

CHEMICALS

GGC gears up for pioneer bioeconomy complex

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SET-listed Global Green Chemicals Plc (GGC) plans a groundbreaking for the country's first bioeconomy complex in October.

The Nakornsawan Bio Complex (NBC) is located in Takhli district, Nakhon Sawan province.

It is a joint investment of GGC and SET-listed Kaset Thai International Sugar Corporation Plc (KTIS). Each company owns a half stake in the complex.

The NBC will occupy a 2,000-rai plot adjacent to KTIS's milling plant and sugarcane cultivation area in Takhli. The complex is aimed at adding value to biochemical products.

Witoon Suewatanakul, the newly appointed managing director, said the venture, GGC KTIS Bio Industrial Co, will soon start development of the first phase with an investment of 7.65 billion baht.

Of the budget, 7.5 billion baht is from a loan obtained by GGC and KTIS from Krungthai Bank.

The two companies started a feasibility study of the complex in 2016, then were granted Board of Investment privileges.

The NBC has two phases of investment. The whole project will be worth 40 billion baht.

Mr Witoon said the first phase is designed for a sugar-cane crushing unit with a daily capacity of 24,000 tonnes;

an ethanol production plant with a daily capacity of 600,000 litres per day; a biomass power plant at 85 megawatts; and steam at 475 tonnes per hour.

The first phase will start commercial operations in the first quarter of 2021.

GGC, a subsidiary of PTT Global Chemical Plc (PTTGC), specialises in biofuel raw materials from palm oil (methyl ester for biodiesel) and sugar cane (ethanol for gasohol).

Mr Witoon said the second phase will be planned during the construction period. GGC and KTIS are aiming tentatively for upstream bio-based feedstock for biodegradable plastics, cosmetics, additives, animal feeds, personal care, home care and fragrances.

Moreover, GGC and KTIS signed an agreement last August with Finnish state-owned Chempolis Co, a biorefinery technology provider, to conduct a feasibility study of biochemical products from sugar fibre.

The collaboration is to research and develop possible biochemical products from sugar fibre via Chempolis's cellulosic technology.

The project is set to add value to sugar juice and fibre with furfural, acetic acid and lignin for raw materials in biodegradable plastics, solvents and synthetic rubber, in addition to biomass.

The biochemicals study is expected to see viable outcomes within three years.