

Thai News Update: 14 August 2018

1. Government Urged To Help 1.2m Desperately Poor Thais

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

Economic think-tank cites huge income gap between country's rich and poor. At Least 1.2 million Thais are desperately poor and need urgent help from the government, the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) said. The national economic planning agency said it plans to prompt the government to assist people in the most serious financial distress as part of efforts to narrow the huge income gap between the country's rich and poor. "There are an estimated 1.2 million poor people who really need help from the government and the NESDB plans to propose that the government support this group first," said Thosaporn Sirisumphand, the newly appointed secretary-general of the NESDB, which reports directly to the Office of the Prime Minister. Economic think-tank cites huge income gap between country's rich and poor.

2. Latest Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge Study Finished In December: Chief

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

Studies on the economic viability, structural engineering and environmental impact of the sixth Thai-Lao friendship bridge will be completed in December, says the chief of the Highway Department. Thanin Somboon, the department's director-general, said the Cabinet has approved a Bt4.3-billion budget to build the bridge linking the neighbouring countries. The 25.8-kilometre-long bridge would link Na Tai district in Ubon Ratchathani across the Mekong River to Muang Lakhonpheng in Salavan province of Laos. When studies are completed, the two governments will sign a memorandum of understanding on funding sources and land expropriations for the project, Thanin said. The final details will be approved by the Cabinet in about January next year, he added. He said Thailand would shoulder Bt2.4 billion of the cost of construction, with the rest paid by Laos.

3. Egypt, Thailand To Adopt Five-Year Joint Action Plan In Economic Activity: Thai Ambassador

Source: MENAFN Daily News Egypt ([Link](#))

Over the last four decades, Thailand has achieved remarkable progress in social and economic development, moving from a low-income country to an upper-income country in less than a generation, according to the ambassador of Thailand to Egypt Chainarong Keratiyut-wong, who was a guest at a roundtable held by Daily News Egypt, along with representatives from the Thai embassy in Cairo, on August 8. The roundtable discussed all aspects of bilateral cooperation, as well as Thailand boosting its economy experience and tourism refreshment, at the newspaper's headquarters. 4 Thai cuisine demo series organised in 2018 including on 26 June, 17 July, 25 July and 7 August. During the roundtable, the embassy's representatives revealed that the Egyptian Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Thai Ministry of Commerce have a plan to hold a joint trade committee meeting at a ministerial level to discuss various economic issues, in order to further expand trade and investment cooperation between both countries. In the planned meeting, both countries will also adopt a five-year joint action plan generally related to economic activities, which is now drafted and considered by relevant agencies of both countries.

4. Minimal Harm To GDP Seen From Trade Tiff

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

The tit-for-tat trade dispute between the US and China is forecast to have a net negative effect on Thai economic growth of a mere 0.03 percentage points, says a source at the Finance Ministry with knowledge of the Fiscal Policy Office's estimates. An FPO study found that the US-Sino trade dispute would entail pros and cons for the Thai economy, the source said. The trade conflict will take a slight toll on Thailand's exports bound for China, shaving 0.11 percentage points off Thai GDP growth, the FPO estimated. The row will also create opportunities for Thailand, however, as Chinese investors may use the Southeast Asian country as a host for production and export to the US to avoid tariffs. Thai GDP growth will gain 0.08 percentage points in the event that the country is picked by Chinese investors to make products destined for the US, the Finance Ministry's think tank predicts.

5. A Thousand Cambodian Labourers Deported From Thailand

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

Some 1,000 Cambodian workers who failed to meet the deadline to legalise their work documents in Thailand have been deported since July 1, said officials at the Poipet border at Banteay Meanchey province. Provincial Labour Department director Ros Sarom said officials had issued legal documents to most Cambodians working in Thailand before July. “The word undocumented or illegal worker does not exist anymore. For example, those who remain illegally are workers brought into Thailand by agents, if they are arrested each worker could face a fine of up to 800,000 riel and they will be deported. “Undocumented workers will face stern action from the Thai government and Thailand has clearly announced that all Khmer and Vietnamese workers must be documented in order to work in the country. If undocumented workers are arrested, we cannot help them,” he said.

6. Pathum Thani To Grow Into ‘Market City Of Thailand’

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

Pathum Thani, known for its diverse range of markets, plans to revamp the sprawling facilities under an initiative that will see the area rebadged as the “Market City of Thailand” with international recognition. Under the initiative, launched as Pathum Thani Market 4.0, all the big traditional markets in the province will be modernised, becoming more hygienic and boasting store-like decorations. Staff will be trained in improved service and English-speaking capability. Each retail market would have its own brand and logo, as well as a website, which should be developed in at least two languages. For the wholesale market, traders should have their own applications to help them sell their products and provide information. They should develop a logistics system and provide efficient delivery services.

7. Cheap Imports Entering Via ASEAN Trade Pact May Hit Make In India

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

India’s big plan to boost ‘Make in India’ through higher import duties has encountered turbulence, with cheap products from overseas being routed into the country by misusing the freetrade agreement with the Association of South East Asian Nations. The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, or DRI, is enquiring into imports of mobile phones and other telecom and IT

equipment under the FTA route after allegations of abuse. “The agency has been asked to look into the issue,” said a government official privy to the development. India imposed customs duty on smartphones in July 2017 and subsequently increased the levy in the budget this year. Customs duties were also increased for automobile components, television LED/LCD and OLED panels, fruits, juices, smart watches and sunglasses in the budget.