

Thailand Morning Cuppa

Top Story

Market Strategy

A Better Tomorrow Lies Ahead

Thailand Strategy

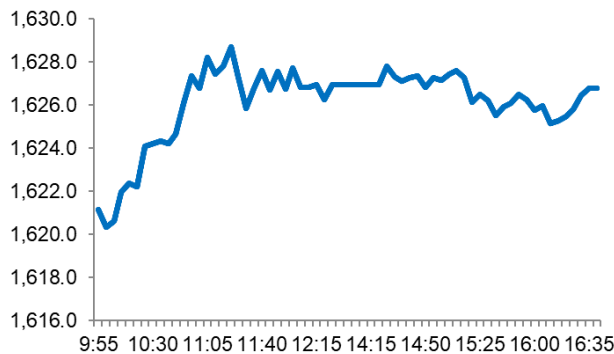
Upbeat on prospects in 2023. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to dominate Thailand's economic landscape, along with inflation, rising interest rates, and supply chain disruptions. We believe the Thai equity market will still grapple with these obstacles in 1H23, albeit at a slower pace. Despite the threat of a global economic downturn next year, Thailand should record stronger numbers YoY, as 2023 will mark a full year of economic reopening activities after businesses were ravaged by the pandemic. The recovery in domestic consumption, tourism and investment growth are vital economic drivers. In addition, the upcoming general election – expected to be held in May 2023 – will be another market driver.

Analyst: Kasamapon Hamnilrat +66 2088 9739

Today's Report: [Market Strategy : A Better Tomorrow Lies Ahead \(27 Dec 2022\)](#)

Previous Report: [Market Strategy : In 4Q22, Accumulate The Big-Cap Stocks \(19 Oct 2022\)](#)

Chart 1: SET intra-day graph



SET	2020	2021	2022F	2023F
PE (x)	37.27	15.12	15.65	14.94
P/BV (x)	1.56	1.77	1.63	1.54
Yield (%)	2.75	2.65	2.82	2.96

SET Value by investor Type: Daily	Buy	Sell	Net
	(THBm)	(THBm)	(THBm)
Institution	3,669.57	2,118.50	1,551.08
Proprietary	2,113.83	2,442.07	-328.23
Foreign	12,335.29	12,370.23	-34.94
Retail	11,320.83	12,508.74	-1,187.90

SET Value by investor Type	MTD	YTD
	(THBm)	(THBm)
Institution	5,516.95	-152,839.96
Proprietary	386.12	-2,056.25
Foreign	-6,883.29	183,100.63
Retail	980.23	-28,204.41

SET50 Index Future	Long	Short	Net	MTD	YTD
Institution	14,714	14,857	-143	-9,492	-21,318
Foreign	107,167	103,372	3,795	-135,212	5,107
Local	58,046	61,698	-3,652	144,704	16,211

Foreign Fund Flows (USDm)	MTD	YTD	YoY
Thailand	-1.0	-1.0	-197.0
			5394.7
			7761.8

Note: *As at 26 Dec 2022 closing

Table 1: Key market indices (27 Dec 2022)

	Index	Chg	Chg (%)	YTD (%)
Thailand (SET)	1626.80	9.25	0.57%	-1.9%
Thailand (SET50)	983.51	5.30	0.54%	-0.7%
Thailand (SET100)	2210.31	12.52	0.57%	-2.4%
USA (Dow Jones)	33203.93	UNCHG	UNCHG	-8.6%
USA (S&P500)	3844.82	UNCHG	UNCHG	-19.3%
USA (Nasdaq)	10497.86	UNCHG	UNCHG	-32.9%
UK (FTSE)	7473.01	UNCHG	UNCHG	1.2%
Singapore (FSSTI)	3257.70	UNCHG	UNCHG	4.3%
Hong Kong (Hang Seng)	19593.06	UNCHG	UNCHG	-16.3%
Japan (Nikkei)	26592.99	243.06	0.92%	-7.6%
Malaysia (KLCI)	1474.68	UNCHG	UNCHG	-5.9%
China (SHANGHAI SE)	3065.56	19.70	0.65%	-15.8%
Indonesia (JCI)	6835.81	35.14	0.52%	3.9%

Foreign Exchange Rates / Oil Market

USD	Closed	Chg	Chg (%)
Baht (Onshore)	34.62	-0.10	0.27
Yen	132.67	-0.21	0.16
Euro	1.06	0.00	0.05

Oil Price (USD/barrel)		Chg	Chg (%)
Brent	82.92	-0.39	-0.47
Nymex-Crude Light	80.78	1.22	1.53

