

Thai News Update: 19 September 2018

1. US Tariffs On China Judged To Support Thai Export Growth

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

The latest round of US tariff hikes on an additional US\$200 billion (6.49 trillion baht) worth of Chinese goods is expected to help Thai exports, offering opportunities to replace the Chinese products. Pimchanok Vonkorpon, director-general of the Trade Policy and Strategy Office under the Commerce Ministry, said the higher US tariffs on 5,745 Chinese products give Thailand the potential to export more replacement goods. The tariffs cover a wide array of goods, from minerals used in manufacturing to vegetable juices and leather handbags. Chinese imports to the US will face a 10% duty effective from Sept 24 until the start of 2019, when the tariffs will jump to 25%.

2. Asean Gains From US-China Trade War, Turns Into Magnet For New Factories

Source: Business Standard ([Link](#))

No one wins from a trade war is a standard refrain among economists. Southeast Asian businesses are trying to prove that maxim wrong. The region is capitalising on a rush of new orders and production moves as firms reconsider their business in the US and China amid a deepening trade war. About one-third of more than 430 American companies in China have or are considering moving production sites abroad amid the tensions, according to survey results released on September 13 by AmCham China and AmCham Shanghai. Southeast Asia was their top destination.

3. Bombardier Eyes Bt100 Bn From Thai Rail

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

Bombardier, the Canada-based leading manufacturer of planes and trains, expects business value in Thailand to reach Bt100 billion by 2022 thanks to the Kingdom's increased investment in infrastructure projects, including rail systems. "This will boost by 100 per cent our total backlog, which is projects worth Bt50 billion already on hand and scheduled for delivery to our customers in the next three to five years," said Gregory Enjalbert, the company's vice president, Asia Pacific,

Rail Control Solutions, and managing director of Thailand Bombardier Transportation, during a group interview at InnoTrans 2018 in Berlin on 18 September.

4. New Draft Rules For Auction Of 900mhz Approved

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

The Board of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) yesterday approved new draft rules for the 900MHz auction, NBTC secretary-general Takorn Tantasith said. Some of the main changes from the previous rules included the increase of the starting bid price to over Bt37 billion from the previous price of over Bt35 billion. Unlike the previous rules, the new draft does not contain a clause requiring the bid winner to be solely responsible for any interference between this 900MHz band and the same band allocated for the future railway projects.

5. Agriculture Initiative Up For Approval

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

Govt offering farmers incentives to join public-private scheme for mutual benefit. The Cabinet will next week decide on whether to proceed with a public-private partnership initiative for the country's agricultural sector. If approved, the initiative will see the Commerce and Agriculture ministries helping farmers plan their production in response to solid demand from the market. "The Commerce Ministry will be in charge of finding the markets for crops while the Agriculture Ministry will check suitable areas of supply," Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak said on 19 September.

6. Thai Beverage Raises B77bn In Bonds Amid Jumbo Buying Spree

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

Thai Beverage Plc, controlled by billionaire Charoen Sirivadhanabhakdi, raised 77 billion baht in the country's biggest-ever corporate bond sale, according to people familiar with the matter. The company raised the money through a seven-part offering of securities and the borrowings will be used partly to refinance loans taken out by Thai Beverage for its purchase last year of a stake in Saigon Beer Alcohol Beverage Corp, said the people, who asked not to be identified because the

details are private. Thai Beverage, a spirits giant that makes Chang beer and SangSom rum, is among the nation's most acquisitive companies. In addition to its push into Vietnam, the firm last year agreed to buy more than 240 existing KFC restaurants in Thailand.

7. November Announcement Set For Digital Asset Licences

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

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) expects to announce the issuance of authorised licences for businesses involved with digital asset operations in November. Six digital asset exchanges have applied to seek operating licences, while there are two digital asset dealers and three initial coin offering (ICO) portals applying for licences to legally operate their businesses, said SEC secretary-general Rapee Sucharitakul. "We expect that the SEC's board of directors will approve the qualifications and other conditions at the next meeting scheduled in October and can forward [the approval] to the Finance minister soon," Mr Rapee said.

8. PM Prioritises Digital Upgrade

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

Thailand aims to play a key role in driving digital development in Southeast Asia to help reduce inequality, Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha said on 19 September. The country will take over the chair of Asean in 2019 and use this as an opportunity to drive digital development so the bloc can grow and strengthen together, the prime minister said. He made the remarks at the opening of a forum called Digital Thailand Big Bang that was organised by the Digital Economy and Society Ministry at the Impact Exhibition Centre. "Thailand's digital competitiveness has substantially improved to 39th place this year [up from 41st in a study of 63 regional economies] but we want to move forward together with other countries..."