

Thai News Update: 20 December 2018

1. Thailand, Chengdu Meet Deepens Partnerships

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

The cooperation week events are held to build a platform for collaboration and exchange as Chengdu-based firms aim to expand into Southeast Asia, and to help businesses grasp opportunities related to China's One Belt, One Road initiative and Thailand's Eastern Economic Corridor, said a press release about the meeting. Contracts for 18 collaborative projects were signed for areas including smart manufacturing, big health, automotive, furniture, trade in fresh products, as well as cultural, artistic and educational exchanges.

2. NBTC Shutting Down 2G To Ease 5G entry

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

The telecom regulator is set to shut down the existing 2G network by October 2019 to give mobile operators more efficient network capacity and pave the way to 5G wireless broadband service by 2020. The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) is encouraging all 5.2 million 2G subscribers to transfer to 3G and 4G systems, which will save them money because the voice service tariff is lower. Oct 31, 2019 is the initial deadline for the 2G system shutdown, as the NBTC and telecom operators think 10 months is sufficient for the entire process, said Takorn Tantasith, secretary-general of the NBTC.

3. Joint Venture Firm To Establish Innospace

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

The Industry Ministry will encourage local and foreign companies to co-invest in a 500-million-baht joint venture firm for the establishment of the country's innovation space project in early 2019. The project, named InnoSpace Thailand Co, will be a public-private venture meant to support new startups in the country. This facility is positioned as the first innovation centre in Southeast Asia, in the region's largest special economic zone, said Industry Minister Uttama

Savanayana. The ministry recently received funds from five companies -- PTT, Siam Cement Group, Charoen Pokphand Group, Thai Beverage and Bangkok Bank -- for this joint venture.

4. Cabinet Reveals New Year 'Gifts'

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

A free internet connection, a free tour of 10 Bangkok temples, Bt40,000 funeral assistance and free emergency medical treatment for 72 hours at all hospitals are among the "new year gifts" that the cabinet has approved this week, said government spokeswoman Col Thaksada Saengkachan. With an election looming, the Digital Economy and Society Ministry also unveiled eight projects, including a TOT PCL free internet connection for three months for those registered for the Pracharath Network by January 15. The Culture Ministry's seven projects including a free one-day tour from 8am-4.30pm from December 30 - January 1 using Bangkok Mass Transit Authority's air-conditioned buses to visit 10 temples from the Chakkri Dynasty.

5. Not So Fast On Proposed Bank Merger, Apisak Says

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

A new government centre was launched on 18 December to protect parties affected by widespread infringement of intellectual property online, with the goal of stopping offenders' activities over the course of one to three days while waiting for the results of a formal investigation. The centre is being established so that police and other concerned state agencies can take immediate action to stop illegal online activities that are reported to the centre. The talks involved the view of the ministry on the tie-up as well as matters such as tax privileges for asset liquidation after any merger proceeded.