

## Daily Thai News Updates: 11 April 2017

### 1. Businesses seek action to check rise of baht

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

Business leaders are urging the government to take action over the Thai baht's appreciation before it hurts Thai exports. Chen Namchaisiri, chairman of the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI), said the strong baht is becoming a concern for businesses. Speaking at a meeting of the Joint-Standing Committee on Commerce, Industries and Banking (JSCCIB), Mr Chen said the business sector is calling for government measures to help curb the strength of the currency to prevent it from hurting Thai exports. The baht has risen by more than 3% so far this year to 34.64 baht against the US dollar, from 35.80 a dollar at the end of 2016, he said. The appreciation is high when compared with other Asian currencies, including the Malaysian ringgit, which rose only 1.2%, the Chinese yuan at 0.7% and the Singapore dollar at 3%, he added. "At this stage, we hope the government will monitor the baht closely and issues measures to help solve problems immediately if needed," said Mr Chen, adding that exports account for 70% of Thailand's gross domestic product.

### 2. THAI Smile tops online ranking

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

Travel booking site TripAdvisor surprised folks in the aviation industry, naming THAI Smile Airways as travellers' favourite regional carrier in Asia-Pacific and the best airline in Thailand. The wholly owned sister airline of flag carrier Thai Airways International was honoured on the basis of the quantity and quality of airline reviews and ratings submitted by travellers worldwide over a 12-month period to February 2017. The low-profile full-service THAI Smile is among 50 airlines worldwide named the winners of TripAdvisor's first annual Travellers' Choice awards. According to TripAdvisor traveller reviews, THAI Smile is lauded for its "super-clean cabin", "friendly and attentive crew" and overall, a "great value-for-money" carrier to fly with, with an overall 4.5 out of 5 bubble rating score. The hallmarks of the Travellers' Choice award winners are outstanding service quality and value, TripAdvisor said.

### **3. Unlicensed IoT platform to get spectrum**

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

The telecom regulator has tentatively identified spectrum in the 920-925 megahertz band for Internet of Things (IoT) access under the unlicensed platform. The aim is to establish standards to support a sustainable development of the burgeoning market for machine-to-machine communications and the IoT ecosystem. The move is part of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC)'s spectrum management roadmap, said NBTC vice-chairman Col Settapong Malisuwan. "We expect to announce the spectrum range for IoT in June," he said. "The vacant 920-925MHz spectrum is the most suitable band for unlicensed band operation." The 920-925MHz spectrum band is widely used by enterprises for retail business and security purposes through Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology, which uses electromagnetic fields to automatically identify and track tags attached to objects.

### **4. Thai exporter urged to prepare for US trade sanctions**

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

Representatives from manufacturing, trade and banking sectors discussed on Monday the trade issues with the United States after the US government reviews trade policy with 16 countries which have trade surplus with the US. Chen Namchaisiri, chairman of Federation of Thai Industries, said exporters have to prepare for any actions from the US, since the US government could raise high tariff rates or impose non-tariff barriers against Thai products. Thai exporters may have tried to seek new export markets, he suggested. He said the Thai government and private sectors have implemented many measures aiming at curbing intellectual property rights violation and labour rights abuses. This should save Thailand from trade retaliation, he said and added that initial assessment suggested that Thailand would not be targeted by the US. He said most of products sent to US are from US manufacturers who investing here. While leading Thai companies have also invested in the US soil.

## **5. Profiteers monitored during Songkran festival**

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

The government is warning local traders not to profiteer during the Songkran festival, and insists it has yet to approve price increase requests by traders for the festive period. According to Deputy Commerce Minister Sontirat Sontijirawong, the ministry has assigned the Internal Trade Department, which supervises domestic product prices, to closely monitor and examine consumer product prices during the Songkran holiday. Traders operating at major bus terminals and railway stations are particularly targeted, he said. Under the Price of Goods and Services Act, any traders found selling goods or services at prices higher than the reference prices will be subject to seven years' imprisonment, a fine of up to 140,000 baht or both. Vendors without price labelling will be subject subject to a fine of not more than 10,000 baht. In a related development, the Commerce Ministry yesterday started another Thong Fah (Blue Flag) Pracha Rat low-cost scheme, selling non-branded products 15-20% cheaper than market prices, mainly via small retail outlets and at retail and wholesale shops.