

Daily Thai News Updates: 21 December 2016

1. Thai online market set to reach \$37bn by 2025

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

An increasing number of internet users will likely spur the growth of Thailand's online market to US\$37 billion (1.33 trillion baht) by 2025, according to a joint research conducted by Google and Temasek. The E-economy SEA: Unlocking the \$200-billion opportunity in Southeast Asia study projected that of the total online market, e-commerce and travel would account for 88%. E-commerce is set to grow 29% a year from \$900 million in 2015 to copy1 billion in 2025. During the same period, the online travel market should grow five-fold to \$21.7 billion, or 18% per year. Among the factors supporting the growth is demographics. According to the study, Thailand is a young, increasingly affluent country with around 58% of the population below the age of 40. Thailand is also a highly connected country, with 57% of the population having access to the internet. Over 85 million mobile subscribers, representing a 125% penetration rate, are on 3G and LTE (Long-Term Evolution, a standard for high-speed wireless).

2. High hopes as mega-airport project near Phuket gets tentative name

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

A transportation mega-project north of Phuket under development by Bangkok Airways has been tentatively named the Phang Nga-Andaman International Airport. In what is being envisaged as either a public-private-sector partnership or a solely private investment, tourism-industry sources have confirmed that Bangkok Airways is in talks with Phang Nga province for a large-scale land lease for the facility, with the environmental impact assessment already in the works. The proposal has been submitted to the Forest Department. The location of the proposed airport is Moo 4, Baan Tha Dindaeng, Lam Kaeng subdistrict in Phang Nga's Thai Muang district. It sits on a site of about 2,000 rai (320 hectares). Tentative plans for the runway are for 3,000 metres, which would be longer than that of Samui's airport. Details on the cost and facilities of the airport have not been unveiled. Overseas investors and international brands are fuelling the momentum of a defined move north of Khao Lak into Bangsak and beyond, seeing a series of large upscale properties coming online.

3. SEPO draws up five-year plan to improve country's transport system

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

The State Enterprise Policy Office (SEPO) will propose to Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak its five-year strategic plan for 11 transport-related state enterprises, aiming to increase annual transport investment by 10 per cent and reduce goods-transport costs to 6.9 per cent of gross domestic product. Krichthep Simlee, acting deputy permanent secretary of the Transport Ministry, said SEPO had proposed to the ministry a strategic plan running from 2017 to 2021. It involves 11 state enterprises under the ministry and complies with the national five-year state-enterprise strategic plan. Krichthep said the Transport Ministry would send SEPO its comments and additional information on the strategic plan tomorrow (Dec 21) and propose it to Somkid on December 23 Friday before forwarding it to the State Enterprise Policy Committee chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha next month. The strategic plans of each state enterprise in the transportation field will be drawn up this month and in January for the committee's review in March.

4. Collaboration enhances Facebook user experience via DTAC network

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

Facebook users on DTAC's network will enjoy better services after the telecom giant teamed with Ericsson and Facebook to optimize the user app experience. Facebook is among the most popular apps in Thailand with 41 million users. DTAC, Ericsson and Facebook join forces to boost by 60 per cent the mobile-app performance on DTAC's 4G network. Prathet Tankuranun, chief technology officer for Total Access Communication (DTAC), said the company planned to invest in network development and its expansion. Prathet said that not only applied customers' best-service experience but also the user app experience on smart phones – taking it to the next level, especially on Facebook, the most accessed social media platform on DTAC's network representing over 90 per cent of the telecom's subscribers.

5. Uber embraces Line's messaging app

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

Uber Thailand has soft-launched its official account on Line, Thailand's most widely used messaging app, allowing people to seamlessly request Uber rides in Bangkok and Chiang

Mai directly via the app. Leon Foong, general manager of Uber Thailand, said that Line had 33 million users. He said that Line messaging had become a part of many people's daily routine, and Uber was increasingly becoming integrated into their lives. In Bangkok, Uber's services include uberX – an affordable and reliable ride at an everyday price – and UberBLACK, a premier ride in style for those special occasions. In Chiang Mai, uberX services are also available.

By Shreya Chopra

