

Thai News Update: 9 December 2020

1. Egat to scale up robotics innovation

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

State-run Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (Egat) plans to scale up its development of innovations in energy and robotics for commercial purposes within five years, says assistant governor Venus Longsomboon. Egat is working on many projects to reduce dependence on imports of machinery and increase efficiency of power generation and transmission systems. A move towards commercial development is in line with economic policymakers who want Thailand to build technology in the country, said Ms Venus, who oversees research, innovation and business development for Egat.

2. AIS starts online ID checks

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

Advanced Info Service (AIS), the country's biggest mobile operator by subscribers, has launched online ID self-verification service to make it more convenient for people to sign up for financial services. AIS is working with National Digital ID Co (NDID), the creator of a platform to verify digital ID, for the service. Kiatnakin Phatra Bank (KKPB) is the first financial institute that has worked with AIS to allow customers to digitally verify themselves to open a deposit account without visiting a bank branch. Even people who are not AIS customers can use the service, which can be carried out at AIS smart kiosks at branches nationwide for free.

3. TDRI urges foreign property buyer support

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

To avoid an oversupply, the government should support foreign buyers purchasing residential units with measures to counterbalance the shortfall in domestic demand, says Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI). Nonarit Bisonyabut, senior research fellow at TDRI, said the government could allow foreigners to bid to purchase residential units. This method can attract their interest and limit the amount acquired by foreigners, who usually have higher purchasing power than Thais, he said. The number of units being offered for bids by foreigners should match the decrease in local demand, he said.

4. 'Let's Go Halves' co-payment scheme extended until Mar 31

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

The Cabinet approved the second phase of the Khon La Khrueng (Let's Go Halves) subsidised shopping scheme on Tuesday. The co-payment stimulus scheme will be expanded to cover 15 million Thais from the original 10 million. Until March 31, the government will pay 50 per cent of a participant's bill for food, drink and general goods up to Bt150 per day. The cap on the total subsidy per person over the whole period has been raised from Bt,3000 to Bt3,500.

5. Gulf's Sarath richest Thai stockholder for second year in a row

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

Sarath Ratanavadi, CEO of Gulf Energy Development Plc, is the wealthiest Thai stockholder for the second consecutive year with Bt115.29 billion, according to rankings compiled by Money & Banking magazine and Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Commerce and Accountancy. The rankings list major shareholders at close of trade on September 30 this year, after the SET fell to 1,237.04 from 1,637.22 last year. The fall wiped Bt140.796 billion off the value of major investors' stockholdings. The worth of Sarath's Gulf shares fell Bt5.67 billion from last year. Sarath is the company's largest shareholder with 35.44 per cent.

6. Progress on EV public transport blueprint

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

The Transport Ministry has reportedly asked the Office of Transport and Public Policy and Planning to study the plan to promote electric vehicles in public transport. The plan will pilot the use of electric public buses in six provinces – Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Nakhon Ratchasima, Ayutthaya, Chonburi and Phuket. Transport Minister Saksayam Chidchob said he had received the EV subcommittee's findings from its study of Thailand's transition from fuel-based vehicles to EVs.