

## Daily Thai News Updates: 27February 2017

### 1. Raja Ferry looking at Andaman Sea route

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

Raja Ferry Port Plc, a leading ferry and boat service provider in the lower Gulf of Thailand, plans to expand to the Andaman Sea and connect its operation to the Pacific and Indian oceans. This expansion is part of the company's investment plan until 2020, said managing director Apichart Chayopas. Raja Ferry Port mainly carries passengers between mainland Surat Thani and Koh Samui and Koh Pha Ngan. "We want to link two oceans – the Pacific [to the East] and the Indian [to the West]," Apichart said. He added that the company should find out this year if this would happen after it submitted the proposal for the ferry operation and port construction to relevant agencies for consideration. He said the new route was designed to not only serve leisure and business travellers but also merchants who lived on the Andaman Sea side and who wanted to sell their craft products on the Gulf of Thailand side. The company was considering operating a 200-seat ferry that can also carry goods. "We have done a feasibility study on the new route for a year and found it is worth investing in," said Apichart.

### 2. DHL report highlights potential of online trading

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

Dhl Express has published research highlighting the significant growth opportunity for retailers and manufacturers with an international online product offering. The report – The 21st Century Spice Trade: A Guide to the Cross-Border E-Commerce Opportunity – looks in detail at the markets and products that offer the highest growth potential, the motivations and preferences of customers making international online purchases and the success factors for online retailers that wish to expand overseas.

It focuses in particular on the opportunity for premium products and service offerings, with higher basket values accounting for a significantly higher proportion of orders in cross-border transactions. The report reveals that cross-border e-commerce offers aggregate growth rates not available in most other retail markets: cross-border retail volumes are predicted to increase at an annual average rate of 25 per cent between 2015 and 2020 – from US\$300 billion (Bt10.8 trillion) to \$900 billion) – twice the pace of domestic e-commerce growth. Online retailers are also boosting sales by 10-15 per cent on average simply by extending their offering to international customers. An additional boost comes from including a premium service offering: retailers and manufacturers that incorporated a faster shipping option into their online stores grew 1.6 times faster on average than other players.

### **3.NMG turns its focus to online media**

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

Nation Multimedia Group (NMG) has announced its vision to become the leader in online media with 100-per-cent growth in online revenue. NMG chairman Thepchai Yong said the group is going through a restructuring process to focus on online media, which has enjoyed high growth. The group is revamping its personnel to implement the new direction, aimed at becoming the leader in online media. In the past, NMG has had a strong base of visitors to the websites of both Kom Chad Luek and Krungthep Turakij. Together with social media, the number of viewers and followers of the group’s websites has reached more than 10 million. The focus on online media will allow NMG to grow further in the future, he said. “This revamp is to focus our resources on online media. We need to restructure our media personnel to be in line with the new vision, which is to be a keen leader in online media. We need to make our media organisation well-fitting and flexible enough to move sustainably forward,” he said. Thepchai said that under the revamp, NMG aims to double its online media business this year in terms of number of visitors as well as revenue, which is expected to go up from Bt40 million last year to no less than Bt80 million this year. Last year, the group’s online media revenue came mainly from Krungthep Turakij’s website and bangkokbiznews.com.

### **4.Bangkok set to get its first SureStay Plus hotel**

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

Surestay Hotel Group has unveiled its first SureStay Plus hotel in Bangkok, marking the arrival of the revolutionary white-label, or unbranded, concept in Asia by Best Western Hotels & Resorts. The hotel is designed to allow economy and lower-midscale hotels to harness Best Western's global network, and the brand has now secured its first location in Asia, with the signing of SureStay Plus Sukhumvit Soi 2 – a new-build lower-midscale hotel being developed in the heart of Bangkok. Construction work started late last year and the hotel is expected to open in December. "SureStay Hotel Group has created a real buzz in the industry since it was launched in 2016, and I am delighted to introduce this unique concept to Asia," said Olivier Berrivin, Best Western's managing director of international operations – Asia. "Hotel owners will be able to benefit from Best Western's extensive global distribution and support network, while guests will be reassured by the fact that all SureStay hotels are bound by a 'SureStay Service Promise' to ensure quality. "I am confident that SureStay hotels will become the benchmark for high-quality, affordable accommodation across the region. The signing of SureStay Plus Sukhumvit Soi 2 will lead to a significant roll-out of this exciting white-label concept in key business and leisure destinations across Asia in future," Berrivin added.

#### **5. Pullman gets convention hall boost**

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

Pullman Bangkok King Power Hotel expects to get a meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibition boost with the launch of a new convention hall as part of a Bt600 million renovation. Nine years after debuting as world's first Pullman, Pullman Bangkok King Power has become part of Accor Hotels' network of upscale properties. The hotel this year completed what it hopes is a transformative renovation as it gets ready to enter its second decade in the Thai hospitality industry. "The hotel spent Bt600 million for the renovation, adding a new ballroom along with refurbishing facilities such as junction – the lobby and bar, swimming pool – as well as all guest rooms," general manager Marc Begassat said. After the renovation, the hotel has flexible meeting space with 20 meeting rooms including the new ballroom. The hotel has also improved its communication system and online services.

**By Shreya Chopra**



