

## Thai News Update: 5 April 2019

### **1. Thai CP Group Nears Deal On High-Speed Link To 3 Airports**

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

Thailand's largest business group, Charoen Pokphand Group, is in late-stage talks to construct a high-speed rail line connecting three of the country's major airports, the railway authority said on 4 April. The State Railway of Thailand granted CP Group negotiating rights in bidding held last November, but talks on the 220 billion baht (\$6.92 billion) project stalled due in large part to financing issues. "CP has made a deal with a financial institution, removing a large barrier," a senior State Railway official said. The plan is to have the Thai government approve a final agreement by the end of the month once the details are worked out.

### **2. Ministry Plans New Rail Route To Cambodia**

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

The Transport Ministry is planning to open a new rail route to link Sa Kaeo's Aranyaprathet district with Cambodia to facilitate cross-border trade, and boost tourism around the eastern border of the country. Transport Minister Arkhom Termpitayapaisith said that the new rail route, which will be opened soon, will connect Aranyaprathet with Cambodia's Poi Pet, Sisophon and Battambang. Thailand will give a diesel-powered train to Cambodia as a symbolic gesture of cooperation between the two countries, Mr Arkhom said. The train will be unveiled at the opening of the new route.

### **3. Firms Urge Soft Loans For Robotics Adoption**

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

The Finance Ministry is set to issue legislation to facilitate mergers and acquisitions (M&A) of specialised financial institutions (SFIs) in a bid to enhance risk management and prevent competition with the private sector. The ministry's Fiscal Policy Office (FPO) is drafting a law for M&A of SFIs under a hearing process with four relevant agencies, including the State

Enterprise Policy Office, and SFIs involved with business transfers, said a source who spoke on condition of anonymity. The FPO will compile opinions from the hearing to improve the draft law and propose policies at a later stage.

#### **4. Tourism Authority of Thailand Splashing Out On Events**

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

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has announced the use of 30 million baht in funds to finance Songkran activities in 15 provinces, aiming to boost tourism income from the events to 21 billion baht. The celebrations will be carried out separately in each area, starting this Sunday through April 21, including in three less-popular provinces: Tak, Mukdahan and Ranong. TAT governor Yuthasak Supasorn expects the festival this year to attract some 3.1 million local tourists and about 546,000 foreigners, up 3% and 8% respectively. Tourism income anticipated from these two sources is 10.7 billion and 10.3 billion baht for a total of 21 billion baht, up 10% from a year earlier.

#### **5. Asean Payment Connectivity A Major Step Towards Cutting Transaction Costs**

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

Migrant Workers, tourists and small and big businesses will be able to cut the cost of their financial transactions in Asean after regulators, bankers and non-bank operators decided to integrate and upgrade their financial services across the region. Eight Asean countries agreed on Asean Payment Connectivity, which aims to cut transaction fees for migrants, tourists and businesses, during the meeting of Asean Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in Chiang Rai 3 April. Bank of Thailand (BOT) Governor Veerathai Santiprabhob and Perry Warjiyo, governor of Bank Indonesia (BI) signed the memorandum of understanding on Cooperation in the Area of Payment Systems and Financial Innovation.