

Daily Thai News Updates: 9 September 2016

1. PDI plans Bt1.5 bn for solar farms

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

Padaeng Industry (PDI), a zinc producer listed on the Stock Exchange of Thailand, plans to spend a total of Bt1.5 billion this year and next mainly on its solar-farm business as part of its shift towards green businesses. The figure is based on the planned investment according to its equity holdings in the projects, managing director Francis Vanbellen said yesterday. He added that in the long term the revenue contribution from the green businesses run by its subsidiaries PDI Materials, PDI Energy and PDI Eco would be around one-third each.

For this year and in 2017 the company's main revenue will still be from zinc business. PDI Asia Solar Co, a subsidiary of PDI Energy Co, is investing about Bt1.9 billion in three solar-farm projects in Japan with 13 megawatts total installed capacity. Of the total value, 20 per cent will be financed by PDI cash, while the rest will be from bank loans. The commercial operation date (COD) of the first project, in Nanao, Japan, will be this quarter, at 2MW.

2. Govt to issue benchmark bonds

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

The government plans to raise more than half of the estimated Bt957.72 billion under its fund-mobilisation plan through benchmark bond issues in the next fiscal year starting next month, according to the Public Debt Management Office (PDMO). After the annual PDMO market dialogue yesterday, aside from the planned benchmark bond issues, 28-day treasury bills will be launched every week and savings-bond issues twice a week for the government's fundraising during fiscal 2017. The planned benchmark bonds will have five, 10, 15, 20, 30 and 50 years maturity for Bt550 billion in total or 57 per cent of the estimated fund-mobilisation plan, as a way to boost government bonds' liquidity and set their reference rates. The government's Bt957.72-billion fundraising plan consists of Bt440.66 billion in new borrowings and a Bt517.06-billion debt rollover in the next fiscal year. Of total new borrowings, Bt390 billion will be used to offset the budget deficit, Bt50.61 billion for credit extension to state enterprises, and Bt48 million for the Natural Catastrophe Insurance Fund.

3. King Rice Oil eyes bigger slice of rice bran market

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

King rice oil group is expanding its production base with the aim of becoming one of the world's leading producers of rice bran products within five years. Executive director Pravit Santiwattana said the move was to meet the consumer trend to be more healthy. He said producing rice bran products would add value to the business through the development of innovative products. "We will continuously launch new rice bran products to cater to tremendous business opportunities," Pravit said. He added that the Bangkok company last year launched rice-bran oil shortening as a pilot product. "Within the next five years, we aim to become a leading manufacturer of diversified rice bran products supplying the world market," he said.

4. Group Lease strengthens ties with Sri Lankan financial group

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

SET-listed microfinance company Group Lease (GL) plans to collaborate further with Commercial Credit & Finance, a Sri Lankan financial group, to strengthen its microfinance businesses in Indonesia and Cambodia after GL acquired a microfinance company in Myanmar from a Commercial Credit shareholder. GL yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding on the transaction with Commercial Credit to buy a 71.9-per-cent stake in BG Microfinance Myanmar, a subsidiary of Commercial Credit & Finance, from BG International Private, a holding company based in Sri Lanka owned by Roshan S Egodage, who is also chief executive officer of Commercial Credit.

GL chairman and CEO Mitsuji Konoshita said the transaction would be made via GL Holdings (GLH), its holding company in Singapore. The remaining 28.1 per cent will be retained by Commercial Credit, which has been operating in the microfinance sector in Myanmar for two years.

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By Nandini Malhotra

