

Thai News Update: 9 July 2019

1. Foreign robots are eating into brokerage business

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

Thailand's domestic brokerage industry will continue to face shrinking revenues as foreign institutional investors increasingly replace local retail customers and pay lower trading commissions. A higher proportion of foreign program trading will remain "a major threat" to the brokerage industry because they pay "extremely low fees" to trade, according to Paiboon Nalinthangkurn, chairman of the Federation of Thai Capital Market Organization (Fetco), a trade group that counts brokerage firms and mutual funds as its members. Domestic securities firms posted a "disappointing" 72% slump in first-quarter earnings as brokerage commissions slumped, the Association of Securities Companies, a trade group of brokerage companies, said in a June report. Asia Plus Group Holdings Plc, the nation's second-largest stock brokerage by market value, suffered a 48% drop in profit, while Finansia Syrus Securities Plc and AEC Securities Plc also reported losses.

2. Nielsen identifies second-tier cities as new growth driver

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

Thailand's struggling tourism industry is finding support with visitors from the population colossus to its west, just as the years of bumper arrivals from the giant to its north are beginning to wane. At a beachfront hotel on the tropical island of Phuket, the occupancy rate from Chinese clientele has stalled, while bookings from India have begun to rise. The Vijitt Resort is one of many in Thailand that has more cause for optimism. "We're starting to see new growth," said Kongsak Khoopongsakorn, Vijitt's general manager and vice president of the Thai Hotels Association. "Indians are now driving industry growth like the Chinese had previously done." In contrast, Indian arrivals accelerated in recent months due to more direct flights, a visa waiver and, most importantly, increasing wealth.

3. EA eyes 1,000 charging points

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

SET-listed Energy Absolute Plc (EA) aims to have 1,000 charging stations for electric vehicles (EVs) in 2019 after developing 500 stations so far. The EA charging outlets are operated by Energy Mahanakhon Co, an EA subsidiary. The company started to install and expand EV charging outlets in 2017 and won investment incentives from the government. Earlier, Energy Mahanakhon expected to reach 1,000 charging stations by 2018. With 1,000 EV charging stations, Energy Mahanakhon will spend 800 million baht on the expansion plan. Amorn Saphaweekul, EA's deputy chief executive, said the company has to speed up the EV charging roll-out to meet the 2019 target, so it has to seek more business partners who are open for the installation of charging stations.

4. EEC vision becomes clearer ahead of city-plan unveiling

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

The Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) will double the amount of land used for manufacturing in the three provinces it spans, the EEC Office has said. The Eastern Economic Corridor Office (EECO) is expecting a large inflow of private investment, its secretary general, Kanit Sangsubhan, said, and a city plan is set to come into effect next month once the new Cabinet is in place. In an exclusive interview with The Nation, Kanit said the draft had been finalised. The government has promoted the EEC concept extensively as an industrial hub for not just Thailand but all of Southeast Asia. About 1 million rai has been earmarked for manufacturing, Kanit said – doubling the size of the current industrial zone spanning Chachoengsao, Chon Buri and Rayong.

5. Govt to ban import of used cars for personal use starting in December

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

The Commerce Ministry will ban imports of used vehicles for personal use starting on December 10, the chief of the Foreign Trade Department said on 9 July. Adul Chotenisakorn, director general of the Foreign Trade Department, said the Commerce Ministry has issued a directive to ban the import of used vehicles for personal use, so as to reduce air pollution and for the sake of road safety. Adul said the ban, which will be enforced on December 10, is also aimed to prevent

importers from avoiding paying high tariffs for entirely-imported vehicles by disguising them as used ones. Adul said the ban was issued after the Commerce Ministry had consulted other government agencies.