

Thai News Update: 2 March 2020

1. E-commerce thrives due to Covid-19 threat

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

Covid-19 might have caused tourism to plunge, but it has paved the way for e-commerce to flourish as consumers switch to online channels to buy products and services and refrain from going to crowded spaces to avoid the virus risk. Thanawat Malabuppha, president of Thailand e-Commerce Association and CEO and co-founder of Priceza, a popular e-commerce hub in Thailand, said that sales of online products because of the outbreak had almost doubled especially in product groups related to protection against the virus.

2. Thammasat University to collaborate on new 'smart city'

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

Universities and their buildings and infrastructure are more than just the physical space where students and their professors meet for lectures. These learning institutions improve and rejuvenate the areas they are situated in, and become inexorably linked to the communities which they serve. One recent example is Thammasat University's Rangsit campus in Pathum Thani, which recently embarked on a collaboration with Harvard University and three Thai companies to design and build a satellite city in the adjacent Nava Nakorn Industrial Zone. The project is being touted as the "Thammasat-Nava Nakorn Smart City" and the first draft of a blueprint is expected to be finalised by the middle of the year.

3. Thailand looks to clear Bangkok's polluted skies with giant railway linking China, Singapore

Source: Straits Times ([Link](#))

Bangkok, a capital choked by daily gridlock and seasonal toxic haze, is at the centre of plans for Thailand's biggest rail development project that will make travel by train possible to China and Singapore, and will connect most major Thai cities to Bangkok and its expanding transit systems.

The Thai government has committed to spending more than US\$21 billion (S\$29 billion) to expand Bangkok's rail transit, extend train lines, and build high-speed rails - with a massive US\$1.3 billion hub at the centre that will become South-east Asia's largest train station when it opens in 2021. The plan is part of the government's move to ease air pollution.

4. Thailand raises threshold to 1 million US dollars for repatriation

Source: Thailand Business News ([Link](#))

The Bank of Thailand has relaxed foreign exchange regulations by increasing the threshold for proceeds that do not need to be repatriated from current \$200,000 to USD 1,000,000. Ms. Vachira Arromdee, Assistant Governor, Financial Markets Operations Group, Bank of Thailand (BOT) announced that the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Thailand have relaxed foreign exchange regulations to increase the threshold for proceeds that do not need to be repatriated to USD 1,000,000 (a relaxation from the current threshold of USD 200,000). The relaxation includes not only export proceeds but also other income as well.

5. ASEAN museums use 3D data to preserve items in online archive

Source: Nikkei Asian Review ([Link](#))

Southeast Asia's museums, galleries and libraries are preserving their most fragile collection items using 3D data technology, making them available online for anyone who wants to take a close look. From Indonesia's 14th century La Galigo script, which is listed in the UNESCO Memory of the World registry, to a collection of gilded manuscript cabinets from Thailand, 160 items have been digitized and were published online in the ASEAN Cultural Heritage Digital Archive this week. Anyone can visit the website, browse the items, and zoom in and turn the 3D items around to various angles. Items currently in the archive come from six institutions in Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia, including the National Museum of Indonesia and the National Library of Thailand.