Note: *As at 26 Dec 2022 closing

Bulletin

STOCK/SECTOR	NEWS	COMMENTS	RATING
<p>Hospitality</p> <p>Airports of Thailand (AOT TB)</p> <p>Central Plaza Hotel (CENTEL TB)</p> <p>Minor International (MINT TB)</p> <p>The Erawan Group (ERW TB)</p>	<p>Airports of Thailand (AOT) has released its estimates for air traffic volumes at its six airports between 29 Dec 2022 and 4 Jan 2023, placing total air passenger numbers at c.2m (+171% YoY). The latter includes 1m international passengers (+833% YoY) and 1m domestic passengers (+57% YoY). AOT puts total aircraft movement at c.12,190 flights (+87% YoY), which includes 5,340 international (+261% YoY) and 6,850 domestic flights (+36% YoY).</p> <p>In related news, China will drop COVID-19 quarantine requirements for passengers arriving from abroad starting 8 Jan 2023, according to the National Health Commission's announcement on Monday. This compares with the current requirement of eight days of isolation, ie five days at a designated quarantine hotel or central facility followed by three days at home. However, passengers are still required to obtain negative COVID-19 test results within 48 hours of departure.</p> <p>China has also downgraded the management of the pandemic from the highest level to its second highest, effectively removing the legal justification for its strict zero-COVID-19 policy. <i>(Various media)</i></p>	<p>The material rebound in air traffic to AOT's airports implies solid pent-up travel demand to Thailand during the high travel season. Still, the company's air traffic during this festive year-end period may be at 41% and 43% in terms of passenger and aircraft movements vis-à-vis the same period in 2019 when there were 4.93m estimated passengers and 28,600 flights. Nonetheless, we expect such improving momentum to continue over AOT's 1HFY23 (Sep) and possibly turn its earnings positive by this period. We also expect the company to deliver THB11.5bn in core profit in FY23 vs FY22's THB10.3bn core loss with total aircraft and passenger numbers at 74% and 67% of 2019's levels (FY22: 44% and 33%).</p> <p>For China's border reopening, we believe this matter may act as a positive sentiment to the domestic tourism industry. It may indicate that the Chinese Government will gradually permit its citizens to travel abroad, which is likely to benefit Thailand in terms of surging air traffic and Chinese tourist arrivals. Thai hoteliers with overseas operations, ie in the Maldives and Europe, may also stand to benefit. Potential hikes in hotels' average occupancy rates may strengthen their revenues per available room further. Including the Chinese travellers, we currently forecast 24.8m international arrivals to Thailand (+125% YoY) and THB1.48tn in foreign receipts (+74% YoY) in 2023, implying 62% and 76% of pre-pandemic numbers, ie 2019. Note: Thailand welcomed 11m Chinese visitors in 2019, ie the biggest contributor to total arrivals at 28%.</p> <p>We maintain our sector call. AOT and Minor International (MINT) are our sector Top Picks. We retain our calls and TPs on these two stocks, as well as those on The Erawan Group (ERW) and Central Plaza Hotel (CENTEL).</p>	<p>Sector: OVERWEIGHT</p> <p>Stocks: AOT: BUY, TP: THB82</p> <p>ERW: BUY, TP: THB5</p> <p>MINT: BUY, TP: THB40.50</p> <p>CENTEL: NEUTRAL, TP: THB45.50</p>

