

## Thai News Update: 4 June 2019

### **1. Upgrades tipped as Phuket mulls new town planning rules**

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

The resort island of Phuket is likely to see a wide range of infrastructure upgrades and development as the government is stepping up its efforts to turn the island into Asia's hub for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (Mice), according to Thapana Boonyapavit, president of the Thai Association for Town Planning. The boom is made possible by the new town planning blueprint that will better regulate land use and infrastructure development in the world-renowned tourist destination. The draft has yet to be finalised, as the Interior Ministry is required to hold more hearings and reviews in order to ensure that the master plan meets the needs of the people and businesses and does not adversely impact the environment.

### **2. EEC-area residences see sales rates rise**

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

A decrease in new residential supply launched in three key eastern provinces in the second half of last year helped improve the average sales rate in the location to over 70%. Vichai Viratkapan, acting director-general of the Real Estate Information Center (REIC), said housing demand in Chon Buri, Rayong and Chachoengsao remained strong. "Housing transfers in the eastern region continued rising," he said. "The amount rose to 57,314 units, worth a total of 103 billion baht last year from 47,256 units worth a combined 84 billion, second only to Greater Bangkok." Last year, the three provinces saw a drop in the number of land allocation permits, low-rise construction permits and condo construction permits by 2.4% to 17,290 units, 17.1% to 24,911 units and 53.7% to 4,486 units, respectively.

### **3. Thai shippers slash 2019 export growth forecast to 1% from 3%**

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

Thailand's shipping body said on 4 June it had cut its 2019 export growth forecast for a second time in a month, to 1% from 3%, as global demand slows amid mounting trade protectionism. Exports, a key driver of Southeast Asia's second-largest economy, declined 1.86% in January-April from a year earlier, customs data showed. A global economic slowdown had affected consumers' purchasing power while a prolonged US-Sino trade dispute had disrupted supply chains, Ghanyapad Tantipitpong, chairwoman of the Thai National Shippers' Council, said in a statement. In May, the group cut its export growth estimate for this year to 3% from 5%, while the state planning agency lowered its forecast to 2.2% from 4.1%. Last year, Thai shipments rose 6.7%.

### **4. Economic package in the works**

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

The Finance Ministry will propose extra fiscal measures to boost the domestic economy that has been adversely affected by falling exports. “Officials have been working to come up with a stimulus package, as we expect the economy to slow down in the second half of the year. The economic package would be proposed to the new government,” said Lavaron Sangsnit, director-general at the Fiscal Policy Office. His comments came amid a slowdown in the Thai economy due to the impact of the trade tensions between the US and China. Thai exports in the first four months contracted by 1.9 per cent year on year. “We are hoping the economy does not see a sharp slowdown, hence the stimulus would not be a big one, as exports are not expected to contract significantly,” he said.

### **5. Thailand to enforce weapons export controls starting in 2020**

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

The Trade Controls on Weapons of Mass Destruction (TCWMD) Act, Thailand's export control regulation on dual-use and military items, received Royal assent and was published in the Royal Gazette on April 30, 2019. The Act will become effective on January 1, 2020 as Thailand implements its international obligations under the United Nations Security Council Resolution

1540 to counter the global proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The TCWMD Act places upon Thai Customs the task of controlling the export of goods that can be used for military ends or to produce weapons. The Act aims to prevent the goods from being acquired by sanctioned entities and/or used for the production of weapons of mass destruction abroad.