

## Daily Thai News Updates: 24 February 2017

### 1. True Corp to splurge Bt20 bn on mobile, broadband platforms

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

True Corp Plans to invest Bt20 billion this year on the further expansion of its mobile-phone and broadband Internet networks, executive committee chairman Suphachai Chearavanont said. “The mobile-phone network expansion will help us achieve a 30-per-cent share of total cellular-service revenue in Thailand next year, up from the current 25 per cent,” he said. True subsidiary True Move H Universal Communication holds licences to operate on the 2.1-gigahertz, 900-megahertz, and 1,800MHz spectra. True group is also considering seeking more business opportunities in the video-content business in the regional market, he said. Last week True announced a management restructuring by appointing Suphachai as executive committee chairman. It also appointed deputy chief executive officer Vichaow Rakphong-phairoj, 59, and group chief operating officer Adhiruth Thothavee-sansuk, 53, as co-presidents.

### 2. Erawan plans to double hotel portfolio by 2020

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

The Erawan Group aims to more than double the number of hotels its operates to 95 by 2020 under an ambitious expansion drive at home and abroad, the group's president said yesterday. “The company continues expanding in high-growth markets and high-growth segments,” Kamonwan Wipulakorn said. Under the group's five-year investment plan, Kamonwan said the company would outlay Bt10 billion, 55 per cent of which would be spent in Thailand and 30 per cent in the Philippines, with 15 per cent used for asset improvement.

The spending is booked from 2016. For 2017, the group is developing 22 hotels at Bt2.2 billion for a total of 2,680 rooms. These include four mid-market and economy hotels branded Mercure, Novotel, ibis, and ibis Style in Thailand. Under the Hop Inn brand, it will build six economy-level properties in the Philippines and 12 in Thailand. Kamonwan said the 2020 goal of 95 hotels would provide 10,000 rooms, up from the existing 41 hotels with 6,385 rooms. In the Philippines alone, the company is expected to have a total of 20 hotels, mostly at the mid-market level. Vietnam is also in the frame for overseas investment. With the planned new investment more on the mid-market and economy segments, the group forecasts that revenue from its luxury properties will fall to 42 per cent of the total in 2020, with the remaining share coming from the lower-priced segments.

### **3. Coffee World to double Thai outlets**

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

Coffee World has announced that it plans to double the number of its coffee houses in Thailand over the next five years to about 175. The company currently operates about 90 coffee houses domestically, half of them through franchising. Darren White, managing director of GFA Corporation (Thailand) Co, the owner and franchiser of Coffee World, said the company had franchised its coffee houses in Laos, Malaysia, Bangladesh, China, Bahrain and India, and was expanding in both existing and new markets. These include Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Middle Eastern markets such as the United Arab Emirates. The company yesterday also announced the launch of Coffee World Truck, a mobile-cafe business. The food and beverage franchiser has come up with new menus exclusively for Coffee World Truck, ready to expand its sale channels through trade fairs. This should help Coffee World increase its profit by 10 per cent this year. "We plan to open between two and three Coffee World Truck outlets in the second half of this year," White said.

### **4. Greenery beckons in Ploenchit-Chidlom**

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

The Ploenchit-Chidom area of central Bangkok is the new destination for those seeking a luxury lifestyle and green architecture, with a number of high-end green buildings – condominiums, hotels, offices and shopping centres – having been developed in the area, or due to be completed in the next two to three years. According to a survey by The Nation, developers of such projects have spent more than Bt100 billion in expanding their investment in the area since 2013, changing the location into a hub of luxury and green building in the capital, with many of the new buildings designed under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) concept and certification from the US Green Building Council. For example, the 98 Wireless luxury condominium by Sansiri was designed under the LEED Silver certificate concept, being the first condominium in Thailand to apply for such certification. Univentures' Park Venture, a mixed-use project that combines offices and a hotel, is the first office building in Thailand to receive LEED Platinum certification. Meanwhile, the Ploenchit-Chidom location also has the highest recorded land price in Bangkok, at Bt1.9 million per square wah (4 square metres) for a Chidom plot purchased by SC Asset Corp in 2015.

## **5. New Khon Kaen logistics depot, to open in 3 years**

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

Construction has begun of an inland container depot (ICD) in Muang district to operate as a logistics centre for rail transport in the Northeast, and it will be finished in three years, according to the provincial chamber of commerce. Chairman Khemchart Somjaiwong said work on the two billion baht logistics centre at tambon Noen Thon had already started. It is a public-private partnership project and will be managed by Khon Kaen City Development in partnership with the Port Authority of Thailand and State Railway of Thailand. Ban Noen Phayom in tambon Noen Thon was selected because it was near a train station. In the future this logistics park would be the regional centre for agricultural products such as sugarcane, tapioca and rice, he said. It was scheduled for completion in three years.

**By Shreya Chopra**



