Thai News Update: 3 August 2018

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**1. Broader Growth Detected
Source: Bangkok Post (**[**Link**](https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/news/1514738/broader-growth-detected)**)**

Consumer sentiment rose to its highest level in 62 months in July, boosted by broader-based economic growth. According to the latest survey by the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC), the consumer confidence index in July rose to 82.2 from 81.3 in June and 80.1 in May. "Consumer sentiment has improved in all facets, including overall confidence in the economy, job opportunities and future income," said Thanavath Phonvichai, vice-president for research at the UTCC. "Consumers have started to feel that income in their wallets has increased on a gradual basis, as indicated by the active shopping spree during the recent long holidays." According to Mr Thanavath, the higher confidence reading for a second straight month in July also signalled that economic growth has become broader-based. Given the positive prospects, he said Thai GDP growth could reach 4.5-5% this year. The UTCC is scheduled to revise up its economic growth forecast next week.

**2.** **EEC Boosts Interest In S-Curve Industries
Source: The Nation (**[**Link**](http://www.nationmultimedia.com/detail/Economy/30351330)**)**

The Government’s Thailand 4.0 initiative and Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) mega-investment programme have significantly boosted businessmen’s interests in automation and related technology investment, according to Chaiyot Piyawannarat, ABB’s managing director for Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. Chaiyot said many Thai enteprenuers are now keen to invest in the new growth or S-Curve industries such as food and beverage, electric vehicles, and robotics. According to Chaiyot, food and beverage (F&B) has a strong potential because it is one of Thailand’s top-five exporters, with a combined employment of more than one million people and a relatively high percentage of local contents. Overall, there are 8,000-9,000 F&B and related factories with the major players already investing in innovation, automation and new technologies while a growing number of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are also considering to invest to boost their competitiveness.

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**3. China Puts 10,000 Tonnes Of Longans In Online Trolley
Source: The Nation (**[**Link**](http://www.nationmultimedia.com/detail/Economy/30351322)**)**

Some 10,000 tonnes of longans will be sent to China under a deal with Alibaba Group’s Tmall online platform. The Internal Trade Department signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the popular e-marketplace for the shipments over two months. The department is also joining with Thailand Post and the Cooperative Promotion Department to provide longans to the domestic market, expecting to supply about 500 tonnes by August 24. Boonyarit Kalayanamit, director general of the Internal Trade Department, said that the arrangement with Tmall would help longan farmers to expand their sales to the international market. Under the MoU, the department will be the facilitator in providing the longans to the Chinese market for the two months. It is also in talks with another giant e-commerce operator, JD.com, to distribute Thai fruit via the latter’s online channels to the international market.

**4. Thailand Surges 13 Spots In World Bank Logistics Index
Source: Bangkok Post (**[**Link**](https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/news/1514830/thailand-surges-13-spots-in-world-bank-logistics-index)**)**

Thailand's logistics performance has greatly improved this year, thanks to massive investment in transport infrastructure and relevant legal reforms. According to the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index 2018, Thailand rose to 32nd this year from 45th in 2016. Thailand's ranking was second only to Singapore in Asean, overtaking Malaysia, and was seventh in Asia. Thailand scored 3.41 out of 5, up from 3.26 in 2016. Kobsak Pootrakul, the Prime Minister's Office Minister, said the biennial index measures customs procedures; infrastructure development such as ports, railways, highways and related technology; international shipments; logistics competence; tracking and tracing; and timeliness.