

Thai News Update: 7 February 2020

1. Ministry issues new measure on strong baht

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

Finance Minister Uttama Savanayana said on February 6 that exporters could park more of their money abroad as the latest measure to curb appreciation of the Thai currency. Exporters will be allowed to keep a larger amount of their profits in overseas accounts, up to one million dollar from the \$200,000 currently allowed, he said. It will lower cost for exporters and at the same time lessen pressure on the baht's appreciation as exporters need not repatriate large sums of money back to the country. It will also lead to more balance between capital outflows and inflows, he said.

2. BOI rolls out economy-boosting incentives

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

The Board of Investment (BOI) on February 6 approved a wide range of measures to accelerate investment and support all sectors of the economy, from large-scale projects to small and medium-sized enterprises. The measures also include incentives to help strengthen the grassroots economy and the tourism industry. To encourage the private sector to participate more actively in improving the competitiveness of the grassroots economy in agriculture and agricultural processing, light industries and community tourism, the BOI approved an extension and improvement of a promotion measures allowing companies to enjoy tax benefits when they invest in such projects.

3. More banks fall in line on rate cut

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

TMB and Thanachart Bank cut their Minimum Overdraft Rate (MOR) from 7.175 per cent to 6.925 per cent on February 7 to ease the financial burden of customers and help lift the subdued economy. The move follows the policy rate reduction by the Bank of Thailand's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on February 5, effective immediately. Several major commercial banks have already trimmed lending rates after the MPC move. Export-Import Bank of Thailand (EXIM

Thailand) also announced on 7 February that it will cut prime interest rate for customers in general and SMEs from 6 per cent per annum to 5.985 per, effective February 11.

4. JAL expands role in local activities for rise in Thai passengers

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

Japan Airlines Co Ltd (JAL) has deepened its involvement in local activities in Thailand as a means to reach out to potential Thai customers, said Sze Hunn Yap, JAL's regional marketing manager, Asia Pacific. Its participation in local events such as the Japan National Tourism Organisation's travel fairs in Thailand, have served to familiarise Thais with the carrier. She hopes Thais would feel comfortable flying with JAL and the great value it has to offer, citing the carrier's high standards of products, service and hospitality.

5. Launch of e-KYC for deposits

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

The Bank of Thailand is letting six commercial banks offer facial recognition using electronic Know Your Customer (e-KYC) technology to verify the identity of new customers under the regulatory sandbox when opening online deposit accounts, starting on 6 February. The six banks are Kasikornbank, Bangkok Bank, Siam Commercial Bank (SCB), Bank of Ayudhya (BAY), TMB Bank and CIMB Thai Bank, said Siritida Panomwan Na Ayudhya, assistant governor for the central bank's payment systems policy and financial group. These banks are permitted to verify the identity of customers who use other banks' financial services through the National Digital ID (NDID) platform, enabling users to open deposit accounts through the digital channel without presenting themselves at branches and removing the need to fill out duplicate information, Ms Siritida said.

6. Uttama says state retains fiscal tools

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

The Finance Ministry is gearing up to borrow from domestic funding sources to finance state investment projects while enactment of the annual budget bill for fiscal 2020 remains delayed, says Finance Minister Uttama Savanayana. The ministry is able to resort to the Public Debt Management Act, which limits borrowing to 10% of budget expenditure, to fund new investment projects that are ready to start, Mr Uttama told the audience at Thursday's Post Today Economic Forum. The months-delayed fiscal 2020 budget, which already passed the Senate and House, is

at risk of falling further behind schedule after the Constitutional Court's decision to accept a petition asking for a ruling on the validity of the bill.

7. Thailand to hold World's Largest Parade of Food Trucks

Source: National News Bureau of Thailand ([Link](#))

The Kingdom is set to host the “World’s Largest Parade of Food Trucks”, and is planning the largest assembly of food trucks in one place. Tourism and Sports Minister Pipat Ratchakitprakan announced that his ministry, in collaboration with the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and Food Truck Club (Thailand) will be hosting the “World’s Largest Parade of Food Trucks” on March 7-8, 2020 at IMPACT Lakeside, Muang Thong Thani. The event will involve more than 200 food truck vendors, making it the biggest such gathering in the world, one which will break the previous record, held by the U.S. State of Florida since March 29, 2014, with 121 vehicles.

8. BoI approves investment, tourism incentives

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

The Board of Investment (BoI) on 6 February approved a wide range of measures to accelerate investment and support key sectors of the economy, from large-scale projects to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as incentives to help strengthen the grassroots economy and the tourism industry. “The measures approved today by the BoI aim to support investment at all levels, from large projects with a significant economic impact to community-level businesses,” Duangjai Asawachintachit, secretary-general of the BoI, said at a press briefing after a board meeting chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha. In 2019, investment applications filed through the BoI reached 756.1 billion baht, beating the government’s target, the board said last month. Out of the total value of these applications, 506.2 billion baht (67%) were applications for foreign direct investment.