



## **Thai International Plastics and Rubber Exhibition for the Indochina Region**

**14 – 17 September 2006**

**Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre (BITEC)**

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## **Joint Organizing Effort Realizes Truly Regional Plastics Showcase for the Indochina Region**

### **— Strong Growth Prospects in Indochina Mark Timely Debut**

The plastic and rubber industries within Indochina now have its own truly representative show. This has come about through a landmark collaboration between three major organizations: **Thai Plastic Industries Association, The Federation of Thai Industries – Plastic Industry Club** and **Messe Düsseldorf Asia**. The partners have pooled together their organizational resources and market expertise garnered from their independent organization of previous Thai-base exhibitions -- TIPF (by the Thai Plastic Industries Association) and T-PLAS (by Messe Düsseldorf Asia) -- to inaugurate TIPREX 2006, the Thai International Plastics and Rubber Exhibition for the Indochina Region. TIPREX will replace both TIPF and T-PLAS.

The exhibition will be held at Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre (BITEC) from 14 – 17 September 2006. The new partnership promises to attract a wide cross-section of exhibitors representative of the actual needs of the Indochina region's plastic and rubber industries who will showcase a diversity of the latest materials, technologies, tools and systems approaches for remaining competitive in today's global business environment.

TIPREX has an apt host in Thailand, one of the region's strongest economies in terms of both manufacturing and growth prospects. UNCTAD, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, rated Thailand the fourth best FDI (foreign direct investment) destination globally in 2004. This stamp of approval is reflected in the latest data from Thailand's Board of Investment (BOI), which received applications for 749 FDI (wholly owned and joint venture) projects in 2004 valued at around \$7.7 billion. This represents impressive 23%-plus year-on-year growth in monetary terms.

Even more impressive, however, was the resurgence in investment interest on the part of local Thai firms — they submitted proposals for 463 projects valued at \$7.6 billion, translating to a truly outstanding growth rate of 376% year-on-year. Overall applications were valued at \$16.4 billion. Furthermore, the BOI approved projects valued at a total of \$15 billion in 2004. This level of investment should keep the Kingdom's economy on track at a growth rate of 5–6%/year.

Thailand's economy is partly driven by its lofty intention to transform into the Detroit of the East. Already, production is pushing the million vehicle per annum mark and with back-up from around 1,700 firms, including numerous plastics molders, local content for utility vehicles is 80–90%, while for passenger cars it ranges between 30 and 70%. The industry target of 1.8 million vehicles by 2010 augurs well for further investment in plastic parts production.

Thailand doesn't have it all to itself in the plastic and rubber stakes in Indochina — Vietnam is also emerging as a star performer. Backed up by GDP growth of 7.7% growth in 2004 and an 8% forecast for 2005, the nation attracted an estimated \$4.02 billion of FDI in 2004. For the first four months of 2005, the rate of inflow picked up, with in excess of \$2 billion finding its way to Vietnam.

This acceleration is in part due to Vietnam freeing up its investment environment. For example, it reduced the foreign income tax rate from 50% to 40% and made amendments to regulations on value-added tax and corporate income tax. Vietnam also removed a 3% limit for the proportion of foreign labor costs at enterprises. It also cut telecommunications service charges and power tariffs for foreign-invested enterprises.

With continued strong growth and investment prospects in place in the region, TIPREX is the perfect forum for Indochina's plastics and rubber industries to come together and source opportunities for innovation, cost competitiveness, and business expansion.

For more information on TIPREX 2006, please contact:

**Exhibition Information**

See Lay Eng, Project Manager  
Jean Ham, Project Sales Manager  
Messe Düsseldorf Asia Pte Ltd  
9 Temasek Boulevard  
#23-03 Suntec Tower Two  
Singapore 038989  
Tel: (65) 6332 9624 / 6332 9646  
Fax: (65) 6337 4633 / 6332 9655  
Email: [tiprex@mda.com.sg](mailto:tiprex@mda.com.sg)

**Press Information**

Rita Biswas  
Marketing Communications Manager  
Messe Düsseldorf Asia Pte Ltd  
Tel: (65) 6332 9645  
Fax: (65) 6337 4633 / 6332 9655  
Email: [press@mda.com.sg](mailto:press@mda.com.sg)