

## Thai News Update: 8 January 2019

### **1. Austrian Renewable Model Gets Local Try**

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

An Austrian energy company has brought a new process for generating renewable energy to Thailand, with the hope that after initial success their model will spread to small towns across the country. The carbon-neutral waste gasification plant in Nong Bua built by Gussing Renewable Energy (GRE) recently began supplying power to the area in November, turning agricultural and forest waste from the local community to energy that could power about 3,000 homes. The company's original power plant in Gussing, Austria improved the local economy by bringing jobs and supplying hot water and energy to the entire town, and GRE wants to replicate this system throughout Asia.

### **2. TCEB To Spotlight Venue Standard, Promoting Thailand As Asian Mice Business Hub**

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

The Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) is planning a five-year venue development model scheme (2019-2023) with the intention of promoting the Kingdom as Asia's MICE business hub that meets international standards, as well as the centre for MICE education within Asean. Following its overwhelming success to date, the TCEB has set its sights on making more than 1,200 industry-standard rooms available by 2023, and featuring the largest number of MICE (meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions) venues in Asean. Additionally, Thailand Sustainable Event Management Standards, or TSEMS, will be launched next year in response to the world's trend towards business operations with social and environmental concerns, TCEB president Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya announced on 7 January.

### **3. Secondary Provinces Gain Traction: Expedia**

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

Cities such as Sakon Nakho, Nakhon Phanom and Nan saw over 50% growth in tourism popularity in 2018, according to a report by Expedia.com. The global travel booking site found large booms in search popularity among 10 Thai "secondary" cities through their internal flight data. Buri Ram, Loei, Roi Et, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Phitsanulok, Narathiwat and Ubon Ratchathani also saw over 50% increases in air traffic demand in 2018 compared with 2017. The report found Thai travellers prefer to travel close to home, and choose local destinations and short-distance domestic travel. Travel to secondary cities is on the rise, while Thais also prefer non-traditional accommodation such as apartment hotels, tents and bungalows.

### **4. Ministry Set For First Seom Meeting Here**

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

The Ministry of Commerce will host the first ASEAN Senior Economic Officials' Meeting (SEOM) in Bangkok from January 12-18 to push for economic issues and to conclude negotiations on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) this year. Oramon Saphaweetham, director-general of Department of Trade Negotiations, said that 12 economic issues will be proposed in the meeting, from the preparation to handle the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), promotion of micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), the expansion of ASEAN Single Window Customs System to include all 10 ASEAN countries, the promotion of food tourism in Asean to the promotion of sustainable fishery.