

## Thai News Update: 11 January 2019

### **1. Czech Pm To Visit Thailand Next Week**

**Source: Xinhua Net ([Link](#))**

Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Andrej Babis, will lead an official and business delegation to visit Thailand Jan. 15-17, the first-ever official visit to Thailand by a sitting prime minister of the country, Thailand's foreign ministry said in a press release on 11 January. During the visit, the Czech prime minister will have a meeting with Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha with a view to strengthening relations and deepening economic cooperation between Thailand and the Czech Republic, according to the Thai ministry. The Thai foreign ministry noted that the economic partnership between Thailand and the Czech Republic dates back more than a century through trade in machinery, automobiles and automotive parts. The two countries established diplomatic ties in 1974.

### **2. Private, Public Sectors Keen On New App To Promote Tourism**

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

Some 49 private and public institutes have entered into an agreement to establish a new social enterprise called Thai Digital Platform Co to provide integrated tourism information about Thailand. Under the plan, a new mobile application, TagThai, pronounced similar to takthai (greetings) in Thai, will be introduced in April. The service is scheduled to be fully operational in June, said Tourism and Sports Minister Weerasak Kowsurat. The app will feature information in Thai, English and Chinese. The establishment of the enterprise is part of the Digital Tourism Platform initiative, a cooperation between the public and private sectors to support the reform and sustainable development of tourism, said Mr Weerasak.

### **3. PPP To Pledge Privatising Alro Farmlands In Campaign**

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

Privatisation of agricultural public lands held under the Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO) is being advanced as an election promise by Phalang Pracharat party, despite objections

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from the Prime Minister and land rights activists. Boonchong Wongtrasirat, an MP candidate for the pro-junta Phalang Pracharat Party revealed on 10 January that his party intended to overhaul the approach taken with lands under the ALRO. While the land currently could not be sold or change hands, the party would allow land deeds and the transfer of ownership in an effort to tackle what it sees as a “land-use problem”. “The party’s promise to turn ALRO land into land deeds is coming from a genuine demand by the public, as many people who live on ALRO land have already shifted away from being a farmer and so changed the land use, but they cannot change or transfer land ownership to increase the value of the land,” Boonchong said.

### **4. Medical Price Control Plan Looms Over Private Hospitals**

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

Share prices take a hit as measure goes to cabinet while consumers breathe sigh of relief a cabinet meeting on January 22 will consider a plan to control the prices of medical supplies and services. The proposed move could have a far-reaching impact on the country’s healthcare sector. While the news has brought joy to consumers, the share prices of private hospitals dived yesterday. On Wednesday, the Committee on Product and Service Prices passed a resolution to control the prices of medical supplies and services. The committee made the plan after complaints from various non-governmental organisations about what they perceive as overcharging by some private hospitals.