Logistics Development

The meeting also reviewed infrastructure and logistics developments. Discussions highlighted the expansion of Thailand's rail network in Bangkok and surrounding areas, the ongoing upgrade of Laem Chabang Port, and Airports of Thailand's development of cargo terminal facilities to boost air freight capacity. Thailand also emphasized its commitment to maintaining and improving road infrastructure to ensure reliable connectivity for investors. Thai government additionally set a goal to increase the rail transportation between Inland Container Depot (ICD) Lat Krabang and Laem Chabang Port to 50% from 36.4% in 2024.

Intellectual Property and Regulatory Reforms

Addressing intellectual property issues, the DIP reported progress on reducing the backlog of patent and trademark registrations. Measures include the introduction of a tele-consultation system to improve communication between patent examiners and applicants, as well as fast-track mechanisms for the issuance and renewal of trademarks for goods and services.

"Thailand remains one of the most important partners for Japanese enterprises," said Mr. Kajiwara, qualifying the talks as "frank and constructive". "We are proud to have contributed to job creation and economic wealth in this country for more than seventy years."

Cumulative foreign direct investment (FDI) in Thailand by Japanese companies stands at approximately 4 trillion baht, making Japan the top source of FDI in the country.

"I would like to reaffirm that the Thailand Board of Investment and other government agencies are fully committed to supporting Japanese business especially in the face of new trade dynamics, regional realignments, and rising geopolitical uncertainties," Mr. Narit said. "Thailand continues to prioritize stability, competitiveness, and value-added investment and we view Japan as a strategic partner in this next phase of our economic development."

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