

Daily Thai News Updates: 14 October 2016

1. Lenovo banking on higher-end segments

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

Lenovo is boosting its Moto brand presence in Thailand's most lucrative smartphone market, the medium-to-high segments. "We expect the local smartphone market will see flat growth during 2016-19 with an average annual sales volume of 22-23 million units," said Tuantong Srivichian, country manager of Lenovo Thailand responsible for smartphone business. But the local smartphone market is projected to register a healthy growth of 30% in terms of value during 2016-19, compared with average annual growth of 22% during 2013-16. Thailand's smartphone market is expected to reach US\$3.8 billion, or around 130 billion baht this year. Lenovo opened the door for Moto's return to Thailand in March after the Chinese computer giant completely took over Motorola's handset division from Google for \$2.91 billion in 2014. Thailand is the seventh country that Lenovo has selected for Moto's return.

2. IATA: Airline profitability nears peak

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

The latest monitoring by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) shows that airline profitability is showing signs of peaking. Underpinning the trend is a 20% drop in net profit in IATA's enlarged sample of airlines for their second-quarter financial performance. The sample total of 97 airlines, including 34 in Asia-Pacific, posted a combined net profit of US\$8.52 billion in the April-June period, down from \$10.6 billion in the same period last year. The lower profit reflects the impact of lower unit revenue, though earnings before interest and taxes edged up to 9.9%, from 9.8% in the same period last year.

3. Sung Yod rice wins Geographical Indication certification from EU

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

Sung yod rice, a variety grown in Phatthalung province, recently won the right to Geographical Indication (GI) certification from the European Union, ensuring greater recognition and probably greater marketing possibilities. The certification goes into effect on November 1. "After the EU certifies Sung Yod rice, it will add value to the product in the EU and world markets. Thai farmers and traders will enjoy higher income and a good reputation for this speciality rice grain," Commerce Minister Apiradi Tantraporn said yesterday. This is the fourth Thai product to win GI recognition from the EU. Hom Mali Thung Kula Ronghai jasmine rice was certified three years ago, and Doi Chang and Doi Tung coffee were recognised last year. The decision was published in the official journal of the European Union on Wednesday.

4. AIS, DTAC nod to cross-network VoLTE calls

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

Advanced Info Service (AIS) and Total Access Communication (DTAC) have collaborated to enable their mobile-phone subscribers to make calls to each other on Voice over Long-Term Evolution (VoLTE) high-speed wireless technology across their two fourth-generation networks for the first time in the Asean region. Some observers of the telecom industry see this team-up between the largest cellular operator, AIS, and the second-largest, DTAC, as a way of competing against the fast-rising and third-largest player, True Corp. All three operators recently made VoLTE available to their subscribers, but initially only for calls within their own network. The technology enables high-quality voice connections and high-definition video calls. Sitthichoke Nopchinabutr, DTAC chief marketing officer, and Titipong Khiewpaisal, AIS senior vice president for consumer marketing and sales, issued a joint statement yesterday about the move. They said it marked a significant collaboration offering VoLTE service between two telecom leaders for the first time not only in Thailand but also Asean. True chief commercial officer Kittinut Tikawan said yesterday that VoLTE was an international standard that should be equally accessible by all consumers. True is confident that in the near future the company will be able to strike a similar collaboration with both AIS and DTAC, he added.

5. Amaranta focusing on Bangkok's next CBD

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

Amaranta Development plans to launch more dual hotel and residence properties to tap the high-end segment in what will soon become Bangkok's newest central business district (CBD) - the Rama IX and Ratchadaphisek-Huai Khwang area. "We want to differentiate our new properties from those of other players by developing a hotel and a residence in the same area. Our first dual project is in the Ratchada-Huai Khwang area," Sopon Asawanuchit, managing director of the local developer, said yesterday. The company launched the Amaranta Residence yesterday next to the Amaranta Hotel, which was opened about nine months ago after an investment of Bt500 million. The new Bt800-million residence, which offers hotel-type services, aims to serve the high-end market in the new CBD covering Rama IX and Ratchadaphisek roads. "The company plans to launch two dual projects per year. The next project is also likely to be in the Ratchada-Huai Khwang area, with an expected Bt1-billion investment for a 200-unit site," he said. The newly launched project comprises 159 units, 117 of which cover 30-41 square metres, with 42 larger units each occupying 55-77sqm.

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