

## Daily Thai News Updates: 6 December 2016

### 1. Phuket to get new luxury mixed-use development

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

Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore Firms collaborate on project. Major real-estate developers from Thailand, Hong Kong and Singapore have joined forces to develop the large-scale Mont Azure project in Phuket, with the project worth between Bt15 billion and Bt18 billion to include a luxury hotel, residences, retail outlets, and tailor-made villas. Three property and hotel investment groups – Arch Capital Management (Hong Kong and Shanghai), The Narai Group (Thailand), and Philean Capital (Singapore), part of Pontiac Land Group – are working together as joint-venture partners on the development. Richard Yue, chief executive officer and chief investment officer of Arch Capital, said the three investors bought a 450-rai (72-hectare) plot four years ago from the Kanjanapas family – the operator of Bangkok’s BTS Skytrain. Narai Group and Arch Capital have previously been involved in joint investments for property projects, mainly in Bangkok, while Philean Capital has entered the Thailand market for the first time. “Arch and Philean have been [investing] and continue to invest in property in many countries and territories including [mainland] China, Macau, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. But Phuket’s Mont Azure project will be the largest single project for us,” Yue said.

### 2. aCommerce joins Line to fuel e-commerce

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

Line is the biggest communication platform in Thailand in social commerce shopping, said Ten Chantaramunkorn, aCommerce director of Internet marketing. Ten said that with this strategic partnership, aCommerce will leverage the Line@ platform to onboard businesses and help them increase their followers and boost e-commerce sales among more than 33 million users of Line in the country. As a full-service e-commerce enabler with a history of working with Line on e-commerce initiatives, aCommerce plans to utilize the partnership to help businesses get the most out of Line@. aCommerce said it has over 1,300 experienced staff to help marketing campaigns to increase the amount of Line@ followers for business, manage Line@ accounts on a day-to-day basis, including answering incoming messages and pushing out targeted promotions, and back-end order fulfillment and last-mile delivery. In the highly competitive e-commerce field, aCommerce aims to help clients differentiate themselves from competitors and acquire quality shoppers. In Thailand, an estimated one-third to half of the total

commerce gross merchant value [GMV] is taking place on social platforms such as instagram, facebook, and Line.

### **3. Knowlarity raises \$20 m to boost cloud telephony services**

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

Knowlarity Communications – the platform partner of ClouDee, a leading Thailand-based cloud communications system, and a joint offering by Knowlarity & Sawasdeeshop – has raised US\$20 million (Bt712 million) in series-C funding to improve cloud telephony services for businesses in the Kingdom. The investment in Knowlarity, one of Asia’s most capitalized cloud-telephony companies, was led by Dubai-based private equity firm Delta Partners. Knowlarity’s existing investors, Sequoia India and Mayfield Fund, also took part, as well as small debt-based investment from Blacksoil and Trifecta. Signal Hill, a leading independent mergers and acquisitions and private capital advisory firm, was the exclusive adviser on the transaction. This investment makes Knowlarity, which has so far raised \$41 million, one of the most capitalized cloud telephony companies in Asia. The company’s flagship product is Super Receptionist, which helps businesses manage their communications better by intelligently handling business calls. Small and medium-sized businesses can get access to an enterprise-grade communication platform without installing hardware, avoiding the high costs associated with a traditional PABX business communication system.

### **4. Ministry Promotes Quartz Industry**

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

The Industry Ministry is pushing for the development of quartz mining, as this mineral is an important raw material for the production of solar panels. According to the ministry’s Department of Primary Industries and Mines, the Kingdom has reserves of 25 million tons of high-quality quartz that could be used to manufacture about 6 million tones of solar-cell-grade silicon, which in turn could generate 1 million megawatts of electricity, or 24 times Thailand’s peak power demand recorded this year.

The mineral could create no less than Bt3.6 trillion in income for the country, exclusive of related high-tech industries that could be developed concurrently, said the department's deputy director-general Somboon Yindeeyoungyuen. "We're confident that if an integrated solar-power industry is developed from our indigenous quartz resources, it will generate enormous revenue for the country as well as bringing down the cost of solar power, making it competitive with other choices of energy. And Thailand will become the largest hub of silicon [solar-cell-grade] silicon and solar panels in Asean," he said.

## **5. Execs to help push exports**

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

The International Trade Promotion Department has drawn aggressive plans, including utilizing executives of large Thai companies to better penetrate overseas markets to help drive shipments to achieve a 3-per-cent growth target in 2017. Malee Cholumlert, director-general of the department, said next year the department would emphasize many active plans in a bid to promote stronger export growth. They will include drawing up strategic partnerships with trade-partner countries as it believes this strategy could effectively solve trade barriers and non-trade barriers as well as increase trade facilitation between Thailand and its trading partners. The government will also nominate Thai nationals as advisers in targeted overseas markets who work for large companies operating in those markets so they can help drive Thai trade and investment. For example, Berli Jucker will help drive exports to China and Asean markets and CP will help support Thai goods trading at Super Brand Mall, a department store under CP in China. In Europe, Central Group will give advice to Thai traders and investors on how to penetrate European markets as the company has many businesses in Europe such as in Italy and Denmark. Thai Union Frozen will help drive Thai shipments and investment in the US. Sahapat Group will do the same for Japan and South Korea, while Double A will be used to boost shipments in the Middle East. SCG will be utilized for India.

**By Shreya Chopra**



