

## Tan Passakornnatee: The Resilient Thinker and Life Fighter

Mr. Tan Passakornnatee is a true "life fighter" in the competitive world of Thai business. As the founder of Ichitan Group Public Company Limited, he has proven that lasting success comes not from a privileged background, but from an unyielding heart and genuine action. His journey began at age 17 with only a junior high school education, starting as a low-ranking employee. At 21, he ventured out on his own, building a diverse portfolio of businesses, from a small newspaper stand to restaurants and real estate. However, his most significant challenge came with an economic collapse that left him with over 100 million baht in debt. Rather than giving up, Mr. Tan rebuilt his career and later founded Ichitan Group Public Company Limited, which became a great success and served as a launchpad for his later ventures in the beverage industry, cementing his role as a key figure in revolutionizing Thailand's ready-to-drink tea market.

The company's operation is more than just a pursuit of profit; it is a "mission" with a strong determination to give back to society with sincerity. He and his wife, Mrs. Eng, founded the Tan Pan Foundation, a non-profit organization with a focus on education and environmental development in Thailand. This aligns with his personal conviction to share opportunities and pass on good things to those in need. The story of Tan Passakornnatee is not merely a tale of a successful businessman. It is the story of a fighter who never gives up, a person who has overcome countless crises with determination and the courage to start over again. He is a role model for a leader who uses their success to do good and truly create positive change for society.

Mr. Tan believes that "faith" is the starting point of success, stemming from conviction and learning from role models. He admires a specific fighter, Dr. Thiam Chokwatana, who, despite having a limited education, inspired him to work hard and fight through problems. He believes that this mindset will lead to success.

He also holds the personal belief that a person's life will move in the direction of their thoughts and beliefs. He advises, **"If you want to be successful in life, associate with successful people,"** but clarifies this is not just about money. It's about surrounding yourself with people who are rich in happiness and have a positive attitude, so you can emulate their energy. Conversely, if you associate with those who are discouraged, your life will follow that path. He believes that **"what you choose is what you get,"** and that every crisis holds an opportunity.

### Company Achievements and the Role of the Entrepreneur

Mr. Tan Passakornnatee's entrepreneurial vision is the driving force behind his company's success and its profound influence on the ready-to-drink (RTD) tea market in Thailand. He is credited with leading a phenomenal market expansion, propelling the industry from a modest 900 million Baht in 2003 to an impressive 18 billion Baht. This explosive growth was a direct result of his commitment to continuous innovation, which transformed tea production from simple plastic bags to the world's most advanced cold aseptic filling system. This dedication to superior technology and strategic overseas expansion has firmly established his company as a dominant regional player.

## **A Leader in Crisis and Social Responsibility**

Beyond his corporate achievements, Mr. Tan has consistently demonstrated remarkable resilience and a deep sense of social responsibility. When the Ichitan Green Factory in Ayutthaya was submerged by the Great Flood of 2011, just one month before its scheduled opening, he viewed the disaster not as a defeat but as a profound lesson in coexisting with nature. This optimistic outlook led to the creation of 'Tan Land', a unique 2,000-square-meter learning center. Visitors can now explore the history of tea, from its ancient origins to the factory's state-of-the-art production technology. The Green Factory itself serves as a model of how an entire production system can reduce resource consumption while in harmony with the planet.

This proactive, community-focused approach is also a central theme in his other endeavors. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he spearheaded the establishment of the Tan Pan Isolation Center, which was built in a record-breaking 18 days to provide a safe space for patients. His more recent work includes the "Mae Sai Not Late" Project in 2024, providing crucial aid to flood-affected communities, and the Chiang Mai Heat Spot Reduction Project to combat PM 2.5 air pollution. These initiatives underscore his holistic view of corporate responsibility, one that extends well beyond business to social welfare and environmental protection.

## **Vision, Mission, & Future Plans**

The core of Mr. Tan's vision and Ichitan's mission is a commitment to giving back to society. He believes that business should create a positive impact on the community, society, and urban development. This philosophy guides his future plans, including projects that support local Akha tea farmers and contribute to urban development in areas like Nimman in Chiang Mai and the upcoming One ChiChan project.

He considers himself an ordinary person who was not born into wealth and who only graduated from junior high school. But he was able to succeed because he never had to fight alone. Having received countless opportunities and help from many people throughout his life, he feels a great duty to give back to the society that has always supported him. He sincerely hopes that his story will be an inspiration to everyone who was not born with a head start in life, to show them that "if I can do it, you can too." And he is confident that no matter what crisis Thai society faces, if everyone cooperates and helps one another, they will undoubtedly be able to overcome those obstacles.

## **Career Highlights**

- Started as a low-ranking employee, rising to sales supervisor.
- Established a successful business portfolio after leaving his first job.
- Overcame a 100 million baht debt after a major economic collapse.
- Pioneered the RTD tea market, expanding it to over 18 billion Baht.
- Transformed his flood-damaged factory into Ichitan Green Factory and Tanland ; learning center.
- Founded the Tan Pan Foundation to give back to society.

**You can start over if your heart doesn't give up.**