

## Thai News Update: 15 October 2019

### 1. 'Final' round of RCEP talks fail to reach agreement, but it's not over yet

Source: AEC News Today ([Link](#))

Trade ministers and negotiators in Thailand for what was scheduled as the final round of negotiations on the establishment of what will become the world's largest free trade agreement (fta) once implemented on Oct 12 failed to reach an agreement on the text of a joint declaration to bring it into effect. The disappointing conclusion to Oct 11 meeting followed two days of intense negotiations between representative of 16 countries attempting to give birth to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), to offset some of the damaging spill-over effects of the US-China trade war. Chaired by Thailand deputy prime minister and Minister of Commerce, Jurin Laksanawisit, the meeting had hoped to finalise details related to investment, e-commerce, rules of origin, and trade remedies. The latter is of particular concern to India whose inefficient, heavily taxed, and heavily subsidised industry sectors fear a deluge of cheap Chinese imports.

### 2. Singapore and Thailand top ranks in female CEO representation, Malaysia lags

Source: Marketing ([Link](#))

Singapore has topped the charts globally for having the most number of female CEOs, according to a study by the Credit Suisse Research Institute (CSRI). Alongside Italy, both countries were tallied with 15% female CEO representation. The Lion City also has 23% of women in management positions. Meanwhile, Southeast Asia countries Thailand and Philippines were close by with 9% and 8% female CEO representation respectively. Indonesia is not too far back with 9% of female CEOs in the country, while women in management totals to 19%. However, Malaysia lags behind the rest of the markets in the region with 0% of female CEO representation. Malaysia has 23% of women in management but lacks in gender diversity in CEO positions. The report said greater seniority of women in management in Asian countries is likely due less to regulatory pressures and more to equitable opportunities where education is

concerned, amid the rapid growth and emergence of new industries and the demographic profile of these economies.

### **3. Japan, Thailand and Singapore benefit as Chinese tourists skip Hong Kong over golden week**

**Source: Asia One ([Link](#))**

Fewer Chinese travellers went overseas during "golden week" this year - but for those who did, Japan, Thailand and Singapore were the top-ranked destinations as tourists from the mainland gave Hong Kong a miss, according to China's largest travel company Ctrip. Chinese government data showed only 6.07 million people travelled during the national holiday between October 1-6, a 15.1 per cent drop from the corresponding period last year. Analysts attributed this to Chinese tourists opting for a "staycation", as 782 million people - a 7 per cent increase from last year - chose to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the People's Republic of China by visiting local historical sites.

### **4. NBTC: EEC may get first taste of 5G adoption**

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

The Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) areas could see 5G rolled out, along with industrial and healthcare zones by next October, says the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC). The EEC is the government's flagship investment scheme, spanning the eastern provinces of Chon Buri, Rayong and Chachoengsao. Due to be completed by 2021, the project is aimed at creating a technological, manufacturing and service hub connected to Asean neighbours by land, sea and air. Nationwide 5G adoption is expected next year as the network roll-out and business use cases need time to take shape, the telecom regulator said.

### **5. Tham Luang Cave reopens for tourists**

**Source: TTR Weekly ([Link](#))**

Tham Luang cave complex where 12 young footballers and their coach were trapped will reopen to visitors later this year, according to the environment minister. Located at the foot of the mountain range separating Thailand and Myanmar just 10 km from the Mae Sai border town in Chiang Rai province, environmental minister VarawutSilpa-archa said the area would officially become a national park next month. The Thai cabinet has to approve the move, and then its status will be gazetted.

## **6. IoT adoption set to surge on lower costs**

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

Internet of Things adoption in Thailand is expected to receive a boost as IoT network operators continue to jump into the market. Several players are engaging in wireless technology that supports IoT. They include Things on Net Co, an authorised provider of the Sigfox network in Thailand; CAT Telecom, which provides the LoRaWan network; and Advanced Info Service (AIS), which is pursuing NB-IoT technology. "We see an opportunity in IoT because of increasing user awareness and lower cost of connected devices," said Prapan Asavaplunghrohm, chief executive of Things on Net. He said there are various business cases in which IoT can be used to mitigate problems, reduce costs and broaden revenue sources.

## **7. Thai Airways eyes passenger growth**

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

Financially struggling Thai Airways is eyeing 8% in passenger growth by year's end as it plans to launch new routes. Nond Kalinta, Vice President of Sales at Thai Airways International Public Company Limited (THAI) told the media the airline's financial situation is likely to improve. The airline's debts by the end of the year will be reduced to under six billion baht thanks to the steady rise of passengers throughout the year. Over the past nine months, the airline has achieved passenger growth of 4%-5%, which is higher than last's year figure year-on-year. The national carrier is hopeful of growth as projected passenger numbers for the last quarter shows an 8% uptick.