

Thai News Update: 21 January 2019

1. Sadao Checkpoint To Open 24 Hrs

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

Thailand and Malaysia have agreed to extend the operating hours of the Sadao-Bukit Kayu Hitam Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) Checkpoints to 24 hours for a three-month trial period, starting from April 1 this year, to reduce congestion at the border. The agreement was reached during a meeting between the foreign ministers of the two countries, as Malaysian Foreign Minister Dato Saifuddin visited Thailand on 19 January.

2. New Rules Stink, Say Fishermen

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

Samut Songkhram is the smallest province in the country, but has been known as a hub for Thailand's fishing industry for decades. The province has a 23km shoreline, dotted with fishing piers. Along its roads are food processing plants, and it is only an hour's drive from Bangkok. Not surprisingly, fishing is the most popular profession and almost all the jobs there are related to the sea in some way.

3. Gi Product Sales Target Set At B30bn

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

The government aims to raise sales from geographic indication (GI) products to more than 30 billion baht over the next five years, while ramping up linking GI locations to tourism schemes. GI products sale topped 4 billion baht last year, up from 3.7 billion in 2017. Thosapone Dansuputra, director-general of the Intellectual Property Department, said the department has been working with all communities to develop unique indigenous products to add value, registering them as GI to boost community revenue.

4. Exports Shrink In December, Up Overall For 2018

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

Thai exports contracted 1.7 per cent in December to a combined value of US\$19.4 billion, the Commerce Ministry reported on 21 January. It said the shrinkage coincided with the global trade slowdown, ongoing trade disputes and disruptive emerging technologies in electronic products. Total export value in 2018 expanded 6.7 per cent from the same period last year, to \$252.5 billion. Imports in December decreased 8.2 per cent to \$18.3 billion, resulting in a trade surplus of \$1.065 billion. For all of 2018, import value rose 12.5 per cent to \$249.2 billion, creating a trade surplus of \$3.255 billion.

5. Tat Shows Foreign Visitors By The Numbers

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

The Tourism Authority of Thailand published a breakdown of 2018 visitors by nationality on the Facebook page of its Intelligence Centre on 19 January night, with Chinese leading the tally, to no one's surprise. Of the 38 million foreign visitors to Thailand last year, 10.6 million came from China, 4.1 million from Malaysia and 1.8 million each from South Korea and Laos. There were 1.6 million Japanese visitors, 1.5 million Russians and Indians, 1.3 million Singaporeans, and 1.1 million Vietnamese and Americans.