

Thai News Update: 12 February 2019

1. Scg Rebrands For E-Commerce Pivot

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

The Thai government has reportedly launched a new 5G testbed in the nation developed by Huawei, despite pressure from the US government to block Chinese equipment from 5G rollouts. Under the project, Huawei plans to establish a 5G lab in Chonburi, the heart of the \$45 billion Eastern Economic Corridor project, Reuters reported. Other vendors including Nokia and Ericsson and the nation's mobile operators have also established 5G labs at the site, the report states. The 5G testbed project will be Huawei's first in Southeast Asia, and modeled after its 5G collaborations in other markets. Huawei has secured more than 30 commercial 5G contracts globally.

2. Farmer Aid Scheme Topped Up With B5bn

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

Another 5 billion baht has been added to finance the rice harvest and quality improvement scheme for farmers in the 2018-19 season. Boonyarit Kalayanamit, commerce permanent secretary, said the National Rice Policy Committee chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha yesterday approved an additional 5 billion baht for the rice aid scheme in the 2018-19 season that started in November last year, on top of 56.47 billion baht approved earlier.

43 Draft Rice Act Draws Objection From Industry

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

Rice industry employers and academics have opposed the draft Rice Act, claiming it would harm the Thai rice industry. The draft passed the first reading of commissioners under the National Legislative Assembly late last month. At a seminar on 11 February, Nipon Poapongsakorn, distinguished fellow at Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI), said the draft claims to reduce risk to farmers and draw a new generation to the farming sector, but gives great power to the government.

4. Somkid Hastens Mega-Projects

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

Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak has urged the Transport Ministry to speed up disbursement of its infrastructure investment as planned, while bids will open for six projects in February-March with contracts signed by the middle of the year. After evaluating the ministry's major projects that could help stimulate the Thai economy in the first and second quarters of this year, Somkid said investment, particularly in public infrastructure, was the key. Noting a slowdown in disbursement, he asked the Transport Ministry to push the pace of mega-projects. In particular, he asked national carrier Thai Airways International for implementation of its plan to procure 24 aircraft by the end of this month, as well as speedier execution of its maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) centre project, which is a joint project with European planemaker Airbus.