

## Thai News Update: 27 March 2019

### 1. Border Volume Falls In February On Strong Baht

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

Thailand's border trade fell in February, attributed to a strong baht and higher competition from Chinese goods. The Commerce Ministry's Foreign Trade Department on 26 March reported overall cross-border trade, including transit trade, shrank by 2.47% year-on-year in February to 83.8 billion baht. Transit trade consists of businesses connected with the passage of goods through more than one country. Exports from Thailand tallied 48.4 billion baht, down 3.77% from February 2018. Imports contracted by 0.63% to 35.3 billion baht, resulting in a trade surplus of 13.1 billion.

### 2. Plan To Construct Own Trains In Northeast Gathers Steam

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

The Transport Ministry is planning to set up train assembly plants in the Northeast to ease Thailand's heavy dependence on train imports in a move to slash government spending on new rolling stock 10-fold. If the ambitious plan is realised, the cost of procuring new trains, which is currently estimated around 70 billion baht, will fall to between 6 and 7 billion baht, Deputy Transport Minister Pailin Chuchottaworn said on 26 March. The Transport Ministry is working with the Industry Ministry and the Board of Investment to kick start the plan next year.

### 3. Genomics Action Plan Approved Until 2024

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

On 26 March the cabinet approved a five-year action plan to drive genomics development during 2020-24, worth 4.5 billion baht. The government aims to increase competitiveness in the medical industry, one of 12 targeted sectors promoted for the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). Nathporn Chatusripitak, a spokesman for Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak, said the action plan covers R&D and development of medical services for genomics, infrastructure and

human resources. Genomics is the branch of molecular biology concerned with the structure, function, evolution and mapping of genomes.

#### **4. RS Dives Into Commerce, Retail Sector**

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

RS on March 26 announced its new vision, following a full-stream migration to the commerce and retail business sector. The company is confident that the new business model will bring in a new high in profits, with the plan to expand its business in CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) starting from next year. RS has moved its business category in the Stock Exchange of Thailand from “media & publishing” to “commerce” with effect from March 29. “Now the company is entering the second phase and will focus on expanding its multi-platform commerce (MPC) business via TV channels in Thailand, as well as online channels and sales representatives,” said Surachai Chetchotisak, CEO of RS Plc.