

Daily Thai News Updates: 28 February 2017

1. Banpu Power posts 100% net profit rise in 2016

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

Banpu Power Plc has reported its 2016 business performance, with its net profit of Bt4.13 billion, a significant increase on the Bt2.07 billion it posted in the previous year. With its strong financial status, Banpu Power has affirmed its strategic plan in operating conventional and renewable power generation businesses throughout Asia-Pacific to achieve a power generating capacity of 4,300 megawatt electrical, of which at least 20 per cent will be a renewable base, by the end of 2025. Voravudhi Linananda, chief executive officer of Banpu Power, said its operating results in 2016 reflected the company's steady growth. The significant increase in net profit compared to 2015 came from the increasing contribution from the full commercial operations of Hongsa Power Plant in Laos since the first quarter last year. While the solar projects in China and Japan continued to progress as planned to start their commercial operations, the company said, adding that three projects in China started commercial operations in the third quarter last year. In the last quarter of the year, Banpu Power's initial public offering provided ordinary shares to all investor groups. The success has therefore assisted in generating funds for future strategic investments and growth, the company said.

2. TAT talks with Japanese, Korean airlines on luring 'quality tourists'

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

The Tourism Authority of Thailand is planning to work with airlines in Japan and South Korea to help beckon "quality tourists" to the Kingdom. TAT governor Yuthasak Supasorn said it would hold discussions with Japan Airlines and All Nippon Airways in Japan and Asiana Airlines and Korean Air in South Korea and ask these premium airlines to help encourage tourists to visit Thailand,

especially to new destinations being promoted. “Japan and South Korea are important markets for Thailand, but many tourists are unable to travel to Thailand during peak season because of a shortage of available seats,” Yuthasak said. “As these airlines are premium carriers, they should [be able to bring in] more quality tourists or high spenders from Japan and South Korea.” The agency’s increased cooperation with foreign airlines is aimed at attracting tourists to alternative or second-tier destinations that TAT is promoting. Yuthasak yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding with Goh Choon Phong, chief executive officer of Singapore Airlines, in order to promote travel to Thailand from priority markets including Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Last year, more than 900,000 tourists from Australia and New Zealand visited Thailand. The number is expected to reach 1 million after the MoU signing. Moreover, Singapore Airlines should beckon tourists from long-haul markets such as the United States, as it is now operating direct flights between Singapore and that country.

3. Egco funds 7 new power projects

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

Electricity Generating (Egco) Group has budgeted more than Bt30 billion this year for seven power projects both in Thailand and overseas, according to company president Chanin Chaonirattisai. Six of the projects are under construction and scheduled to start commercial operations between this year and 2019, including three small power producer (SPPs) projects – Xayaburi in Laos and San Buenaventura and Masinloc Unit 3 in the Philippines. In addition, share transfers for the Salak and Darajat geothermal power plants in Indonesia are in progress and expected to be complete this quarter. The Bt30-billion investment budget does not include new projects Egco Group is attempting to acquire or four other overseas projects under development. Of the four projects under development, two are hydropower projects in Laos – the Pak Beng project, which is waiting for the Mekong River Commission’s approval, and Nam Thuen 1, which is awaiting the attorney-general’s review of the power purchase agreement. The third overseas project under development is Units 3 and 4 of the Star Energy geothermal power plant in Indonesia, which is in the process of electricity-price negotiation with state-owned power company PLN.

4. SCB invests in new tech, training staff

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

Siam Commercial Bank will be the bank with all application platforms five years from now by partnering with a host of business categories to provide digital financial services. “Customer behaviour has changed, so we need to customise our services to cater to their different demands. “We also have to develop our services and our staff to cope with the changes in our customers’ requirements,” chief executive officer Arthid Nanthawithaya said recently. SCB will spend Bt40 billion from this year to 2021 to develop its technology and set up an academy to train its 25,000 staff to support the new concept. Customers do not need only to make a deposit or apply for loan when they go to the bank. They need more financial services to match their lifestyles, such as advice on investment or other financial instruments. Progress in technology has driven the bank to develop its system with such functions as PromptPay, e-payments and e-wallets.

5. Est maintains dominance in carbonated drinks market

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

Est by Thai Drinks Co continues to enhance its current predominance in brand positioning in the carbonated soft drinks (CSD) market. The brand strikes again this summer with ‘expansion of fan-love among teens across all lifestyle’ strategy. With this refreshing initiative, est will be introducing, for the first time, an innovative promotional campaign called ‘est Zaa Zeed Luek Dai, Tang Fin Tang Zing’, which essentially enables consumers to choose their prizes from the supreme enjoyment (or ‘fin’ in Thai) of being one of 500 people getting an exclusive trip on an island with GOT7, or the fun in driving away in a Toyota Yaris to escape the summer heat (100 units). The prizes are worth more than Bt57 million in total. Furthermore, the new limited-edition summer packages featuring GOT7 vibrant designs will also make this summer more refresh and active, available only this summer. Jesdakorn Ghosh, Senior Vice President of Thai Drinks Co., Ltd., said that with differentiation strategy in the CSD market last year under the ‘Happening’ concept has yielded positive results. “With this strategy, we have been ‘catching the waves’ of the most trendy activities and celebrities among consumers, from sports enthusiasts to music lovers. ‘est’ welcome the Thai superstar ‘Nadech’ and invited new-generation

By Shreya Chopra

