

## Thai News Update: 26 January 2018

### **1. Thailand to be ASEAN-India Intermediary**

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

Thailand will act as an intermediary between India and ASEAN countries and also support constructive cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha told his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on Jan 25. Thailand will help enhance cooperation among all countries in the Indo-Pacific, Gen Prayut said, adding they would be encouraged to work together in all areas including economic ones through the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which was launched in November 2012. The total trade value between Thailand and India reached US\$0.38 billion last year, or 352.83 billion baht, jumping 34% from 2016. Thailand recorded a \$2.6 billion trade surplus with India in 2017.

### **2. Indian Expertise Wooed for Digital Projects**

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

Prayut said Thailand was ready to promote its creative partnership with India in all dimensions, including with digital cooperation in projects such as the development of smart cities. India was in an advanced stage of digital transformation, Prayut noted, and Indian companies could play a role in advancing Thailand's economic reforms, such as the Thailand 4.0 policy, the development of the Eastern Economic Corridor and the new S-Curve industries. On regional cooperation, both countries gave their approval to efforts for strengthened connectivity on land and sea, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region and through the regional comprehensive economic partnership (RCEP). India said it views Thailand as a major neighbouring country, in terms of a shared sea, would seek new sea stability cooperation, promote anti-terrorism and actions to combat transnational crimes as well as pursue cooperation in tourism and connectivity among both countries' tourist cities. Thailand and India will also cooperate on matters relating to palm oil and natural rubber.

### **3. ASEAN-India: Shared Values and a Common Destiny**

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

Thailand has emerged as an important trading partner of India in Asean and is also one of the important investors in India from Asean. Bilateral trade between India and Thailand has more than doubled over the last decade. We are important regional partners linking South and Southeast Asia. We cooperate closely in the Asean, East Asia Summit and Bimstec (the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic as also in the frameworks of Mekong Ganga Cooperation, Asia Cooperation Dialogue and Indian Ocean Rim Association. Thailand's prime minister's state visit to India in 2016 has made a long-lasting impact on bilateral relations.

### **4. Chatuchak Market to go Cashless from June, SRT Says**

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

Starting at mid-year the world's biggest weekend market is going to go 'Full 4.0' with stalls and even the parking area to switch to payment by card or QR code. The State Railway of Thailand (SRT) aims to begin turning Chatuchak market into a cashless commercial area by June. The SRT is planning to spend more than 100 million baht on developing Chatuchak market, starting with the introduction of automated parking lots, he said. Meanwhile, a plan to build air-conditioned lavatories around the market has gained traction, with the SRT holding talks with private firms for construction rights.

### **5. TAT to Focus on ASEAN Visits**

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

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has pledged to boost cross-border tourism and raise the number of Asean tourists coming to Thailand. Tanes Petsuwan, deputy governor for marketing communications at the TAT, said Thailand has opened about 30 overland border checkpoints for international visitors from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Malaysia. There are four friendship bridges with Laos and two with Myanmar, with more planned. For air connectivity, Mr Tanes said Airports of Thailand Plc operates six international airports that serve 135 scheduled and chartered airlines. Meanwhile, marine connectivity is on the rise, with Phuket, Pattaya and Koh Samui home to a number of cruise and yachting marinas. Ferry connectivity with Malaysia is growing and is expected to grow in the in the future with Indonesia, Cambodia and Myanmar.

## **6. Fintech ‘Sandbox’ Ready For Start-Ups to Test Ideas**

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

Thai Fintech Association (TFTA) president Jessada Sookdhis presided at the signing this week of an agreement to launch the “F13 Fintech sandbox”. The signatories were Thai IT infrastructure service provider TCC Technology and Leap Solutions Asia, the cloud-platform provider for the initial batch of 13 start-ups. The F13 initiative will allow fintech start-ups in Thailand to test, simulate and launch programs in an online cloud platform. The connections will be under the scrutiny of national regulators. Thirteen teams are participating in six categories-blockchain, insurance, retail investments, personal finance, lending and credit, and business tools.

## **7. BMW Group Thailand Sets New Annual Sales Record in 2017**

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

BMW Group Thailand has announced a historic sales record with 11,030 BMW and Mini vehicles delivered to customers from January to December 2017, an increase of 39 per cent year-on-year and the first-ever five-digit sales figure in the company’s history. These milestones have made 2017 the most successful 12-month period for all of BMW Group Thailand’s three business units-with BMW Thailand in particular posting the highest growth rate across BMW’s global network at 43 per cent year-on-year, according to a company press release on Jan 25. A total of 10,020 BMW cars were delivered to Thai customers in 2017, a robust increase of 43% from the previous year and the highest growth recorded for the year across all of BMW’s global operations.

## **8. MICE Industry Ties in With Region-Wide Tourism Promotion**

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

The Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) hosted the ASEAN MICE Conference 2018 at the 37th ASEAN Tourism Forum in Chiang Mai on Jan 24. Held for the first time in conjunction with Southeast Asia’s most significant annual tourism-promotion event, the conference showcased “MICE Cities”, creating business opportunities for second-tier cities to accommodate corporate meetings and conferences. The partnership encourages collaboration in significant areas, such as policy coordination in promoting the MICE industry and the development of infrastructure and facilities.