

Thai News Update: 11 February 2019

1. Transit, EEC Projects Buoy Developers

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

Despite economic warning signs, property firms plan house and condo projects in capital, suburbs and EEC provinces. Listed property companies plan to invest more than Bt100 billion in land purchases this year for the development of condominiums and low-rise residential projects in Bangkok and the provinces. Planning for more than Bt300 billion worth of condo, single-detached homes and townhouse projects are being finalised, despite expectations of slower economic growth and the negative impacts from a new Bank of Thailand measure and a rise in interest rates. A recent survey by The Nation found that most listed property firms are continuing to expand their investments in land acquisition for residential development, especially in Bangkok and the provinces with a focus in the Eastern Economic Corridor, including Rayong and Chon Buri. All firms surveyed expect to boost sales and to maintain double-digit growth this year.

2. Thailand Allows Huawei To Open 5g Testbed

Source: Telecom Asia ([Link](#))

The Thai government has reportedly launched a new 5G testbed in the nation developed by Huawei, despite pressure from the US government to block Chinese equipment from 5G rollouts. Under the project, Huawei plans to establish a 5G lab in Chonburi, the heart of the \$45 billion Eastern Economic Corridor project, Reuters reported. Other vendors including Nokia and Ericsson and the nation's mobile operators have also established 5G labs at the site, the report states. The 5G testbed project will be Huawei's first in Southeast Asia, and modeled after its 5G collaborations in other markets. Huawei has secured more than 30 commercial 5G contracts globally.

3. Govt Urged To Establish EPA, Introduce Clean-Air Legislation

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

Claiming the authorities had failed to protect citizens from PM2.5 smog, especially the underprivileged in urban slums, academics have called for a clean-air act and an independent environmental protection agency (EPA) to safeguard the “people’s right” to a healthy atmosphere. Nuchanart Tantong, coordinator of the Four Regions Slum Network, said she and most of her neighbours living in a Bangkok slum had no idea that the haze lingering over the capital since December was toxic. “We just carried on with our daily lives in our non-air-conditioned homes and worked outdoors without any protection,” she said. “Having had no warning from the authorities, the poor people in the slums only learned from the media that the dense smog was harmful and we realised our health had been at risk for weeks.”

4. Academics Push For A Welfare State

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

The country should embrace a welfare state which can be made possible by having a secure source of financing and tax reform, a forum was told. The Sunday forum on a welfare state which has equal benefits of everyone at Thammasat University discussed growing disparities in Thailand, which it said highlighted the need for a decent welfare state. He said the gap was widening owing in part to centralised politics restricts access to the corridors of power to people who are financially better off.