

Daily Thai News Summary: 13 November 2015

1. Bangkok ranked in top 10 emerging cities

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

Bangkok is ranked ninth among the top 10 emerging world cities in leading indicators, and sixth for human capital and innovation, according to new research from real-estate consultancy Jones LangLasalle (JLL). It is also ranked by the company as one of the manufacturing leaders among emerging world cities. Shanghai is ranked the top emerging world city, followed by Beijing and Dubai, the research found.

JLL added that Asia-Pacific's three established world cities - Tokyo, Singapore and Hong Kong - risked being outshone by emerging cities in the region over the next decade. Tokyo, Singapore and Hong Kong make up half of the "Big Six" established world cities and, along with London, New York and Paris, attract world-class corporations, talent and more than one-fifth of global real-estate investment.

2. Rice exports to stay strong, say shippers

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

The country's rice prospects are brightening with exports expected to stay strong at 9.5 to 10 million tonnes next year, says the Thai Rice Exporters Association. Thailand's rice situation is stable thanks to several pending purchase orders under government-to-government contracts with the Philippines and China, President Charoen Laothamatas said yesterday.

He expects Thai paddy prices will remain steady at 8000 to 8500 baht a tonne next year. The government is hoping to sell more rice from its stocks in the year to come due to lower output resulting from drought conditions. Drought is forecast to cut second-crop output next year by 50% to to 4-5 million tonnes of paddy from 8-10 million tonnes. The government through the Foreign Trade Department will sign a G-to-G deal this week to sell 500,000 tonnes of newly harvested rice worth 8 billion baht to Indonesia's rice-buying agency, Bulog.

3. Casio pins faith on Thailand for ASEAN expansion

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

Tokyo based Casio Computer Co, a maker of consumer electronics, is committed to investing in Thailand so that it can use the country as a springboard for expansion in Myanmar and Laos. *"We [Casio in Japan] are considering expanding our business into other Asean members including Myanmar and Laos through our Thai unit Casio Marketing (Thailand), which was assigned to be our base in this region, Thailand will be chosen to look after marketing activities in Myanmar and Laos. Thailand shares a relatively similar culture with those countries."* Even though Casio is a leading brand for consumer products, it is also operating IT solution services. Casio has operated for 30 years in Thailand, where it has mainly produced its well-known watches but also calculators and electronic dictionaries at its factory in Nakhon Ratchasima province.

4. Uber plans to expand driver

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

Uber expects 100,000 drivers to support its mobile-application-based ride-sharing service next year, up from 30,000 partners now. It also targets a three-minute response time from when a customer calls to the time of arrival of the car. Currently the average pick-up time or estimated time of arrival is 5.5 minutes. Chan Park, general manager for Southeast Asia, said yesterday that the company had now served more than a million rides on its platform. There are some 10,000 customers per week and about 20 per cent of them are active. Of the 30,000 car-driver members, 20 per cent earn Bt30,000 per month, with Bt134,000 the highest. The areas of highest demand for Uber are Ratchaprasong, Sathorn and Sukhumvit.

5. Stimulus to boost growth next year

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

The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking and the Thailand Development Research Institute see a better year for the economy in 2016, as the major drivers - consumption, exports and investment - are all expected to hit the road. *"The stimulus measures that have been introduced will contribute to better economic expansion next year along with the government investment on infrastructure,"* Supant Mongkolsuthree, chairman of the Federation of Thai Industries, a member of the Joint Standing Committee, said yesterday.

"The opening of the AEC [Asean Economic Community] will also be another important catalyst for GDP growth in 2016, as it could attract more investment from abroad, especially

from China," he told reporters at a seminar on "Thailand's Strategy: Prospering CLMV" arranged by the Thammasat Economics Association. However, another possible severe drought, continuing high household debt and a further delay in state investment projects could weigh on the expansion of gross domestic product next year.

6. Gems, Jewellery industry to seek govt support

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

The gems and jewellery industry plans to ask for the government's support on four main issues in a bid to double the share of Thai exports of these products in the world market to 4 per cent within five years. The proposal is to be made at a meeting on December 4 between Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and chief executive officers of key industries, mainly in food, gems and jewellery, and services.

The meeting is aimed at voicing private enterprises' opinions and complaints. Somchai Phornchindarak, president of the Gems, Jewelry and Precious Metal Confederation of Thailand (GJPCT) and former president of the Thai Gems and Jewellery Association, said his industry was facing four key problems: Shortage of skilled labour, lack of support for research and development, low financial liquidity, and the high cost of importing raw materials.

By Harsha Hazarika