

Thai News Update: 8 January 2021

1. Commerce ministry announces core missions this year

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

The Commerce Ministry's core missions this year are to boost farmers' income and to ease people's living costs, said minister Jurin Laksanawisit on 7 January. Measures implemented by the ministry to meet those goals include the price guarantee scheme for farmers, the subsidised shopping scheme, and the push to expand Thai food's share of the global market. It will also continue to promote the use of digital platforms for exports and exhibitions, he added. Meanwhile, the ministry will accelerate negotiations for free trade agreements with countries and territories around the world.

2. IEAT plan for Chon Buri to forge ahead

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

The new coronavirus outbreak, which has spread to 56 provinces in less than a month, is threatening to affect short-term investment in Thailand as it is sapping business confidence, says the Industrial Estate Authority of Thailand (IEAT). Yet the IEAT remains firm on its plans to develop a new industrial area in the red zone province of Chon Buri. As daily infection rates remain volatile, including newly-found cases in factories, this has led the state to impose travel restrictions and order some businesses to shut, so Thai industry is beginning to undergo subsequent impact amid these developments.

3. Draft panel for five-year trade tactics

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

Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit has ordered a panel to be established to work on the country's strategic trade plans for 2021-25 to cope with the crisis and ensuing recovery. Speaking after outlining his 2021 trade policies to senior ministry officials, Mr Jurin said he assigned the commerce permanent secretary to chair the panel, which includes representatives from related government agencies and private sectors to draft Thailand's five-year trade strategies. "The new five-year trade strategic plan is a part of a 14-pronged strategy the ministry aims for this year," said Mr Jurin.

4. BMA looks into three approaches to solve thorny issues with BTS

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

January 15 will be the last day the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) allows commuters to use the Green Line Skytrain extension sections for free, after the sections that

run from Mo Chit to Ku Kot stations on the northern route and from Bearing to Samut Prakan stations on the southern route were officially opened for public use on December 16. Bangkok Governor Aswin Kwanmuang earlier said that the BMA had been negotiating with Skytrain operator Bangkok Mass Transit System Plc (BTS) about the fair for the BTS network, which consists of 59 stations covering a total distance of 68 kilometres.

5. B Grimm Power to enter growing independent power supply market

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

B Grimm Power has unveiled plans to enter the independent power supply (IPS) market, whereby companies produce electricity for their own use. The IPS market has significant potential for expansion given large companies are seeking to lower their energy costs, said B Grim CEO Harald Link on Thursday. Mixed-use projects (shops, offices and residential) are currently looking to produce their own electricity to cut high energy costs, he added. Link revealed he is in talks for electricity production projects with five or six clients, saying B Grim plans to begin investing in the market this year.