

## Daily Thai News Summary: 10 August 2016

### 1. UTCC boosts GDP growth forecast to 3.3% after vote

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

The Univeristy of the Thai Chamber Commerce has raised its forecast for the Thai economy to 3.3 per cent for this year, thanks to the “yes” vote in Sunday’s nationwide referendum on the draft constitution and a stabilised political outlook. Previously, the UTCC forecast that gross domestic product would grow by 3 per cent this year. Next year, the UTCC expects GDP to grow by 3.5-4 per cent. *"The better outlook for the economy resulted from the positive outlook for political stability after the approval of the draft charter in Sunday's referendum. Consumer confidence also increased in the latest survey,"* said Thanavath Phonvichai, director of the UTCC's Economic and Business Forecasting Centre. He said that with the approval of the charter, about Bt50 billion was expected to injected into the economy from more spending and investment. Other positive factors included the end of the drought, higher crop prices, expected government investment in the second half of this year, and better foreign-investor confidence.

### 2. Under Armour eyes regional growth

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

Under Armour, a US maker of performance sportswear and apparel, is committed to investing further in Southeast Asia, while its exclusive distributor for the region plans to add at least two branches per year in Thailand to cash in on the fitness fad. *"After launching six stores in strategic locations through Bangkok, in the remaining months Under Armour is opening two stores in CentralFestival Pattaya in October and Jungceylon in Phuket in December,"* Michael Binger, chief executive officer and co-founder of Singapore-based Triple Private Ltd, the exclusive distributor of Under Armour in the region, said yesterday. Each new location will occupy 200 square metres and cost Bt20 million, Binger said at the celebration of the first anniversary of his business in Thailand. Under Armour products are available in its stores at Mega Bangna, Zpell @ Future Park, Siam Paragon, The Emporium and The EmQuartier. The distributor also operates the brand's biggest house in Southeast Asia at the Siam Centre shopping mall. This 480sqm flagship store stocks a wide range of products, apparel and sports accessories.

A limited number of Jordan Spieth's Preferred Kits are available at this store as well as the latest edition of running shoes like the Bandit 2. With the growth in interest in sports and fitness in the country, the company will continue to put more money into branching out its stores.

*"We continue to build a solid foundation with our core apparel products and by emphasizing that training is a key fundamental in improving all kinds of sport performance," Binger said. Thailand is a new market for Under Armour but there is more room to grow, he said.*

### **3. WHA sets Bt 43 BN for investment**

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

WHA Corporation, also known as WHA Group, has unveiled a Bt43-billion five-year investment plan for Thailand and Southeast Asia in a bid to cash in on the emergence of high-end industries such as aerospace, as well as investment in logistics, the "digital economy" and real estate. Chief executive officer Jareeporn Jarukornsakul said yesterday that the listed group saw more opportunities in Thailand after the announcement of the government's initiative to develop the Eastern Economic Corridor in the provinces of Chachoengsao, Chon Buri and Rayong.

WHA Group is also planning further expansion in Southeast Asia to take advantage of the Asean Economic Community, which is within what she termed the "oval" of India and mainland China. *"We feel more confident in the future after the charter referendum vote [on Sunday], and expect to see more foreign investors [entering Thailand], too,"* she said. Jareeporn said the group would focus on its four core businesses - logistics, industrial development, utilities and power, and digital platform - with an innovative digital platform and smart facilities to facilitate the emergence of new industrial super-clusters.

### **4. CENTEL reports jump in Q2 profit on rise in foreign tourists**

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

CENTRAL PLAZA HOTEL (CENTEL) has enjoyed a 44-per-cent surge in second-quarter operating profit to Bt354 million on an 8-per-cent increase in foreign tourists. Chairman Suthikiati Chirathivat said yesterday that consolidated revenues for the second quarter rose 6.7 per cent to Bt4.77 billion from the same quarter last year. The hotel business picked up by 4.4 per cent to Bt1.93 billion and the food business by 8.4 per cent to Bt221 million. The mix from the hotel and food businesses was 40.5:59, compared with 41.4:58.6 for the second quarter of last year. About 30 per cent of international arrivals were Chinese, representing a 13-per-cent increase in arrivals year on year.

European arrivals increased by 11 per cent, driven mainly by the 38-per-cent growth in tourists from Russia, which indicates the continuing recovery of this source market. This positive

tourism trend corresponds to the improvement in average achieved occupancy (OCC) for Centel's hotel properties from 76 per cent to 78 per cent.

## **5. TeamFurn, partner opening Zedere furniture stores in China**

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

TeamFurn (Thailand) Co, manufacturer and exporter of furniture products under the Zedere brand, yesterday revealed a strategic joint venture with Aris (China), a top-five furniture retailer in China, for the opening of its first 90-square-metre Zedere furniture store in Beijing at the cost of Bt12 million. Under the partnership, the company expects to open three more branches in Beijing and two in Shanghai by the end of this year, with total revenue from Zedere malls in China targeted at Bt288 million. About 20 Zedere furniture stores are expected to be operating in China by next year.

Naithada Nunwitoon, a member of TeamFurn (Thailand)'s board, said the company had exported Zedere furniture to 23 countries. Australia is now the company's biggest market at Bt50 million in annual export value, followed by Japan at Bt37 million. Despite the sluggish global economy, Zedere has enjoyed export growth of 90 per cent so far this year. This is because consumers have recognised Zedere as a high-quality Thai brand, providing the best service quality, the company says. *"China is generating high demand, because [many] Chinese people are getting wealthy. They choose furniture according to what they like and not by brand. This means a good business opportunity for Zedere to expand its business in China. So we decided to cooperate with Aris (China), a top-five furniture retailer, to open a Zedere furniture store in Beijing at the cost of Bt12 million. Under the partnership, TeamFurn (Thailand) has invested Bt4 million in the store, with another Bt8 million from our Chinese partner Aris (China),"* Naithada said.

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