

## THAI NEWS UPDATE: 5 JANUARY 2022

### **1. Cabinet earmarks over 2 billion baht for infrastructure repairs**

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

The Cabinet on Tuesday set aside 2.13 billion baht from the 2022 national budget to fund the restoration of infrastructure damaged by flooding. The rainy season between May and October brought heavy rains and subsequent flooding to many provinces in Thailand, causing damage to national highways and rural roads. The departments of highways and rural roads have already spent about 8 billion baht repairing 663 roads in 31 provinces. Under the new budget, the Department of Highways will be given 1.65 billion baht and the Department of Rural Roads 476.44 million baht to repair more roads damaged by flooding.

### **2. AIS seeks 2 major partnership deals in 2022**

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

Advanced Info Service (AIS), the country's largest mobile operator by subscriber base, aims to seal two major partnership deals this year in a drive to complement its existing digital service. Speaking exclusively with the Bangkok Post, AIS chief executive Somchai Lertsutiwong said one of the deals would involve retail business. He did not reveal the other deal. The company is also studying the prospects of cryptocurrency and the metaverse to enliven its business outlook, said Mr Somchai. He said AIS is focused on maintaining the leading position for mobile business in terms of customer perception and value of services, shrugging off the planned merger between True Corporation Plc and Total Access Communication Plc (DTAC), the two other large mobile operators in Thailand.

### **3. Bitkub eyes overseas crypto expansion after stellar 2021**

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

Bitkub Online, the country's leading digital asset exchange, aims to increase its customer base to 7 million and expand its services abroad this year, starting in Southeast Asia. In a statement, the company said it plans to focus on security and product development to meet users' needs in 2022 after it enjoyed huge success in 2021, when the surging price of Bitcoin lured more investors to the market. This raised the exchange's trading value and cemented its position as the largest digital asset exchange in Thailand. Building on its 2021 success, the company said it aims to expand its customer base to 7 million, bring more than 100 digital assets to list on the exchange, increase the customer satisfaction level to 90%, and expand its services abroad. Bitkub also plans to tap into the high growth potential of upcoming digital

trends such as the metaverse and decentralised game finance by listing digital coins related to these future technologies.

#### **4. Suspension of Test & Go continues amid Omicron spike**

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

Thailand continues the suspension of the Test & Go scheme for travellers, as the country is battling the spike in Covid-19 cases driven by the Omicron variant, a senior Public Health Ministry official said on 4 January. Opas Karnkawinpong, director-general of the Department of Disease Control, said the country will not reimpose the quarantine-free programme due to the spread of Omicron. "Under the current circumstances, there's no plan to bring back Test & Go," Dr Opas told a media briefing. He did not elaborate on how long the scheme will remain suspended. On Monday, Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said he would ask the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) to keep the programme on hold until the end of this month.