

## Thai News Update: 20 September 2019

### 1. High-speed train talks with China back on rails

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

The Transport Ministry will hold contract talks with China for the joint high-speed railway project between Bangkok and Nakhon Ratchasima during the Asean Summit in November, Transport Minister Saksayam Chidchob said on 19 September. Mr Saksayam said Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang will also attend the Asean Summit, to be held in Bangkok. Thai officials and their Chinese counterparts have yet to reach a deal on the so-called "Contract 2.3" worth about 50 billion baht, which covers the cost of purchasing tracks, an electricity system, machinery, procurement of train carriages and training.

### 2. New traffic e-regs effective Friday

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

A new regulation enabling the punishment of errant motorists without seizing their driving licence becomes effective on 20 September as authorities begin to digitalise measures against traffic violators. Under the new Land Traffic Act, drivers will still be required to pay fines, however, the police will not seize their licences, as this is seen as a burden on motorists who usually have to go to the station to get it back. However, "drivers must still show their licence when asked," deputy city police chief Chirasan Kaeosaengek said on 19 September. An electronic driving licence the virtual version of a licence stored on a mobile phone app developed by the Department of Land Transport will be accepted, as will be a photo of an e-driving licence with a quick response (QR) code.

### 3. Fee ceiling curbs motor insurance

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

The insurance regulator is being urged to reconsider the ceiling on brokerage commission fees for motor insurance in order to accommodate existing market conditions, as the motor insurance

segment has posted losses for five straight years. Kheedhej Anansiriprapha, executive director of the Thai General Insurance Association (TGIA), said the net loss ratio for motor insurance has seen considerable increases in recent years -- to 66% for the voluntary base and 60.9% for the compulsory base in 2018, up from 62.8% and 41.2% respectively in 2014.

#### **4. No decision yet on LNG import plan**

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

Energy Minister Sontirat Sontijirawong said on 19 September that the ministry has yet to decide on the plan to import 1.5 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) annually from Malaysia's Petronas LNG. He was responding to a report which suggested that the ministry had cancelled an auction organised by the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (Egat) for the imports of LNG for eight consecutive years, estimated to worth more than Bt 100 billion. Egat uses LNG as input for electricity production. The Energy Ministry wanted Egat to buy LNG on the spot market, starting with small amounts and not exceeding 90,000-180,000 tonnes per purchase.

#### **5. OIC keen to enforce new regulations**

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

The Office of the Insurance Commission (OIC) aims to enforce the risk-based capital (RBC) 2 regulations by year-end after a public hearing suggested that some insurance firms are prepared to adopt the new rules. "The framework was brought to the OIC board last year, and the regulatory draft completed a public hearing with market participants, including accounting auditors," said OIC assistant secretary-general Chayanin Kerdpholngarm. "We have planned tentative enforcement of RBC 2 by this year-end, with an approval from the OIC board expected this month." But the insurance regulator is willing to adjust the regulatory framework if the new rules have a negative impact on Thai insurance firms, she said, as the OIC wants local companies to have a competitive advantage against regional peers.

#### **6. Post office touts express service to aid e-commerce**

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

Thailand Post is promoting its e-commerce delivery services with the "Morning to Afternoon Can Deliver, Afternoon to Next Day Can Deliver" campaign. In keeping with the theme, parcels

sent in the morning can be delivered in the afternoon and parcels sent in the afternoon can be delivered the next day, said Smorn Terdthampiboon, president of Thailand Post. This express mail service (EMS) is an answer to the rise of e-commerce. The post office has also extended its service hours to 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to respond to the e-commerce market that is growing steadily. A further promotion offers a 70% discount on postal charges for customers using COD services via Wallet@Post. The cash-on-delivery discount is available for items heavier than 500 grammes and up to 10 kilogrammes, from today until the end of October.