

Thai News Update: 13 September 2018

1. ASEAN Leaders Agree To Tap 4th Industrial Revolution

Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

Leaders of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) members gathered at Hanoi on 12 September for the 2018 World Economic Forum on ASEAN, stressing the importance of fully tapping the Fourth Industrial Revolution for socioeconomic development. "Digitalisation has become a new growth catalyst," Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen said, adding that the technological frontier will create many positive changes. To tap great potential of the Fourth industrial revolution and minimize its potential negative impact, the Cambodian Prime Minister proposed ASEAN countries enhance quality of education and training, sharpen skills of labourers and entrepreneurs, seek innovations, introduce new business models, and improve hard and soft infrastructure, especially their regional connectivity capabilities, Xinhua reported.

2. Thai Airways Ranks Best Economy-Class Airline

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

Thai Airways took the top spot as the best economy-class airline in the world, according to the Skytrax's annual "Best Airlines in the World" ranking for 2018. Airlines based in Asia dominated the ranking, taking nine of the top 10 spots. The UK-based consumer aviation agency's survey based its ratings on more than 20 million customer satisfaction surveys.

3. Thailand Tops Tourism List For Chinese In H1

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

Thailand remained the top destination for Chinese travelling abroad in the first half of the year, according to a joint report by the China Tourism Academy and online travel firm Ctrip. The report said 71.3 million Chinese tourists departed from more than 200 Chinese cities en route to 130 countries in the first half, a 15% year-on-year increase. Dai Bin, president of the China Tourism Academy, said the most popular destinations were Thailand, Japan, Vietnam, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Russia, the US and Cambodia, in that order.

4. B1bn Target For Innovation

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

The Commerce Ministry has set its sights on boosting sales of innovative rice products to 1 billion baht next year after promoting more than 600 entrepreneurs to develop such goods this year. Adul Chotinisakorn, director-general of the Foreign Trade Department, said sales of innovative rice products supported by the department through the Institute for Agricultural Product Innovation (API) are estimated at more than 300 million baht this year. The API has teamed up with supermarkets and department stores to sell and promote innovative agricultural products.

5. Plan To Upgrade China-Asean Trade Agreement Unveiled

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

China will work with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to upgrade a strategic partnership and build a closer community of a shared future, Vice-Premier Han Zheng said at the opening ceremony of the 15th China-Asean Expo in Nanning, capital of the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, on 12 September. China welcomes ASEAN countries aboard the express train of China's economic development, Han said, and will share the dividends of economic growth with ASEAN. Han announced that China will work with ASEAN to upgrade the China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement signed in 2004 and accelerate talks for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. China has been ASEAN's biggest trading partner for nine consecutive years, while ASEAN has been China's third-largest trading partner for seven years in a row.

6. Thai Plan To Buy New Aircraft Gets Backing

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

A deputy prime minister and the finance minister are backing Thai Airways International (THAI)'s plan to procure a new fleet of aircraft to boost its competitiveness. Finance Minister Apisak Tantivorawong said on 12 September that THAI needed to procure a new fleet if it wanted to compete with foreign airlines. He said the National Economic and Social Development Board had not raised any objections against THAI's procurement of 23 new aircraft worth about Bt100 billion, but wanted the airline to provide a clear turnaround plan. Deputy PM Somkid Jatusripitak will visit THAI on 12 September to follow up on its turnaround plan, the planned procurement of new aircraft, their models and route adjustment.

7. Energy Ministry Aims To Boost Alternative Sources Of Power

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

The Energy Ministry's Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency (DEDE) aims to use alternative sources to produce 30 per cent of total power consumed in the country by 2037 as part of its new alternative energy development plan (AEDP). Praphon Wongtharua, DEDE director-general, said the department has also been drafting a power development plan (PDP) for the same period. The new PDP will be categorised into North, Northeast, East, West, South and Bangkok. With these plans in place, by 2037, 30 per cent of the total energy used in the country will be produced using alternative means, Praphon said. The BEC is part of the government's energy efficiency plan, which aims to save energy. From 2009-2018, some 650 buildings have been inspected, and over the past two years, about 114 buildings of 33 agencies have saved 430 million units of energy worth about Bt1.5 billion.