

Thai News Update: 29 March 2019

1. Thai Fruit Exports Jump Under FTA Deals

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

Thailand exports \$2.65 billion worth of fruits last year, a 17.05 per cent increase for the previous year, driven by the country's free trade agreements (FTA) with Asean, China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand, Peru, Chili, and Hong Kong, according to Auramon Supthaweethum, director general of Trade Negotiations Department under the Commerce Ministry.

2. Smartcard Scheme Racks Up B76.8bn In 14 Months

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

The government has spent 76.8 billion baht on the welfare smartcard scheme for low-income earners over the 14 months through February 2019, says the chief of the Comptroller-General Department. Most of the spending was for Thong Fah Pracha Rat shops, with the remainder for cooking gas purchases, fares for inter-provincial buses, trains, and public buses in Bangkok, and training course expenses, said Suttirat Rattanachot, director-general of the department.

3. EEC Projects On Track Despite Post-Election Muddle, Transport Official Says

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

It's business as usual for the development of key infrastructure projects in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), says a senior minister, who insists the government is not in a caretaker role in the unclear aftermath of the general election Deputy Transport Minister Pailin Chuchottaworn said the incumbent government has the full authority to proceed with every project as scheduled, highlighting the five biggest ones planned for the economic zone. Pailin said that these projects are for the U-Tapao airport and Aviation City developments, an aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul centre, the third phase of Laem Chabang Port and the Map Ta Phut Port, and a high-speed railway.

4. Capital Outflow Seen After Dividend Payments

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

Kasikorn Bank forecasts foreign investors to withdraw up to Bt87 billion from the Thai capital market after receiving dividend payments for the second quarter from listed Thai companies. Advanced Info Services Plc has announced a total dividend payment of Bt7.4 billion to foreign investors, Bt7.2 billion from PTT, and Bt4.6 billion from Kasikorn Bank, said the bank's economic and capital markets research manager Kobsit Silapachai said on 28 March.