

Thai News Update: 28 January 2019

1. Condo Investors Turn To Renting Out To Generate Income

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

When China's government in 2015 encouraged its people to expand their investments in Thailand and other overseas countries, Chinese investors responded. Thailand was one of the largest beneficiaries of both individual and corporate investment from China. According to Siam Commercial Bank IEC research, Chinese investors expand their property market investments outside of Mainland China to over Bt1 trillion in the year 2015, up 82 per cent from 2012 in which Bt170 billion of investment was recorded. The top three countries benefiting from Chinese property investors were the US, Australia and the UK, according to Knight Frank Research.

2. Set Expected To Gain From Election Date

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

Following government's announcement of the national election date on March 14, the Thai political development is moving in the right direction with foreign capital expected to return to the Thai stock market. Foreign holding of Thai equities has been declining for the past six years, sliding from 30 per cent to 22.68 per of the SET's market capitalisation at the end of last year. A return of foreign capital could lead to PER re-rating from 14 times to our estimated 16 times this year or the SET Index at 1,780-1,705 points. The Thai stock market has been under pressure from the redemption of LTFs in the current quarter, with this year being the last time investors will be given tax privileges for the purchases. There will be no new LTFs entering the SET next year while existing funds, which have reached holding conditions, will exit the market.

3. Mtl Embraces New Business Model

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

MUANG Thai Life Assurance Plc (MTL) has unveiled a new business model for this year, aiming to become a digital and health tech assurance company to meet the changing demands of insurers in all generations. The company will expand its investment in startups in the region for

the creation of new platforms. "We invested more than Bt200 million last year in five startups, both in Thailand and abroad. We will increase the budget for startup investments this year in pursuit of our goal of being a health and assurance tech business," said Sara Lamsam, the company's president and chief executive officer, at press conference last week.

4. Thailand Welcomed Record 38.27 Million Tourists In 2018

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

Thailand saw a record 38.27 million tourists in 2018, up 7.5% from 2017, the Tourism Ministry said on 28 January. The country's December tourist arrivals were 3.85 million, the ministry said in a statement. For 2019, the ministry expects 41.1 million tourists to spend 2.21 trillion baht. The number of visitors from China- Thailand's biggest source of tourists- is projected to rise 11% to 11.69 million, it said. Foreign tourist receipts account for about 12% of Thailand's gross domestic product.

5. EEC Gets 400,000 Rai For Development

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

As much as 400,000 rai will be designated for industrial areas within the government's flagship Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). Monton Sudprasert, director-general of the Public Works and Town and Country Planning Department, said a town planning draft for the EEC was approved by the EEC Policy Committee chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha last week. The draft calls for the industrial areas to be expanded by 122,931 rai from 286,492 rai. The new EEC town plan covers the three eastern provinces of Chachoengsao, Chon Buri and Rayong, which together span 8.3 million rai. The three have 11% of plots designated as urban or city areas, a total of 913,000 rai, with 3.4% for industrial (283,561 rai), 68% for farmland (5.65 million rai), 18% for forest conservation (1.49 million rai), and the rest for other purposes