

Daily Thai News Summary: 14 January 2016

1. China's Yingli to start solar panel manufacturing in Thailand

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

Yingli Green Energy Holding or Yingli Solar has reached a joint-venture deal to establish a solar-panel manufacturing facility in Rayong. The plant, Yingli's first outside China, has an annual capacity of 300 megawatts of multicrystalline photovoltaic (PV) panels, which will be sold by Yingli under the Yingli Solar brand name. The facility is expected to begin operating in the second half of this year. The JV involves its subsidiary Hainan Yingli New Energy Resource and Demeter Power, a Thailand-based developer, EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) provider and operator of renewable-energy projects.

The 40:60 JV will fully implement the project with capital investment of about Bt689 million. Thailand's favourable business climate, coupled with its generous tax-incentive scheme, world-class infrastructure and continued government support for the expanding solar-power industry make it a perfect place for the joint investment, Apichet Bhusry, chief executive officer of Demeter Corp, said recently. Liansheng Miao, chairman and CEO of Yingli Green Energy, said: *"We are proud to establish our first overseas manufacturing operations in partnership with Demeter Corp, and we hope to expand the new factory's production capacity across the PV value chain in the future."*

2. Mizuho Bank first foreign partner in certificate issuance

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

Japan's Mizuho Bank has become the first foreign partner of the Business Development Department in its issuance of business certificates. Mizuho Bank's Bangkok branch will be able to issue e-certificates for enterprises in March. The department had only joined six local partners in issuing e-certificates to enterprises at 4,245 branches nationwide. The six local banks are Bangkok Bank, Krungthai Bank, Government Savings Bank, Kasikornbank, Siam Commercial Bank and Thanachart Bank.

Pongpun Gearaviriyapun, director-general of the department, said yesterday that the cooperation with Mizuho Bank was the next step of the department's services in facilitating enterprises, especially for Japanese firms doing business in Thailand. The department is trying to make it easier for entrepreneurs to establish businesses nationwide by reducing red tape, while promoting Thailand as an easy place to do business. Documents issued by banks and modern

traders will have 100-per-cent legal authority. Kentaro Maruki, joint general manager of Mizuho Bank's Bangkok branch, said the cooperation with the department would facilitate Japanese operations in Thailand. With full Asean integration, more Japanese and other foreign firms would become interested in doing business in Thailand, which is showing strong economic growth.

3. International travel fair set for February

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

The Thai Travel Agents Association (TTAA) and the Association of Domestic Travel (ADT) plan to hold the 18th Thai International Travel Fair (TITF) next month, aimed at helping the outbound-tourism business grow by 7 per cent and domestic tourism to increase by 25 per cent this year. Suparek Soorangura, president of the TTAA, said the event would take place at Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre in Bangkok from February 17-21.

The TITF is expected to attract more than 500,000 visitors from Thailand and overseas and generate income of Bt700 million for the tourism industry. He said three similar events were planned to run at the same time in major provinces upcountry. Chiang Mai will host the event in the North, Udon Thani in the Northeast and Phuket in the South. Suparek said travel operators from abroad would join the TITF, mostly from Myanmar, Brunei, the Philippines, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Singapore, mainland China, Japan, Hong Kong, India, New Zealand, Australia, the United States, Italy and Africa. *"This year, 65 operators from overseas will join the event and have a chance to talk with 1,200 local operators,"* he said. Suparek said 6.8 million Thais travelled outside the country last year. Half of them visited neighbouring countries, particularly Laos, Cambodia, Singapore and Myanmar. The association expects the outbound business to grow by 7 per cent this year thanks to the official implementation of the Asean Economic Community (AEC).

4. BT 70 bn set for farming entrepreneurs

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

The Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC) is planning to launch a 4-per-cent-interest loan with a budget of Bt70 billion to support around 7,200 small and medium-sized enterprises in the agricultural sector that have the potential to become role models for small businesses within their localities. The new loan budget will support the government's economic plans to shift Thailand from an export-led economy towards a domestic-led one amid the ongoing Thai slowdown and the new norm of low economic growth in major global markets. *"All five tangible measures that were agreed upon today will definitely be implemented*

this year," Somkid Jatusipitak, deputy prime minister in charge of economic affairs, said yesterday after signing five memoranda of understanding with around 30 public and private organisations on ways to steer the "Pracharat" ideology of economic partnerships among the people, government and the private sector.

Among the prominent agencies and institutions inking the MoUs were the Community Organisations Development Institution, the Internal Trade Department, the BAAC, the Government Savings Bank (GSB), the Industrial Promotion Department, the National Farmers Federation, the National Innovation Agency, the Federation of Thai SMEs, the National Village and Urban Community Fund Office, the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration, Biz Club Thailand, CP All, Tesco Lotus and Big C Supercenter. The first of the MoUs is for the National Village and Urban Community Fund Office to compile investment plans on local infrastructures from farmers, local communities, governors and local government before coming up with a budget for community projects that are most beneficial for local people as a whole, and for Pracharat projects such as storage facilities, processing and drying factories, and production equipment and machinery.

5. Thailand gains from China's outbound travel boom

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

South Korea, Thailand, Japan and Taiwan are among the top five favourite destinations for Chinese travellers, which were numbered 109 million in 2015. According to GfK's analyses, by the start of November 2015, counting air and overnight visits, the number of Chinese travellers to South Korea showed an increase of 112 per cent since 2011. Thailand experienced an increase of 263 per cent, Japan by 157 per cent and Taiwan 54 per cent. Hong Kong, which was the preferred destination for China's outbound tourists up until 2013, saw a 37 per cent increase in the period. *"China's outbound tourists remain strategic to Hong Kong and its businesses - but other destinations are jumping ahead in winning their favour. Destinations such as Hong Kong need to re-evaluate China's new breed of young and independently-minded travellers, to understand how best to attract them and capitalize on the growth of China's outbound tourism,"* said Laurens van den Oever, global head of travel and hospitality research at GfK. Since 2014, increasing numbers of China's outbound tourists have been opting for other destinations that offer historical and cultural experiences, as well as shopping. The analyses showed that last year China produced 109 million outbound tourists who spent a total of US\$229 billion (approximately Bt8.2 trillion).

6. Work begins on largest data centre

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

Construction has begun on the new US\$300 million (Bt11 billion) Supernap Thailand, the first Uptime Institute-rated Tier IV Gold data centre in Asia and the largest data centre in the Kingdom. Located in Hemmaraj Industrial Estate, Chon Buri, the facility is expected to open in the first quarter of 2017 with capacity of more than 6,000 data server racks. It is developed by Supernap Thailand, a joint venture of Supernap International, CPB Equity, Kasikornbank, Siam Commercial Bank, and True IDC. *"Not only will Supernap Thailand help grow Thailand's digital economy, but it will also support Thai companies that seek to expand their offerings to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) sector,"* said Somkid Jiranuntarat, vice chairman of Kasikorn Business-Technology Group. *"We know that ultimately this will support our customers and enable us to do more for the Thai business community and public. Having a world-class data centre is truly a competitive advantage for Thailand."*

By Harsha Hazarika