

## Daily Thai News Updates: 25 January 2017

### 1. Export up 6.2% in December, 0.45% for 2016

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

Exports rose 6.2% year-on-year in December, pushing growth for the year into positive territory at 0.45%, with total shipments worth US\$215.327bn - the first rebound in four years. According to Commerce Ministry, Thailand shipped US\$8.165 billion worth of goods in December, the second straight month of annual gains after 10.2% surprise growth in November. Imports in December totalled US\$7.227 billion, an increase of 10.3% from the same month in 2015. This resulted in a trade surplus of \$938 million for the month. With the positive push from December, the country hauled its negative export performance back into the black zone with growth of 0.45% over 2015, with a total value of \$215.327 billion. Overall imports in 2016 were worth US\$94.668 billion, a drop of 3.9% from 2015, giving the kingdom a record trade surplus for the year of \$20.659 billion. Pimchanok Vonkhorporn, director of trade policy and strategy, said exports by the farm and agricultural industry sector expanded by 5.5% y-o-y in December, while the industrial sector rose by 5.4%

### 2. Thai exports could benefit, face risks from Trump policies

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

US President Donald Trump's trade policies could result in both positive impacts and risks for Thai exporters, who should hedge the exchange rate to protect themselves from uncertainty, according to a study by the Commerce Ministry's Trade Policy and Strategy Office. Pimchanok Vonkhorporn, director-general of the office, said one positive indication was Trump's clear announcement that the United States will leave the Trans-Pacific Partnership, of which Thailand is not a signatory, while Thai export competitiveness could improve if the Chinese yuan strengthens. "The new US trade policy is not clear yet. However, according to a preliminary analysis, Trump's new policy will create both advantages and challenges for Thai trade. To prepare for unexpected results, Thai exporters should hedge in order to assure their income," Pimchanok said.

### **3. CP joins 25 firms to promote food reform**

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

The Charoen Pokphand Group (CP) has joined 25 companies worldwide in food reform for sustainable and healthy food manufacturing and consumption, the company said in a statement. The Food Reform for Sustainability and Health (FReSH) was officially announced last week at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the company said in a statement. It aims to create a network of food and other business communities focusing on food security and sustainability, as well as healthy food manufacturing and consumption. Other members are Nestle, Danone, Unilever, Kellogg, PepsiCo, Bayer, DuPont, Google and Quantis.

### **4. Thai fintech sector calls for state support**

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

The Thai FinTech Association has called on the government to increase its support for local tech startups and financial institutions to enhance their competitiveness and prevent foreign giants from monopolising the fintech market. "It's time for the government to create a level playing field between local and foreign players and prevent monopolies from taking hold through the use of the Trade Competition Act," said Chairman Korn Chatikavanij. He expressed concern at the prospect of foreign players controlling the e-payment service market after Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba moved aggressively to increase its presence in Thailand through a partnership with CP All, the operator of 7-Eleven convenience stores in the country. "The alliance between the two giants poses critical challenges to Thai fintech companies," Mr Korn said yesterday at a seminar entitled, "The New Era of Digital for Business Solutions", hosted by Brother Commercial Thailand.

**5. Former British PM Cameron to speak at global tourism summit in Bangkok**

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

Former British Prime Minister David Cameron has been invited to deliver speeches about key issues that might influence global tourism at the “World Travel and Tourism Council Global Summit”, which is scheduled to be held in Bangkok in April. David Scowsill, president and chief executive officer of the World Travel and Tourism Council, said yesterday that Cameron would discuss some of the key geopolitical issues currently facing the world and how they affect tourism. The WTTC Global Summit is scheduled to take place on April 26 and 27 under the theme of “transforming our world and how the sector’s contribution to sustainable development can be maximised”. The event will bring together business leaders in the hotel and hospitality industries from around the world to share their experiences and visions. The summit will focus on the impact of security threats and climate change on the rights and ability of people to travel; the increased connectivity and infrastructure development in the Asean region; and the innovations that will enable travel and tourism growth in coming decades.

**By Rajnee Narula**



