

Thai News Update: 3 April 2019

1. Thai Fruit Exports Rise To \$2.65 Bln Under FTA Deals

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

The Director-General of the Department of Trade Negotiations, Auramon Supthaweethum, said Thailand exported fruits worth 2.65 billion US dollars in 2018. This is a 17 percent increase year-on-year, driven by the country's free trade agreements (FTA) with the ASEAN, China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand, Peru, Chili, and Hong Kong. Ms. Auramon said the ASEAN and China are the main markets for Thai fruits, accounting for 2.13 billion US dollars or about 80 percent of the total value of Thai fruit export last year.

2. Duty-free Bid Rules Panel To Wrap Soon

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

A panel to consider whether the bidding for the duty-free concession falls under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Act is expected to present its findings within two weeks, Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak said. The panel, set up on Friday and chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, will also look into whether the auction for non-duty-free commercial operations at Suvarnabhumi, Phuket, Hat Yai and Chiang Mai airports comes under the newly amended PPP Act.

3. FPT Eyes TCC Land to Expand EEC Estates

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

SET-listed industrial estate developer Frasers Property (Thailand) Plc (FPT), formerly TICON, owned by the Sirivadhanabhakdi family, wants to utilise the vast land bank of the family's TCC Group, some tens of thousands of rai in Chon Buri and Rayong, to expand its industrial estates and capitalise on interest in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). President Sapon Racharaksa said TCC Group's largest land bank in the eastern provinces boasts more than 10,000 rai, located

near industrial estates in Chon Buri. In this province, FPT has 700-800 rai remaining for new industrial estate development.

4. Foreign NVDR Shorts Permitted

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

The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) will allow foreign investors to borrow stocks listed as non-voting depository receipts (NVDRs) for short-selling transactions, effective 3 April. Last year, several brokerage firms were fined by the SET because they allowed foreign investors to trade stocks without securities-backed collateral or had no securities borrowing and lending. The practice is known as naked short selling, which is against the rules and regulations of the SET. All investors are required to have securities-backed collateral before ordering trade transactions. SET president Pakorn Peetathawatchai signed the order on March 19 to let foreign investors borrow underlying securities on the NVDR list as ordinary shares eligible for short-selling transactions.

5. Smart Cities Development To Be Given A Big Push

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

The Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA) aims to set up smart cities to cover 77 provinces within the next five years. The agency next year will set up 13 smart cities in the provinces and will join business partners to showcase smart city solutions. Passakorn Prathombuts, DEPA's senior executive vice president, said the agency aims to develop smart cities to cover 77 provinces in the next five years in order to improve the quality of life and boost the country's competitiveness. The agency aims to play the role of a facilitator to support both the private and public sectors in helping the development of smart cities. The agency, under the City Dara platform, will collect unstructured and structured information such as traffic data, CCTV, WiFi access and transportation to create a mega-data market place of the cities.