Top BUYs

	TP (THB)	Upside (%)	Catalysts
Airports of Thailand (AOT TB)	82	11.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect smaller negative earnings YoY and QoQ in 4QFY22. Improving flight and passenger numbers should strongly support earnings – mainly via passenger service charges and concessions revenues. Expect FY22F core loss of THB9.4bn, which will turn to a core profit of THB11.31bn in FY23. Possible easing of COVID-19 restrictions globally may trigger more foreign arrivals and Thai departures in the near term, ie from 1HFY23 onwards. AOT's Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport has room to double capacity in six years. The new Satellite Terminal is scheduled to open in 4QFY23 (Sep) and may help drive an earnings jump in FY24.
Bangkok Dusit Medical Services (BDMS TB)	35	23.89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect 3Q22's THB2.77bn core profit (+10% YoY, +4% QoQ). Hospital occupancy rates rise to 75% (3Q21: 71%, 2Q22: 69%). Foreign patient revenue may ramp up to 95% of pre-pandemic levels (2Q22: 91%, FY21: 55%) and it may return to normal in 4Q22. 4Q22F earnings may grow moderately YoY and slightly QoQ. Rising general treatments from local and foreign patients and the uptrend in profit margins may limit impact of a gradual decline in pandemic-related income. Expect strong 47% net profit growth in 2022, with resilient 10% growth in 2023. 2022 bottomline and profit margins should exceed 2019 levels. BDMS remains our Thai healthcare Top Pick.
Central Pattana (CPN TB)	78.25	12.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect 3Q22 earnings to jump YoY and gradually increase QoQ. Operational momentum for all its businesses for July-August may be stronger than in 2Q22. Customer traffic to CPN malls will ramp up throughout 2H22 (2Q22: 85% of 2019 levels), benefitting from a recovery in out-of-home activities and Thailand's full re-opening to international tourists. CPN's rental rate discount is quite stable (15% on average) as tenants have recovered after COVID-19, and it will attain a stronger rental income from tenants with revenue-sharing contract
Central Retail Corp (CRC TB)	48	5.49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normalising store operations may keep the earnings turnaround ticking on in 3Q22 vs the lockdowns that led to the temporary shuttering of CRC's Thailand and Vietnam stores – this, in turn, resulted in a steep THB2.24bn core loss in 3Q21. Its 3Q22F SSSG may be close to +50% YoY. Rising post-pandemic demand and a rebound in tourism may drive sales growth for the company's fashion and food wings throughout 3Q-4Q while the planned opening of more new stores in 2H22 could support the hardline segment's turnover. Expect a core profit of THB5.61bn for 2022, jumping from an extremely low base of THB189m in 2021, and it will expand 45% to pre-pandemic levels in 2023.
Home Product Center (HMPRO TB)	18.70	23.03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect 3Q22's THB1.50bn net profit (+72% YoY, -1% QoQ). Assume +15% YoY SSSG for HomePro Thailand (3Q21: -17.0%, 2Q22: -1.1%), net rental and other incomes growth of 80% YoY and 2% QoQ. GPM should rise YoY and QoQ on a higher sales mix of private label products to 20.5% (9M21: 19.5%). 4Q22F earnings may grow YoY and QoQ, to be the strongest quarter. Support factors: a high season for retail, home improvement demand post flooding, the opening of one new HomePro and a total three new Mega Home stores, and stronger recurring income. Expect a strong 17% earnings growth in 2022 and a resilient 9% growth in 2023.
Kasikornbank (KBANK TB)	175	21.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KBANK is ready for the new digital era, as it has business units that are fully equipped with new tech. This will be hidden value waiting to be unlocked in future. Historical price trends suggest its share price should outperform peers when the economy is on a recovery path. KBANK offers lowest CIR in the banking industry, while its asset quality remains manageable.
Land and Houses (LH TB)	9.45	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land and Houses will focus on: i) Conservative increases in targets for project sales revenue and presales and ii) a major focus on boosting new project launches that may include new condominiums. This key developer's plan may highlight industry trends for 2022, and its competitors may follow suit by ramping up project launches more aggressively. 1H22 overall presale was in line with FY22 business target at 50% of full-year target. Low-rise project presale in 2Q22 slightly declined 2%YoY while condominium presale jumped strongly 50%YoY from the low-base level. Its presales progress was in line with other leading developers. The country's re-opening will also bode well for the company's recurring income assets including hotel and shopping mall that can start to generate revenue growth from FY23 onwards.

Top BUYs

	TP (THB)	Upside (%)	Catalysts
PTT (PTT TB)	51	58.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In early October, OPEC+ decided to decrease overall production by 2mbpd from the August levels, starting November, which is beyond estimation. This event leads to supply tight and make oil prices to stay at high level. PTT is entering high season in 4Q22 in accordance with high demand of heating energy for cold weather as well as higher production from gas business. PTT is able to pay an attractive dividend of 5%. In addition, PTT is still working to capitalise on future business trends, such as in the EV-related space, and innovations in health and environmental products.
Thai Union Group (TU TB)	24	44.58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TU is progressing further in terms of debuting its pet food business on the stock market after it began the filing process with the SEC. The pet food business provides higher margins of c.23-27% vs normal TU's margin c.17-18%. Hence, the newly listed entity can potentially trade at high valuations and add value to TU. 4Q22 earnings are also expected to recover from better economic reopening after the pandemic and the rise in consumption spending. Tuna costs remain under manageable levels and should be under less pressure after the passing of the fish aggregating devices banning period.
TISCO Financial (TISCO TB)	114	14.86	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to its solid asset quality and healthy capital position, as well as its above-average dividend yields of 7%.

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<p>RHB Investment Bank Bhd Level 3A, Tower One, RHB Centre Jalan Tun Razak Kuala Lumpur Malaysia Tel : +(60) 3 9280 8888 Fax : +(60) 3 9200 2216</p>	<p>RHB Bank Berhad (Singapore branch) 90 Cecil Street #04-00 RHB Bank Building Singapore 069531 Fax : +65 6509 0470</p>
Jakarta	Bangkok
<p>PT RHB Sekuritas Indonesia Revenue Tower, 11th Floor, District 8 - SCBD Jl. Jendral Sudirman Kav 52-53 Jakarta 12190 Indonesia Tel : +6221 509 39 888 Fax : +6221 509 39 777</p>	<p>RHB Securities (Thailand) PCL 10th Floor, Sathorn Square Office Tower 98, North Sathorn Road, Silom Bangrak, Bangkok 10500 Thailand Tel : +(66) 2 088 9999 Fax : +(66) 2 088 9799</p>