

Daily Thai News Summary: 9 October 2015

1. SEZ privileges will cover 10 more sectors

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

Ten more industrial categories will be allowed to enjoy privileges given to those investing in special economic zones (SEZs) on top of the 13 approved earlier. The additional categories comprise crop drying and silos, byproducts of farm products, production of metal structures, general printing, animal feed and raw materials, raw materials for construction, personal care and toiletry products, plastic products, products from pulp and paper, and factory and warehouse construction.

Porametee Vomolsiri, the newly appointed secretary-general of the National Economic and Social Development Board, said the first four categories now under the Board of Investment (BoI) promotion will be entitled to privileges including corporate income tax exemption for eight years plus a 50% reduction in the tax rate for five years once their tax holiday lapses.

The remaining six categories are industries that were deprived of investment privileges early this year after the new seven-year investment strategy was announced, which based privileges on the type of project, favoring those that support the digital economy such as high technology, research and development and design and specific industries in the same designated cluster.

2. Investors' confidence leaps 70% on economic stimulus

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

Stock investor confidence hit a five-month high in October, propelled by the government's recent launches of economic stimulus to add money to low-income earners' pockets and help small and medium-sized business operators gain better access to borrowing sources. The Fetco Nida Investor Confidence Index for the final quarter surged to 101.48, up 70.4% from 59.57 in the previous survey, said Voravan Tarapoom, chairwoman of the Federation of Thai Capital Market Organizations (Fetco).

All types of investors had more optimistic views of the Thai stock market, particularly institutional investors, she said, adding that the sub-index on institutional investors' confidence jumped to a seven-month high to 99.99 or an 88.9% increase. Foreign investors' confidence improved the least at 66.7% to 66.7. According to the confidence measurement, a figure lower than 80 is bearish, 80-120 is neutral and more than 120 is bullish. The survey also found that

construction is the most attractive sector for investors on expectations that they will reap benefit from accelerating public investment, while the steel sector is the least interesting.

3. Poland's Jatomi Fitness moves into Thailand

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

Poland-based Jatomi Fitness is investing Bt900 million in a plan to establish 10 fitness clubs in Bangkok and the surrounding area, with its first locations opening inside Big C and Tesco Lotus retail centres.

Thailand is Jatomi's third country in Asean after the company opened branches in Malaysia and Indonesia, group chief executive officer Tracy Gehlan said. Currently, the company has more than 150,000 members across its 70 clubs in seven countries. Originating in 2008 from Poland, it has locations in the Czech Republic, Romania and Turkey as well as expanding into Southeast Asia, where it has locations in Malaysia, Indonesia and now Thailand. It plans to expand to 250 clubs worldwide over the next five years, she said.

4. Weaker baht boosts demand for residential sales in Asian markets

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

Leading residential developers are boosting overseas sales of their luxury projects via roadshows and other initiatives, especially in Asian markets such as China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan and Taiwan, thanks largely to the baht's depreciation this year. The unit weakened sharply, from 32.95 per US dollar on January 1 to 36.43 last week. *"We sold units in our two condominium projects under the brand, the Line - in Chatuchak and Sukhumvit 71, worth Bt1.8 billion in total - in the first nine months of the year, due to the baht's weakness,"* said Uthai Uthai-sangsuk, Sansiri's executive vice president of business development and project development division (high rise).

Most of the company's foreign customers are from Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan, with additional business being drummed up by road shows in these key markets. These buyers, along with plans to enter China by the end of the year, are expected to boost full-year foreign presales to Bt3 billion, he said. Eastern Star Real Estate is also holding a roadshow for its two condominium projects - the Starview on Rama 3 and the Nara 9 on Narathiwat Road - via the "China Real Estate Business Exhibition 2015", which is touring the cities of Chengdu, Chongjin, Kunming and Gulyang during the remainder of the year. *"This is part of efforts to boost sales in the final quarter, having seen strong demand from foreign buyers following the baht's weakness,"* said a member of the company's management.

5. Siam Paragon announces Bt100m sales campaign

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

Affected negatively by the economic slowdown and decline in purchasing power, the retail sector anticipates growth of less than 5 per cent this year, causing retail players to launch attractive campaigns to stimulate sales in the fourth quarter, the peak sales season of the year. Siam Paragon yesterday announced it would invest about Bt100 million in its biggest campaign of the year, "Siam Paragon 10th Anniversary: The Prismatic Phenomenon".

There will be two thank-you campaigns: a 10-week promotion with 100 prizes running from tomorrow to December 18 and a 10-day celebration including a series of "world-class" events and gifts. Siam Paragon is one of the major shopping centres on Bangkok's Rama I Road, jointly developed by Siam Piwat Co and The Mall Group, Thailand's two giant retail developers. The 10th-anniversary campaign is aimed at increasing customer traffic at Siam Paragon by 5 per cent and to increase spending per transaction by 10 per cent.

Mayuree Chaipromprasith, senior executive vice president for marketing at Siam Paragon Development, said the strong partnership between Siam Piwat and The Mall Group had made Siam Paragon a retail phenomenon and a true "world-class shopping destination" that attracts more than 200,000 local and international shoppers a day.

By Harsha Hazarika