

Thai News Update: 17 December 2019

**1. Thai Government announces its New Year's gifts for the people**

**Source: The Pattaya News ([Link](#))**

To brighten the coming New Year celebrations, many ministries have prepared special gifts to help reduce the financial burden on all groups of people. – The Ministry of Energy will stabilize the electricity price from January – April 2020 to reduce the financial strain on people as a New Year gift. It is expected that this will require a budget of approximately 6.8 billion baht. – With every 1,000 baht spent via the wallet app, each user will have a chance to win gold every week. Merchants will also benefit, as each electronic receipt on the wallet application will give them a chance to win gold.

**2. Asean paves path towards better FTAs**

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

Thailand looks poised to improve free trade agreements (FTAs) under the Asean framework next year, aiming to extend tariff cuts to cover more products, particularly sensitive items. The Trade Negotiations Department also wants to upgrade agreements so they are in line with changing economic conditions. Auramon Supthaweethum, director-general of the department, said the focus of negotiations will be the Asean FTAs with China, India, South Korea and a joint pact with Australia and New Zealand. "The review for the Asean-China FTA, for instance, will focus on improvements in market access to allow more products to receive tariff cuts," Mrs Auramon said.

**3. Myanmar gas deal to benefit Thailand**

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

A new cooperation deal between the Myanmar government and private energy company, MPRL E&P, will bring good news for Thailand's power generation sector, Myanmar's Ministry of Electricity and Energy said in a statement on 16 December. The statement was issued after MPRL E&P, a Myanmar-based independent energy company, successfully concluded negotiations with Yangon on two key agreements on fiscal terms and the sharing of output from

the A-6 offshore gas bloc in Myanmar. MPRL E&P is the only independent energy exploration company in Myanmar which actively explores both onshore and offshore wells in the country. In the statement, MPRL E&P said the talks resulted in a number of improvements in negotiating terms, which will be crucial to the economic viability of the gas exploration project, which is located in deep waters off the Myanmar coast.

#### **4. PTTEP allocates \$4.61bn for 2020 business objectives**

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

PTT Exploration and Production Plc (PTTEP) has announced planned expenditure for 2020 of US\$4.61 billion, equivalent to 139 billion baht. Of the 2020 budget, \$2.65 billion is capital expenditure and the remaining \$1.97 billion is operating expenditure. Phongsthorn Thavisin, president and chief executive, said PTTEP has many strategic plans next year. "In 2020, PTTEP will focus on capital expenditure for three business objectives: maintaining production of existing projects [\$1.94 billion], increasing production volume in the future [\$425 million] and discovering contingent resources [\$281 million]," he said. PTTEP's existing projects are the S1 in Sukhothai, Phitsanulok and Kamphaeng Phet, the Bongkot in the Gulf of Thailand, the Arthit in the Gulf of Thailand, the MTJDA in the Gulf of Thailand and the Zawtika Project in the Gulf of Martaban.

#### **5. Goodyear sees EEC growth potential**

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

SET-listed tyre maker Goodyear Thailand plans to expand production capacity for tyres for passenger cars and aircraft in Pathum Thani, taking advantage of new opportunities in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). The corridor promotes the automotive and aviation sectors as S-curve industries. Luca Crepaccioli, newly appointed managing director, said Goodyear is in talks with car and aircraft companies to supply tyres under new purchase contracts. Goodyear announced in August 2016 it had earmarked 5.63 billion baht for a radial aircraft tyre factory in Pathum Thani, targeting commercial airlines both in Thailand and abroad.

## **6. Thai energy firm sets sights on Taiwan wind power project**

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

Energy Absolute (EA), a renewable energy firm, is interested in bidding for a wind power project in Taiwan, the company's deputy chief executive officer Amorn Saphaweeikul said. He expected Taiwan to invite bids next year for Phase 3 development of the wind power to generate 3,000 megawatts. EA is closely monitoring the project, he added. He said Taiwan was a country with high potential in wind power generation. Besides Taiwan, the company has also conducted a feasibility study on investing in a hydropower project with capacity between 100MW-200MW in Laos, he added.