

## Daily Thai News Updates: 19 January 2017

### 1. Central market spur ordered

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

Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak has ordered the Commerce Ministry to speed up the establishment of central markets nationwide, both for general products and those unique to each province, to serve as distribution channels for local vendors and traders. The work should be done in tandem with community market development, which will be further expanded to the village level through cooperation with the Village Funds and the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), said Mr Somkid during a meeting with senior-ranking Commerce Ministry officials yesterday. Mr Somkid added all the markets should be easily accessible, especially for tourists. "The Commerce Ministry needs to hold a brainstorming session with its officials at all provincial commerce offices regarding proper locations for the central markets. Decisions should be made in the next 3-6 months," he said. "From now on, it's the prime minister's and my policy that all ministries work closely with provincial governors to develop and stimulate provincial economies and raise local people's income." The cabinet on Tuesday approved an additional mid-year budget of 190 billion baht for fiscal 2017.

### 2. Existing production sufficient

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

New investments in the country's automotive sector, including the second phase of the eco-car scheme, are unlikely this year and next, as existing production is enough to serve both domestic sales and exports. Surapong Paisitpatanapong, a spokesman for the FTI's Automotive Industry Club, said manufacturers are running at 60-70% of production capacity, which totals 2.85 million units a year. "We believe carmakers are carefully considering decisions for any new investments because the current market and economic environment remain fragile," he said. "Once their capacity utilisation reaches 80%, new investments are likely to be reconsidered." More important,

he said, the overall private sector is now waiting for the government's new economic stimulus measures and incentives to lure new investments. The federation forecasts eco-car manufacturers will start investing in the second phase of the eco-car scheme by 2019.

### **3. TAT enlists Facebook to spread word**

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

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) plans to use Facebook Live as a tool to promote its campaigns, citing the application's growing popularity among Thais and tourists from nearby countries. TAT governor Yuthasak Supasorn expressed interest in initiating brand-new tourism campaigns using Facebook Live. "We hope Facebook Live will help stimulate both domestic and international tourist markets, as it has very high exposure worldwide," Mr Yuthasak said yesterday at the Asean Tourism Forum in Singapore. Using digital technology and social media, he added, will help the TAT reach target customers, especially young people and women. Technology will also help the agency stay abreast of trends in the digital world. The TAT has found that Facebook is one of the most influential social media, with the number of Facebook users in Thailand among the highest in the region.

### **4. Thailand unveils campaign to attract tourists from Asean nations**

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

Thailand is showcasing a tourism campaign in the Asean market called "Unique Thai Local Experience" with the expectation of attracting 9.2 million visitors from the region this year. The Tourism Authority of Thailand announced the national tourism campaign for 2017 last October. TAT unveiled the campaign to global markets at World Travel Mart in London in November, and the same campaign is being promoted to Southeast Asian markets this week at the Asean Tourism Forum (ATF) in Singapore. TAT governor Yuthasak Supasorn told media that travel to Thailand from Asean countries continued to grow thanks to visa-free policies, increasing trade and business contacts, strong marketing campaigns and more low-cost airline links. Last year, arrivals from the Asean nations to Thailand numbered 8.6 million. Malaysia topped the list with more than 3.14 million arrivals, followed by Laos with 1.28 million and Singapore with

846,646. The fastest-growing source markets were Myanmar, which grew by 35.09 per cent, and Cambodia, which increased by 28.56 per cent. This year, the number of tourists from Asean nations is expected to be 9.20 million, 5.0 per cent more than last year.

### **5. 98% of Generation Z prefers to shop in-store, study finds**

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

Despite expectations that the first “digitally native” generation would want to shop online, a new study by IBM and the National Retail Federation found that almost all members of Generation Z prefer to shop in bricks-and-mortar stores. With the global Gen Z population – people born after the mid-1990s until the early 2000s – set to reach 2.6 billion by 2020, retailers need to create more interactive engagement around their brands to serve the “always on”, mobile-focused, high-spending demographic, according to the study. “Generation Z expects technology to be intuitive, relevant and engaging – their last great experience is their new expectation,” said Kittipong Asawapichayon, country manager for the software group at IBM Thailand. “This presents a significant challenge for retailers and brands to create a personalised, interactive experience with the latest digital advances or risk falling behind. “This kind of innovation is not linear or a one-time project – it is a new way of thinking, operating and behaving. “Just as millennials overtook Gen X, there’s another big buying group retailers need to plan for, and it’s even larger and more enigmatic: Generation Z. These shoppers learned to ‘click’ before they could walk or talk, yet they also appreciate the hands-on experience of shopping in a store. “With technology constantly evolving but some shopping habits remaining the same, retailers need to be agile enough to serve both needs. That means being willing to experiment with new innovations to stay nimble and relevant to each new generation.”

**By Rajnee Narula**



